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Nottingham City Council Companies Governance Executive Committee

Minutes of the meeting held at Ground Floor Committee Room - Loxley House, Station Street, Nottingham, NG2 3NG on 23 July 2024 from 3:00pm – 4:53pm

Membership

Present

Councillor Linda Woodings (Chair)
Councillor Jay Hayes
Councillor Neghat Khan
Councillor Pavlos Kotsonis

Absent

Councillor Ethan Radford

Colleagues, partners and others in attendance:

Kevin Barr	- Finance Manager for Companies
Mike Carey	- Governance Officer
Nicki Jenkins	- Shareholder Representative for Futures
Tim Richmond	- Chair of the Board, Futures
Jennie Willock	- Chief Executive, Futures

Call-in

Unless stated otherwise, all decisions are subject to call-in. The last date for call-in is 2 August 2024. Decisions cannot be implemented until the working day after this date.

12 Update on the Chair and appointment of Vice Chair

The Committee noted that appointment of Councillor Ethan Radford as Chair of the Committee for the remainder of the municipal year 2024/25.

Resolved to appoint Councillor Linda Woodings as Vice Chair of the Companies Governance Executive Committee for the municipal year 2024/25.

In the absence of Councillor Ethan Radford, Councillor Linda Woodings took the Chair for this meeting.

13 Apologies for absence

Councillor Ethan Radford – personal.

14 Declarations of interests

None.

15 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 21 May 2024 were confirmed as an accurate record and signed by the Chair.

16 Work Programme

It was agreed to move the meeting of the Committee scheduled for January to February, to allow companies to bring business plans to that meeting. The new proposed date is the 11 February 2025 at 3pm.

The Committee noted the Work Programme.

17 Futures Business Plan - Public Presentation

This item does not contain any decisions eligible for call-in.

Jennie Willock, Chief Executive for Futures, presented the Futures Business Plan, highlighting the following points:

- a) Futures is a not-for-profit social enterprise, jointly owned by Nottingham City Council and Nottinghamshire County Council, with a 30-year history of delivering careers advice. Previously known as Connexions, Futures is about empowering people, businesses, and communities to achieve more, with careers information and guidance as its core purpose;
- b) the business plan is centred around four strategic goals:
 - i. delivery and impact, providing a high quality service;
 - ii. our people and culture, providing a positive working environment;
 - iii. delivering excellence, maintaining a culture of continuous improvement;
 - iv. financial sustainability, while delivering value for money for commissioners of services.
- c) Three key themes run through the business plan:
 - i. simplicity, focusing on the core purpose of the organisation rather than trying to follow the funding too far from Futures' area of expertise;
 - ii. high performance culture;
 - iii. customer centricity.
- d) Futures has a clear corporate intent, blending national programmes with more bespoke local provision, to provide a holistic customer journey for all their service users. The people Futures works with are often those furthest from education or employment, so no one single intervention is sufficient to complete their journey. Futures tries to use all services and funding streams to maximise an individual's progress. This can be separated into three distinct areas:
 - i. careers, the core function of providing careers information, advice and guidance;
 - ii. targeted support, reaching out to vulnerable groups who face the most significant barriers to education, employment and training;
 - iii. skills, to help individuals who may be disengaged from the traditional academic pathway gain skills that are valued by employers and that will help them reach their goals.

In the discussion which followed, and in response to the questions of the Committee, the following points were made:

- e) you do not have to be in receipt of benefits or have a DWP referral to access support. Last year around 15,000 people accessed support through Futures, through a variety of different projects and funding streams. The National Careers Service, for instance, is a free universal service open to anybody aged 19 to 70, while some schemes have eligibility requirements, such as unemployment or earnings below a certain threshold;
- f) it is positive to see that Futures is going back to its core function, and that it works with hard-to-reach members of the community rather than focusing on 'easy wins'. Futures plays a key role in supporting Nottingham City Council's and Nottinghamshire County Council's economic plans, drawing in funding that Councils may not be able to access directly and influencing how nationally commissioned programmes are delivered locally.

The Committee noted the presentation.

18 Exclusion of the public

The Committee decided to exclude the public from the meeting during consideration of the remaining agenda items in accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 on the basis that, having regard to all the circumstances, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighed the public interest in disclosing the information, as defined in Paragraphs 1 and 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act.

19 Futures Business Plan - Exempt Discussion

This item does not contain any decisions eligible for call-in.

Jennie Willock, Chief Executive for Futures, gave the exempt presentation on the Futures Business Plan.

Details of the report and subsequent discussion are set out in the exempt minute.

Resolved to note the Futures Business Plan 2024/25.

Jennie Willock and Tim Richmond left the meeting at the conclusion of this item.

20 Exempt minutes

The exempt minutes of the meeting held on 21 May 2024 were confirmed as an accurate record and signed by the Chair.

21 Futures Group Strategic Review

Nicki Jenkins, Shareholder Representative for Futures, presented the report on the Futures Group Strategic Review. Details of the report and subsequent discussion are set out in the exempt minute.

Resolved to approve the recommendations as set out in the exempt report.

Nicki Jenkins left the meeting at the conclusion of this item.

22 Review of the Companies Governance Handbook

Kevin Barr, Finance Manager for Companies, presented the report on the Review of the Companies Governance Handbook. Details of the report and subsequent discussion are set out in the exempt minute.

Resolved to approve the recommendations as set out in the exempt report.

23 Appointment of Non-Executive Director to Nottingham Highways Limited

Kevin Barr, Finance Manager for Companies, presented the report on the Appointment of Non-Executive Director to Nottingham Highways Limited. Details of the report and subsequent discussion are set out in the exempt minute.

Resolved to approve the recommendations as set out in the exempt report.

24 Companies' year end financial performance report

This item does not contain any decisions eligible for call-in.

Kevin Barr, Finance Manager for Companies, presented the Companies' year-end financial performance report. Details of the report and subsequent discussion are set out in the exempt minute.

Resolved to note the companies' year-end financial performance report.