

Meeting of the ETF Board

Date: Tuesday 16 March 2021

Time: 10am-1pm

Venue: Video conference via Microsoft Teams

Present

Sally Dicketts CBE

Jon Graham

Prof. Peter Latchford OBE (Chair)

Lynette Leith

Andrew McConnell OBE

Rachel Musson

Florence Orban

Mick Ord

Palvinder Singh

Ruth Spellman OBE

In attendance

Mike Harvey, Director of Business Strategy

Dr Gina Hobson, Governance Director and Company Secretary

Jenny Jarvis, DCEO

Kate Jones, Governance Officer

Adrien Laure, Director of Finance and Business Intelligence

David Russell, CEO

Apologies

Alison Morris, Director of Operations

Minutes

PART A: GOVERNANCE

A1. Welcome and apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Alison Morris, Director of Operations. Palvinder Singh and Lynette Leith were welcomed to their first Board meeting.

A2. Queries under Part E (Information Pack)

The Board received the information pack which included declarations of interest, minutes from the meeting on 11 November 2020, matters arising, Q3 business performance report, report from the ETF Committees, and the new or updated policies.

The Board approved the minutes from the previous meeting (subject to a typographical change). The declarations of interest were noted; for full transparency and for the Board's information, the Chair drew attention to a newly declared interest on the Register which involved his possible working with Pat Carrington at Peterborough City Council.

The Board noted the information pack and approved the minutes from the meeting of 11 November 2020. The policies (including Financial Regulations, Hospitality & Gifts and Complaints) were approved subject to a small number of changes.

PART B: GOVERNANCE

B1. Board Delegated Authorities

The Board received the draft Board Delegated Authorities and noted that this was a Board owned document which set out the functions the Board had delegated to its Committees and/or the Executive. The Board welcomed the document. It asked that the approval levels from the schedule of delegation (annex B, Financial Regulations) be added and noted that the updated version would be included in the information pack at the June Board meeting.

The Board approved the Board Delegated Authorities, subject to the requested change.

PART C: STRATEGY & RISK

C1. Strategic Priorities and ETF's 3-year strategy

The Board was presented with an overview from the DCEO on the 3-year strategic priorities, along with updates following the publication of the FE White Paper, opportunities presented, and how GLIDE's impact would be assessed.

The Board welcomed the comprehensive update. It asked the Executive to consider developing a visual representation to show the interactions between the priorities, budget, resourcing and investment, the White Paper, strategic risks and opportunities. The Board noted that Project Initiation Documents (PIDs), including milestones and timeframes, were being developed for each of the priorities, which would incorporate detail regarding the resources required for delivery.

The Board sought further information regarding: ETF's progress as a learning organisation; how customers informed and linked to the strategic priorities; and ETF and policy imperatives in the White Paper. **It noted that these would be discussed in more detail at future meetings and/or through the Board's Committees.**

The Board received the update on ETF's strategic priorities and 3-year strategy.

C2. 2021-22 Budget (including 2020-21 Q3 position and full year forecast, investment, reserves and surplus position, and staff remuneration 2021-22)

The Board received the 2021-22 budget report and supporting material. It noted that the previous discussions with the FD had informed the budget pack; the trustees were thanked for their earlier input and reflected on the constructive budget development process.

The Board noted that the budgeted income of £50m was the highest to date for the charity and that the operational surplus was proportionate and similar to previous years. Trustees spent time considering the longer term outlook. They noted that the charity was currently in a good cash position, with a strong balance sheet. The Board sought further information regarding the assumptions and detail behind the 5 year forecast and discussed the operating environment for the charity in that timeframe.

The Executive was asked to compile a Financial Strategy and further financial models showing potential scenarios with different levels of optimism and pessimism within a five year outlook.

The Board discussed the use of reserves, along with investment in the strategic priorities. **It agreed that a voluntary investment forum should be established where trustees and the Executive could sense check propositions in advance of them being formally presented to the Board.**

The budget for 2021-22 was approved by the Board.

CONFIDENTIAL ITEM

C3. Strategic priorities and 3-year strategy

Following the strategic priorities and budget discussions, the CEO reflected back the themes, questions and thoughts provoked as a result. He noted that investment across a number of areas was critical to maximise the impact ETF could have for and on the sector. Investment areas would include the strategic priorities, plus organisational relationships and resilience. In turn the Board noted that ETF's interconnectedness with the sector and DfE remained vital, and reflected on the Board's responsibility to keep testing this balance.

The Board welcomed the opportunity to reflect and noted that the Executive would consider the implications of the discussions and build them into the planning around the strategic priorities.

C4. Risk

The Board received the proposed risk appetite framework (recommended by the Audit & Risk Committee), along with the Q3 risk register and report. The Board and Executive discussed the suggested scenarios in greater depth to test the framework further.

The Board approved the risk appetite framework and noted it would be reviewed in 12 months' time.

The Board noted the Q3 risk register and report.

PART D: REVIEW & WRAP UP

D1. Board and Committee dates, plus review of the meeting

The Board received the dates for the upcoming Board and Committee meetings. **It was noted that the November Board meeting would be moved as a result of a clash with the AoC Annual Conference. The Board noted that meetings would continue to be virtual but that face-to-face meetings were being explored for later in the year.**

D2. Any other business

The Board asked the Executive to consider how it might discuss ESD and understand the work being done in this area in between meetings.