



NATIONAL CITIZEN SERVICE TRUST

Minutes of an extraordinary meeting of the board of directors held via video conference between 15:00 and 17:30 on Thursday 23 June 2022

Present:	Mark Gifford	Brett Wigdortz (Chair)
	Ashley Summerfield	Ahmed Ibrahim
	Ndidi Okezie	Deborah Tavana
	Laura Jackson	Lamin Tarawally
	Jacquie Nnochiri	Hannah McLellan
	Tristram Mayhew	Nick Hurd
	Darren Xiberras	
In attendance:	Sarah Knight (Secretary)	Michael Devlin
	Amanda Best	Louka Travlos
Apologies:	Amanda Timberg	Sir Ian Livingstone

1. Chairs welcome and declaration of conflicts of interest

- 1.1** Mr Wigdortz opened the meeting and welcomed the new Board members, Mr Xiberras and Ms Timberg. No conflicts of interest were declared. Mr Wigdortz thanked Lord McNicol (in absentia) for his service, whose term had ended on 30th May, and Mr Ibrahim, as this was his last meeting. Mr Wigdortz welcomed Mrs Knight back from maternity leave who was taking up her post as Secretary of the Board, and thanked Mr Travlos for his work in covering her maternity leave.
- 1.2** Mr Wigdortz gave an overview of upcoming Board dates and encouraged all members to go on a programme visit. He also provided an overview of the Away Day in September followed by the next Board meeting on 1st December. The 2023 dates would be diarised in the next week or so.
- 1.3** **ACTION: to circulate Youth Voice Forum dates**
- 1.4** **ACTION: to diarise Board dates for 2023**
- 1.5** **ACTION: to follow up with Board on Summer 2022 visits**

2. Board and Committee approvals

- 2.1** Mr Xiberras and Ms Timberg were approved as members of the ARC and Mr Xiberras was approved as ARC Chair. Ms Timberg was approved as a member of the Impact Committee. Mr Tarawally was agreed as a youth representative on the Board and as a member of the Impact and Safeguarding Committees.
- 2.2** The Trust was looking for two external members to join the ARC committee with Audit and Finance/Commercial experience respectively. Ms Hanna, Trust's CVO to provide insight on specific skills needed and to support the Board on this.
- 2.3** A short update on successions and re-appointments was given. The Trust, in



concert with the Public Appointments team, would be seeking a new Chair (Mr Wigdortz term would expire in 2023) and successor for Lord McNicol.

- 2.4 Mr Travlos gave a short overview of the ethos and objectives of the upcoming Away Day.
- 2.5 **ACTION: Mr Xiberras with Ms Hanna (Trust's CVO) to discuss and make recommendations to the Chair of Board and CEO and seek to secure two individuals to join ARC.**

3 Regular Governance

- 3.1 Mr Travlos reviewed the action log. The minutes from 23rd March 2022 were approved with no comments. Minutes from the most recent Safeguarding and People and Remuneration Committees had been enclosed for noting.
- 3.2 Mr Mayhew updated that a Safeguarding Committee meeting had taken place in May. The agenda had focused mainly on the Trust's Trans policy in light of media attention on the topic. Policy was found to be fit for purpose but given the sensitivities further training had been undertaken for outsourced staff. Preparation was underway for Summer 2022 programmes and the Committee felt that there were good policies in place to support this.
- 3.3 Mr Hurd left the meeting.
- 3.4 No ARC meetings had taken place since the last Board.
- 3.5 Ms Nnochiri had not yet joined at this point, but when she later joined the meeting she updated on some of the topics covered by the Impact Committee, including skills gained by young people who took part in NCS and how these could be better embedded in the programme, as well as employment opportunities NCS graduates went on to take, and further impact that NCS may have in being a pathway to jobs. It would be important to continue to show how NCS had long-term and sustainable impact and this could be a topic for the September Away Day.
- 3.6 Mr Summerfield updated the Board that the Committee were supporting the work that Mr Gifford and colleagues had done in organisational design, helping to refine where needed. He also mentioned that a successor to chair the People Committee would be needed before Mr Summerfield's term expired in 2023. The Committee was also proactively working with the Public Appointments committee to secure strong successors for Mr Wigdortz and Mr McNicol. He requested the Board's support to promote and encourage prospective candidates to enable a strong field of candidates

4 Youth Voice Forum (YVF) Priorities

- 4.1 Mr Tarawally introduced the topic of youth voice and previous feedback from the Board that the YVF should be clearer about its impact and outputs. The YVF had therefore undertaken to report back to the Board on potential KPIs in order to seek further guidance and support. A reminder was provided about the vision of the YVF, against which KPIs had been considered and drafted around embedding youth voice, decision making and meaningful youth participation. The YVF Co-Chairs requested Board input and support on the proposals and responded to a number of questions and comments on the presentation,

including the importance of balancing agility with thoroughness in the drafting of KPIs.

- 4.2** It was emphasised that NCS should continue to demonstrate best in class youth leadership as evidenced by recent awards that had been won for youth involvement. It was acknowledged that cultural evolution continued to be required to ensure youth voice was meaningfully embedded. Mr Gifford thanked the YVF for their presentation and congratulated them for rising to the challenge. He agreed that more needed to be done to ensure that youth voice was culturally embedded. He thanked the Co-Chairs for their exceptional leadership of youth voice both internally and externally.
- 4.3** Mr Hurd rejoined the meeting
- 4.4** Mr Mayhew noted that expectations needed to be managed and that decision making should remain with the Board who had supremacy in decision making. It was agreed that this might be resolved through younger representation on the Board itself, more frequent engagement between the Board and YVF such as information sharing, and a more transparent feedback loop in cases where young people's suggestions had not been taken forward.
- 4.5** Ms Okezie joined the meeting.
- 4.6** Mr Devlin was pleased that Mr Ibrahim was being embedded in the transformation team in the coming weeks in order to ensure that youth voice continued to be represented as the Trust developed its new strategy and continued to rapidly evolve..

5. Summer '22 Performance update

- 5.1** Ms Nnochiri joined the meeting.
- 5.2** Ms Best noted that over 48,000 places were currently forecast, in advance of contracted places, though there was some variation between regions. Attrition was lower than expected which was pleasing, but this was driving numbers onto waiting lists. Waiting lists were being actively managed across the partner network to avoid disappointment and unwanted surprises. Costs were being managed to create more places in order to manage demand. An update on other service lines - Skillbooster, Changemakers and Connect - was provided, with strong progress being made towards targets in these areas. It was suggested by the Board that the Trust should do more to share the excellent progress that was being made, including with the Government.
- 5.3** Questions were asked about social mix targets, including clarifications on SEND percentages, and whether different types of need were being captured.
- 5.4** The Board was concerned that waiting lists existed for the residential (and would have been higher if the Trust had continued in its efforts to attract young people). The CSR settlement meant that places needed to be reduced again next year by about 50%. This would result in demand further not being met, and also made delivery less feasible for some smaller delivery partners. It was questioned as to whether there was any prospect of further funds being received in order to meet this additional demand. The Executive committed to



continue to explore options to harness resources which could maximise residential numbers at least at current levels if possible (c50,000) as this was shown to have substantial impact and was important to young people, especially as marginal costs per participant had now dropped to c £800 per place.

- 5.5 Ms Jackson was delighted with the very positive results that were being achieved but reminded the Board that parameters had been set by the Spending Review settlement and public finances were increasingly stretched. That said, options should be explored and discussed with the Department. Mr Hurd reminded the Board that influence could also be achieved by proactively demonstrating the excellent impact of the Trust's residential programme, though patience may be required.
- 5.6 **Action: Amanda Best to revert to the Board on any further SEND breakdown.**

6. CEO Update

- 6.1 Mr Gifford discussed three areas:

Commissioning for 2023: despite several hurdles, challenging timelines and government approvals, these had been met on schedule with support from DCMS and the sponsor team. Yesterday, the ITT for 2023 residential was launched which will ensure contracts are in place to recruit young people for the 2023 programme. Commercial cases had been strong and won hearts and minds including within the Government. The ITT for residential had been launched. On Digital we are slightly behind on our timelines but will hit them as the Procurement processes were more agile via the 'Dynamic Purchasing System', and the Trust was working with external organisations to accelerate some work. Recruitment was underway to secure leadership on digital innovation.

Consultation: The process had started, with the first formal consultation meeting happening yesterday. Employees remained engaged in order to secure the success of 2022. It was humbling to see the commitment and passion of colleagues despite the ongoing consultation process.

Risk: While risks were being robustly managed, they were nevertheless significant: namely, balancing summer 2022 delivery with commissioning for 2023, further cuts in funding for 2023, and staff consultation ongoing. The Trust had been praised by NAO and DCMS for its improved ability to manage change and risk, but the ARC would need to arbitrate in the coming months, especially focusing on any activity that needed to be slowed down to help the Trust manage the extent and pace of change.

- 6.2 It was encouraging that c.40 MPs were scheduled to come on programme this year, pleasing that the Trust was ahead of schedule against target, and positive that recent Jubilee events had been highly successful in raising the Trust's profile.
- 6.3 There was a question and extensive discussion surrounding NCS' proposition towards its alumni, and the importance of better developing and articulating this, given the strategy of moving from a 'moment' to a 'movement'. Mr Gifford noted that the Trust currently engaged its alumni, including getting them



involved in Trust events such as the Jubilee pageantry events. The Trust’s new strategy will continue to build on this in order to harness the potential of NCS graduates. It was agreed that alumni need to act as ambassadors and influencers to shape the movement, and that this needed to happen organically. The ideal would be for NCS to create the space and opportunity for young people to be the engine powering this for other young people in a natural way. Research should be commissioned as to best achieve in this area. This would help to dispel stigmas around NCS being a short-term intervention that does not have longevity into the future, but creates long term and sustainable impact.

6.4 ACTION: September Away Day to include a focus on alumni engagement and moving from a ‘moment’ to a ‘movement’.

7. AOB

7.1 Mr Gifford provided an update on the Patrons network. The Board agreed that the YVF should have involvement in this process.

7.2 ACTION: To include an update on Patrons at the next Board meeting.

8. NED Only Session

These minutes were approved as a correct and complete record of the proceedings by the Board at its meeting on 22 September 2022, and signed by the chairman as authentication.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Brett Wigdortz". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

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Chair