



HOOPLE BOARD

Minutes of a meeting of the BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF HOOPLE LTD held via WebEx on Thursday 21 May 2020 at 2.00pm.

Board Members present:

Clr David Hitchiner (DH)	Chairman and Non-Exec Director, Herefordshire Council
Richard Ball (RB)	Non-Executive Director, Herefordshire Council
Andrew Cottom (AC)	Non-Executive Director - Wye Valley NHS Trust

Officers Supporting the Board:

Nick Mather (NM)	Chief Operating Officer
Audrey Clements (AEC)	Head of Management Accounting, Herefordshire Council
Tracey Sampson (TS)	Assistant Director for People
Stephen Weller (SW)	Training and Education Manager
Kerry Lawrence (KL)	Company Secretary Support / Minute Taker

1. Apologies

- 1.1 There were no apologies for absence.

2. Declarations of Interest

- 2.1 There were no new declarations of interest.

3. Minutes, Action Sheet and Matters Arising

- 3.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 25 March 2020 were agreed as an accurate recording of the meeting.

- 3.2 There was further discussion regarding the resilience of the Scoot traffic light management system and clarity was required in terms of its status.

Action: NM

- 3.9 NM advised the working arrangements due to Covid-19 were going well after an initial exceptionally busy period. The training and education centre has closed due to restrictions in place and we are unable to deliver face-to-face training though some training have moved online. Recruitment has moved online and has adapted well.

- 3.10 AC asked whether there is an opportunity for Hoople to provide business resilience to smaller depts. within WVT i.e. accounts receivable, payroll etc and may offer longer term benefits. NM agreed this would need further exploration.

4. Final Year End Outturn Position 2019/20



- 4.1 The board noted the finance and business update report including the 2019/20 outturn position, the progress to date made by the business and the key issues and risks. AEC reported the final outturn position as £447k after tax, an improvement to the forecast due to additional business in recruitment and IT.
- 4.2 AEC confirmed the annual audit would take place virtually, the last two weeks of June and was not envisaging any issues. The audit findings will be presented by Bishop Fleming to the board meeting in September along with the statutory accounts.

5. Finance and Business Update

- 5.1 The board noted the finance and business update report including the 2019/20 outturn position, the progress to date made by the business and the key issues and risks.
- 5.2 The board noted the debt position. It was agreed going forward that the cash position would be reported to board.
Action: AEC
- 5.3 NM acknowledged that the Head of IT position currently being advertised had received a good response thus far. In response to involving shareholders in the process, NM expected there to be a second round of interviews and agreed stakeholder input would be useful.
- 5.4 RB suggested a potential opportunity in providing schools with a consistent approach to IT support for home schooling across Herefordshire and whether a similar solution was needed for training, could be used.
- 5.5 The board acknowledged progress made towards the internal audit plan, no concerns were raised.

6. Pay Award

- 6.1 NM presented a report recommending a 3% company pay award to bring salaries more inline with Hoople's public sector competitors particularly at the lower end of the payscale. The anticipation is the uplift will help ease the ability to recruit in areas such as IT, payroll and recruitment which have previously been difficult.
- 6.2 The board agreed the recommended 3% pay award 20/21 and agreed to communicate to staff.
Action: NM

7. Training and Education Ofsted report

- 7.1 SW provided an update to the action plan for measures being put in place aligned to the key recommendations of the Ofsted report and explained is regularly reviewed by training senior management team.



- 7.2 SW advised a Governance board had also been established consisting of members of the management team and an external specialist which meets every two months. The aim of the meeting is to provide oversight and allows challenge that there is an appropriate set of actions and complete set of actions. Feedback received from the external consultant who has a vast experience of Ofsted, has been positive.
- 7.3 AC was pleased that a good rating had been achieved for staff behaviour and attitudes giving a good foundation for building the service. RB took assurances that a comprehensive plan was in place and is being regularly reviewed.

8. Scheme of Delegation

- 8.1 NM advised the scheme of delegation had been updated to reflect line managers approving expenses up to £500 and change in authorised signatories.
- 8.2 The Board approved the revised version and recommended it to the shareholders.

9. Forward Plan

- 9.1 The board noted and approved the updated forward plan.

10. Any Other Business

Communications

- 10.3 It was agreed to draft a message for DH approval to thank staff for their flexibility and adapting to the new ways of working.

Action: NM/KL