

# MEETING OF THE ENGLAND COMMITTEE

23<sup>rd</sup> January 2024

Microsoft Teams

## MINUTES

### PRESENT:

John Mothersole	Chair
Kevin Bone	Member
Ray Coyle	Member
Maggie Jones	Member
Halima Khan	Member
Kamran Rashid	Member
Karin Woodley	Member

### IN ATTENDANCE:

Phil Chamberlain	England Director
Emma Corrigan	England Director
Jon Eastwood	Deputy Director, England
Mark Purvis	Deputy Director, England
Hannah Rignell	Deputy Director, England
Tamara Walker-Moore	Deputy Director, England
Catherine Lindsey	Senior Governance Officer (Minutes)

### FOR SPECIFIC ITEMS:

Mike Bates	Senior Head of Finance (Item 3)
Ian Cotterill	Funding Officer (Item 4)
Bethany Roberts	Funding Officer (Items 4&5)
Rachel Mitchell	Funding Officer (Item 4)
Eleanor Kaufman	Funding Officer (Item 4)
Sarah Pattinson	Funding Manager (Item 4)
John Jatto	Funding Manager (Item 5)
Rebecca Maxton	Funding Officer (Item 5)
Katie London	Funding Officer (Item 5)
Shelley Howett	Funding Manager (Item 5)
Abi Tsouvallaris	Funding Officer (Item 5)
Pete Dobson	Funding Manager (Item 5)
Damian Robinson	Funding Officer (Item 5)
Steve Lowden	Funding Officer (Item 5)
Christine Cooper	Funding Manager (Item 5)
Juliette Kelvin	Senior Grantmaking Manager (Items 4&5) (Observing)
Rachel Stephens	Head of Funding, Multi-Regional Team (Item 5) (Observing)
Jennie Thompson	Head of Funding, Strategic Programmes (Item 5) (Observing)

## 1. COMMITTEE INFORMAL CATCH UP

1.1. The Committee held a closed session for members only.

*ESLT and the Senior Governance Officer joined the meeting.*

## 2. WELCOME

2.1. The Chair opened the meeting and welcomed all.

2.2. No apologies were received.

2.3. Karin Woodley had flagged historical connections with two of the organisations whose proposals were to be considered by the Committee (School of Social Entrepreneurs and Shelter), however the Chair agreed that the connections were not significant or recent, and therefore did not need to be formally declared and

would not disqualify Karin from participating in decision-making.

- 2.4. The minutes for the meeting of 7<sup>th</sup> November 2023 were **APPROVED** as an accurate record.
- 2.5. The action log was taken as read and it was **AGREED** that action 228 could be cancelled, and actions 231, 234, 237, 238, 240 and 241 could be closed.
- 2.6. The Chair noted that as work on action 239 was ongoing, with further material to be considered by the Committee at their next strategic meeting, the action should remain open on the log.

**ACTION:** Governance

- 2.7. There were no matters arising.

### 3. **ENGLAND UPDATE**

*Mike Bates joined the meeting.*

- 3.1. Phil Chamberlain introduced the report, highlighting that a workshop with DCMS would be taking place the following week with dedicated time to discuss the England Portfolio Review, amongst other topics relating to their strategic relationship with the Fund.

#### **Third Party Activity**

***Sections 3.2 - 3.5 are Commercially Sensitive - S43(2)***

#### **Latest Financial Position**

- 3.2. Mike Bates summarised the portfolio's financial position, highlighting 2023/24 performance on Grant Awards, Operating Costs, Income and headline figures from the latest forecast. In response to a query from the Chair, ESLT clarified that the Manx Lottery Trust transfer from the UK Portfolio had not resulted in a negative variance for the England portfolio.
- 3.3. Noting that £39.2m of unallocated budget had been moved to future years due to the resource required to deliver additional third party programmes in the current financial year, Committee members discussed concerns regarding the wider opportunity costs of undertaking additional third party work. Given that colleagues across all regions were reporting the challenges and closures being faced by organisations, Committee members encouraged ESLT to strongly consider how the Directorate could best direct its capacity and resource going into the next financial year.
- 3.4. Members also considered the Fund's position in terms of replacing statutory funding. Reflecting on the Fund's previous rapid responses to Covid-19 and the CoL, it seemed that disinvestment in the sector would constitute a third crisis requiring a similar response.
- 3.5. The Chair expressed that the Committee would like to see proposals brought forward regarding how the unallocated budget might be spent against rapidly emerging issues in the sector, with members contributing their own market intelligence to assist in providing a steer, that would be relevant to the ambitions

of our new strategy and enable early activity within the England Portfolio. Committee members did not want this to be too tied up in wider strategic discussions, noting that the current review process shouldn't impede the Fund reacting tactically to crises where needed. Phil Chamberlain advised that potential early spend proposals would be discussed at the Committee's strategic meeting in February, and along with Hannah Rignell he assured the Committee that these issues were frequently discussed amongst ESLT and across the Directorate.

### **Portfolio Review**

- 3.6. Hannah Rignell advised that the new team were progressing work which would form the basis of the papers to be considered in February, and thanked members for their cooperation so far with mission leads. A series of internal engagement sessions had been attended by 360 colleagues across various teams, with equity and being 'more than a funder' emerging as the areas of greatest interest to England funding teams.
  - 3.7. During the Committee's February session, it was planned that members would work with ESLT on refining priority outcomes around the community missions and equity. In response to the Committee's encouragement to progress work and start allocating funds, the team were developing 'more than a funder' funding proposals which would encompass grantholder support offers, partnership working and greater community/civil society involvement in the portfolio's decision making. Halima Khan offered to provide specific support regarding this aspect of the review if helpful.
  - 3.8. Committee members suggested that the portfolio's approach to equity should focus on intersectionality and the impact of the environmental crisis. Hannah Rignell gave assurances that the learning from current and historic funding programmes (including Climate Action Fund) had formed an important part of the insight gathering phase of the portfolio review and would be reflected in the proposals brought forward in February
  - 3.9. With the Fund's equity-based approach in mind, Committee members expressed that the EDI tables provided in the England Update paper didn't effectively support discussions on the issue, and the inclusion of targets and figures from previous years would provide helpful context to the current numbers. Members were also keen to receive information regarding the EDI data of organisations' leadership and governance structures, not just their beneficiaries.
  - 3.10. The Committee discussed how decisions to recommend grant variations (or not) were reached, and Jonathan Eastwood provided further detail regarding the Directorate's approach. The Chair requested that any parameters and guidelines be captured and circulated to the Committee.
- ACTION:** Jonathan Eastwood
- 3.11. Furthermore, it was suggested that it would be helpful to Committee if proposals set out which aspects of the application were within these parameters. Noting that they did not have sight of unsuccessful funding applications, the Committee also suggested it would be useful for high-level data to be provided regarding

applications over £500k which were not recommended for funding, along with some analysis of trends where these were observed, as this could help members to identify specific areas requiring attention or development.

- 3.12. ESLT advised that Tamara Walker-Moore would be undertaking a Governance review within the Directorate to identify how papers, assessment and analysis could be used to support the Committee in making decisions in the best and quickest way possible.

*Mike Bates left the meeting.*

#### **4. GRANT VARIATIONS & FUNDING DECISIONS** ***Section 4 is Commercially Sensitive - S43(2)***

- 4.1. Grant Variations and Funding decisions are restricted and can be found in Annex A.

#### **5. REFLECTIONS ON THE DAY**

- 5.1. The Committee noted that the majority of proposals considered at this meeting had been based in London or adjacent areas, and ESLT provided context as to why this was the case.
- 5.2. Committee and ESLT reflected positively on the conduct of the meeting, noting that it was made clear to funding officers where discussions pertained to specific proposals or broader strategic issues. ESLT looked forward to welcoming the Committee to their strategic session in February, which was due to be held in London and attended by the Fund's CEO, David Knott.
- 5.3. Acknowledging that it was Maggie Jones' final meeting after serving two full terms, the Chair thanked Maggie for her time, efforts and invaluable contributions to England Committee during her time as a member. Committee members and Fund colleagues wished her well.
- 5.4. There being no further business, the meeting concluded at 15:30.