



HOOPLE BOARD

Minutes of a meeting of the BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF HOOPLE LTD held via Microsoft Teams on Tuesday 28th July 2020 at 1.00pm.

Board Members present:

CLlr 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

Invited:

David Warden (DW)	Associate Director IM&T, Wye Valley NHS Trust
-------------------	---

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 21 May 2020 were agreed as an accurate recording of the meeting.

Actions update:-

9/D In relation to the Scoot traffic light management system, it was agreed a proposal would be provided to Herefordshire Council to upgrade the infrastructure to offer greater capabilities and resilience.

Action: NM

8/4 The board agreed that the piece of work in connection with embedding Hoople's values, should progress as it was unknown when lockdown would be fully lifted.

Action: TS



The board acknowledged the remaining updates.

4. Draft Financial Statements 2019/20 including the Directors and Auditors Reports

- 4.1 AEC included the draft financial statements 2019/20 for comment prior to concluding the audit. AEC confirmed Bishop Fleming would be in attendance at the September board meeting to present the final set of accounts together with their audit findings.
- 4.2 AEC confirmed the year-end audit which took place virtually, had gone smoothly with no significant concerns raised. A reoccurring issue Bishop Fleming have raised is the number of staff posting journals is considered high, however Hoople have internal controls in place to manage the risk and it gives staff the opportunity to benefit from experience.
- 4.3 It was acknowledged that this was the first year the financial statements were clear of pension deficit payment and allows Hoople to be more commercially attractive when bidding for tenders.

5. Finance and Business Update

- 5.1 The board noted the finance and business update report including the 2018/19 outturn position, the progress to date made by the business and the key issues and risks.
- 5.2 The board noted the debt position.
- 5.3 NM highlighted the risk register had been updated to incorporate risks surrounding Covid.
- 5.4 It was noted that the new Head of IT had been appointed and joins Hoople on 12th October from Oxford University.
- 5.5 It was acknowledged that a positive response had been received for the recruitment of Chief Operating Officer. After some discussion it was agreed an element of commitment would be required to Herefordshire and an understanding of the County, its rural nature and the people we serve would be a requirement.
Action: TS
- 5.8 NM acknowledged that back up data had fallen below target and manual intervention was required as the daily back-up had failed, however no data had been lost. New backup software is expected in approx. 3 months which should offer more reliability.



6. ESFA Apprenticeship Contract

- 6.1 SW reported notification had been received from ESFA that they were withdrawing apprenticeship funding from 1st August due to Hoople falling below minimum standards during 17/18 and 18/19. Therefore Hoople will not be able to operate apprenticeships from 1st August 2020 for a period of 3 years.
- 6.2 As a result, Hoople Training and Education will be undergoing a change and a number of staff will face the risk of redundancy, however alternative roles have been sourced with other providers to retain employment.
- 6.3 SW confirmed that there is no impact on other ESFA contracts operated i.e. study programme which has increased over the years and will look at others areas of growth within the commercial. Hoople will still be subject to Ofsted reviewing and would continue with the Quality Improvement Plan (QIP).
- 6.4 It was acknowledged that other providers in the county also had their funding withdrew and Jessie Norman, local MP was aware of the issue.
- 6.5 SW advised that a tender exercise was underway to identify a new provider for the transition of learners and new apprentices. Hoople would continue to manage the apprenticeship levy whilst identifying a new provider and ensure there is a smooth transaction for learners to the new provider.

7. Standard Life Pension Investment Review

- 7.1 NM sought a report from defacto and their review of standard life default scheme was poor in terms of its return and risk basis, therefore the board agreed a review should take place.
- 7.2 DH would share an independent advisors contact details to AEC for advice.
Action: DH

8. Forward Plan

- 8.1 The Board acknowledged the forward plan.

10. Any Other Business

- 10.1 It was noted as NM's last board meeting and the board wanted to record their thanks for his great leadership and moving the company forward.

11. Communications and Announcements

- 11.1 It was agreed to communicate the appointment of the new Head of IT and COO's leaving to all staff.
Action: NM/ TS