

MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF JERSEY BUSINESS LIMITED ("JBL" / "the Company")

(56th Meeting)

24th November 2021 at 9am at Jersey Business, The Parade, St Helier

Present: Mrs J Carnegie (JC) (Chair)
Mr J Day (JD)
Mrs K Le Feuvre (KLF)
Mrs A McClure (AM)
Mr G Smith (GS)
(the "Board" or the "Directors")

In Attendance: Aimee Maskell, AM to PM Secretarial Services (Minutes) (AMa)

1. **Welcome and Apologies** – No apologies were noted.
2. **Declarations of Interest** – No declarations or conflicts of interest were noted.
3. **Minutes of previous meeting - IT WAS RESOLVED** to approve the minutes dated 22nd September 2021, a copy of which was circulated with the agenda, and JC signed the same.
4. **Matters Arising** – The following updates were provided on the outstanding actions from the previous meeting (which were not otherwise included on the agenda):

(A) **Gap Analysis between JBL's Annual Report and Controller and Auditor General's (CAG) best practice recommendation** – **IT WAS NOTED** that the Controller and Auditor General (CAG) had recently released comprehensive guidelines and best practices for preparing annual reports. An exercise will therefore be undertaken by JBL during Q1 to review through these against JBL's annual report. Thereafter, JD will undertake an independent review. JD added that he believes JBL is already meeting most of the CAG's guidelines, albeit that JBL's annual report may not include some of the more detailed best practices. However, GS noted that whilst JBL could include more detail in its annual report to meet the guidelines, he stressed the importance of ensuring the report is proportionate, noting that some of the suggested practices may not be appropriate to JBL. **Action: GS/JD**

AM advised that work was also ongoing on to develop the outline of JBL's 2021 Annual Review. She proposed building on last year's three-page document in this regard and reporting on the financial statements separately and JD proposed using the Annual Review as PR or marketing literature in the same way other organisations do

(B) **Productivity Support Scheme** – GS reported that approximately ten applications were received under the productivity support scheme pilot (nine of which were put forward via JBL) and four approvals were made. **IT WAS RESOLVED** that GS/AM would request a summary from the GOJ on what was / was not approved and their reasons for this and revert to the Board with further details when received. **Action: GS/AM**

GS noted that several of the issues JBL raised about the pilot scheme have materialised. He therefore proposed discussing these with Richard Corrigan (RC) and Lyndon Farnham (LF) when the pilot is formally reviewed at the end of Q1 2022. **Action: GS/AM**

(C) **2022 Board Meeting Dates** – AM proposed scheduling the 2022 Board meetings on the last Wednesday of each month (after the quarter end) on the following dates:

- 26th January 2022
- 27th April 2022
- 27th July 2022; and

- 26th October 2022

and **IT WAS RESOLVED** that she would circulate meeting invites for the same. **Action: AM**

5. **2021 Year to date Financial Review** – The Board reviewed the year-to-date financial report, a copy of which had been circulated with the agenda. AM confirmed that whilst JBL was on track against budget, as various projects have not taken place this year (due to timing issues), the client support budget was unlikely to be spent prior to year-end. However, she reassured the Board that these projects would be undertaken in Q1 2022 and that all anticipated income had been received from the GOJ for JBL’s core and Covid grants.

IT WAS NOTED that JBL is currently working to two different timescales when accounting/reporting on the core budget and covid budget because the covid funding covers client work until March 2022. AM accepted that whilst this was slightly difficult, it is expected to work itself out by end of next year.

6. **2022 JBL Business Plan** – The Board reviewed the 2022 Business Plan, a copy of which had been circulated with the agenda, and AM summarised the same. She noted that JBL has never previously published its business plan. It is therefore proposed to include a summary together with details of JBL’s key activities

AM advised that the Business Plan focusses on client facing support and explains how JBL contributes to the GOJ’s purposes by delivering programmes against the three strategic priorities it has created. She suggested that the delivery framework slide in the Business Plan was the most important, noting that this focusses on the five outcomes (People, Innovation and Productivity, Environmental Sustainability, Economic Resilience and Information Sharing and Foresighting) and splits the activities connected to each into direct business support and strategic industry projects.

AM summarised the support programmes and industry projects JBL is proposing to deliver next year and noted that the latter were being worked on by Simon Soar (SS), Nick Steele (NS) and Lorie Rault (LR). She added that there will be flexibility to adjust the programmes depending on the level of interest received.

IT WAS NOTED that the Business Plan also outlines JBL’s measures that matter (MTMs). AM acknowledged that having too detailed analysis can become meaningless. She therefore stressed that the MTMs were very high level. She added that figures for the MTMs have yet to be populated as it is proposed to use this year to create a base line with a view to committing to that going forward.

GS confirmed that the Business Plan will be presented to GOJ officers prior to publication. However, he does not expect them to be surprised by any of its content.

KLF congratulated AM and GS on the Business Plan. She noted that JBL was moving from being a reactive organisation in 2020/2021 to being a proactive organisation in 2022 and suggested that this may be quite difficult to achieve this when the environment was still uncertain. However, AM explained that JBL’s new system will enable it to measure the actual service it delivers far better. Therefore, once JBL starts collecting data, it will be able to “tell the story” of the complexity of what JBL does, noting that it is proposed to do this with more emphasis on case studies (e.g. what difference JBL made to the client and what difference it made to the business.)

KLF noted that the GOJ like to see measurable impacts, particularly around productivity, although she accepted that this was sometimes difficult to achieve given that outcomes can be interpreted differently. GS suggested that whilst it was possible to measure the impact of specific programmes, JBL needs to give a cumulative picture and, currently, the most useful way of doing this was the independent survey.

AM advised that JBL will also develop a feedback framework to enable feedback on programmes to be gathered as they happen, rather than waiting for the annual feedback survey, which will enable JBL to follow up on any feedback received in a timely manner.

JC queried how other arms' length organisations (ALOs) measure the impact of services they deliver, and GS advised that we were in some ways being used as the pilot ALO in order to develop a sensible framework. Inevitably this will involve developing more SMART KPI's where achievable. This was echoed by KLF who commented that the GOJ were likely to want the ALOs to be more measurable going forward. She therefore welcomed the fact that JBL were "ahead of the curve".

GS advised that critically the delivery framework set out in the business plan will help him run JBL and analyse the data being collected. Furthermore, it will help the staff understand the importance of why data is being collected and enable JBL to "tell its story".

JC expressed disappointment that JBL is not treated at the same level as the other ALOs from a funding perspective and GS accepted that JBL has always been treated differently because the other ALOs are more sector focussed promotional/ developmental agencies both on and off island. However, implementing the framework set out in the Business Plan, will enable JBL to "tell its story" better.

A discussion took place as to whether JBL should hold an event to highlight its work and mixed views were expressed in this regard. GS recommended that JBL "tell its story" via data based evidence and case studies rather than holding "glitzy" events. However, KLF highlighted that despite how well JBL dealt with the effects of Covid it continues to be treated differently to the other ALOs. She stressed that JBL managed to help so many businesses cope with covid and expressed frustration that JBL is not recognised in terms of funding when it clearly provides benefit. However, GS accepted that this was unlikely to change given that the other ALOs focus on specific sectors whereas JBL works across all sectors. However, KLF noted that Jersey was an Island full of entrepreneurs and that JBL will be the best placed ALO to help the next sector (whatever that may be) start up in Jersey.

JC proposed that consideration be given to working with Visit Jersey (VJ) and others on events around the Island Identity to promote the work of JBL, noting that events bring in money as well as publicity. This was supported by KLF who suggested holding an event which promotes JBL in a positive light rather than focussing on covid. GS agreed that consideration could be given to holding an event if it has relevance or benefit (e.g. hospitality, medicinal cannabis, retail.). However, JC stressed the importance of JBL holding an event which is not sector based and this was echoed by KLF who proposed hosting something similar to the Chamber of Commerce lunches and inviting a mix of people to attend and a mix of people to present from whom the audience could learn.

AM advised that she was not in favour of holding a JBL event showing casing businesses, given that there were not enough businesses who would want to attend to hear about other businesses. She therefore recommended proceeding with the case study approach to tell JBL's story. That said, she noted that consideration is currently being given to collaborating with Manchester University on initiatives around the retail sector and suggested that a similar approach could be adopted with experts in other sectors. However, JC suggested that there was an opportunity to do both, noting that when JBL starts talking about one sector, the other sectors stop listening.

JD recommended developing five or six case studies and presenting these at an event as suggested by JC/KLF. However, JC proposed that the event should also be linked to a theme that the GOJ is working on (e.g. the Island Identity). GS recognised the importance of an event having a relevant theme rather than just having businesses with whom JBL has worked presenting on what they have achieved, noting that this makes sourcing sponsorship and

obtaining GOJ support easier.

In answer to a question from AM, JC advised that she would anticipate the audience of a JBL event being “normal business-people”. However, AM noted that Chamber and Institute of Directors events have different audiences. GS added that the purpose of a JBL event would be a PR/profile raising exercise: not to attract businesses to use JBL’s services. GS also suggested developing a programme around next year’s election whereby JBL presents to candidates leading up to the election, so they consider JBL as part of their manifesto.

AM proposed holding an event focussed on the launch of JBL’s 2021 Annual Review. However, JC suggested that this would be a dull topic for a profile raising / promotional event. She also stressed the importance of not approaching the event from an operational point of view. However, AM highlighted that none of JBL’s previous events have resulted in JBL securing any additional funding and that the only additional funding JBL has ever received was for Covid. **IT WAS THEREFORE RESOLVED** that GS/AM would consider appropriate profile raising/promotional event topics and formats further outside of the meeting. **Action: GS/AM**

7. **Board Fee Review** – The Board reviewed the independent review of NED fees undertaken by Polymatrix, a copy of which was circulated with the agenda. **IT WAS RESOLVED** that this would be further considered at the next Board meeting with the benefit of updated Polymatrix and comparative data.

8. **Productivity Support** – **IT WAS NOTED** that this was discussed in item 4(B) above.

9. **Workforce Housing Project** – GS advised that he had been invited to a meeting with Deborah Reeves (DR), the Senior Officer to Russell Labey (RL). He reminded the Board that RL is working on developing a housing strategy for the Island and accepts that this should include a strategy for workforce accommodation. GS added that Paul Martins was provided with a copy of JBL’s Workforce Strategy paper (a copy of which was discussed at the previous meeting) and proposed that a working group should be set up. He noted that DR was working on establishing this and suggested that she would be inviting him to join the same.

JD reported that the GOJ have already established a Strategic Housing Partnership Board which met for the first time on 21st September 2021 and suggested that this could be the same working group that DR was inviting GS to join.

GS advised that he had also met with Mark Boleat (MB) to discuss the issue of workforce accommodation. He noted that he sought MB’s feedback on JBL’s Workforce Strategy paper, and he provided some helpful amendments to the same.

GS expressed disappointment that the issue of workforce accommodation has not gathered momentum. However, he noted that, separately, SS and NS are considering sites that could be used. He reported that he had also met with the Jersey Luxury Hotel Group who confirmed their support for the strategy, albeit they were very critical of the GOJ for not re-investing into the Jersey economy.

KLF stressed the importance of the GOJ being aware of the unintended consequences of their actions. By way of example, she noted that many property owners were selling their properties due to the increased “red tape” involved in renting properties (e.g. the proposal to legislate landlords) and expressed concern that this could result in an increased demand in tenants looking for accommodation.

GS sought the Board’s confirmation that he has their broad support for him stating that there is a housing crisis in Jersey when attending meetings with the GOJ. This was confirmed by the Board. However, it was agreed that the housing crisis issue should be managed by

another organisation as JBL does not have the capacity to own it, albeit it should still give its views and suggestions. On this basis, **IT WAS RESOLVED** that JD would introduce GS to Richard McCarthy from Andium when he was in the Island next week. **Action: JD/GS**

10. **JBL Property Paper** – As briefly referred to above, GS advised that the GOJ refused JBL's request to fund the fit out new premises (at a cost of £700k) and LF has requested that JBL look to source alternative premises which will suit the organisation and staff requirements for the next two to three years instead. GS has therefore met with D2 to discuss available premises which may be suitable for JBL over this period.

In answer to a question from KLF, GS advised that whilst LF did not indicate what budget would be made available for the alternative premises, he anticipates it being approximately £250k and KLF expressed concern that this was not cost effective for only two years. This was echoed by GS, and he therefore proposed agreeing a five-year lease with a three-year break clause.

JC noted that LF recommended JBL consider the stock of available GOJ buildings and GS confirmed he was already in the process of finding out what could be available. **IT WAS THEREFORE RESOLVED** that GS would follow up. **Action: GS**

AM expressed concern that the GOJ's refusal to fund the fit out was another indication of how JBL was under valued compared to the other ALOs and she stressed the importance of ensuring JBL moves to premises which are suitable for the next five years, noting that moving to premises which are not fit for purpose may result in the staff feeling demoralised. This was echoed by GS who reassured the Board that if premises cannot be found which are better than the current location, JBL will not move.

KLF stressed the importance of JBL staff feeling valued and GS reported that LF recognised that JBL has outgrown its current premises.

JD recommended liaising with providers of serviced offices in the Island and GS advised that whilst he has already talked to one of them, their building will not be ready for two years. However, he suggested that this could be suitable for the business hub which is being considered (and which LF is supportive of).

JC noted that Highlands were interested in taking on office space in town and she therefore agreed to introduce GS to Jo Terry Marchant about the possibility of a shared space. JD suggested that Piquet House could be an option for this, and **IT WAS RESOLVED** that GS would contact Jersey Property Holdings for more information in this regard. **Action: JC/GS**

IT WAS NOTED that LF suggested that JBL consider premises at the new Finance Centre. However, GS noted that the rental for this was likely to be £30+ per square foot whereas JBL was only currently paying £21.

11. **Risk Register** – The Board reviewed the Risk Register, a copy of which had been circulated with the agenda and GS noted that no changes had been made since the last meeting (other than in relation to the Facilities Management risk which was discussed above). In addition, whilst GS confirmed that the current lease had been extended until June 2022.

12. **Any Other Business**

(a) **GOJ Representative** – GS advised that he had received no further update regarding a GOJ representative joining the Board.

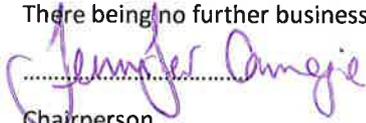
(b) **Economic Forum Recommendations** – GS reminded the Board that he had been asked to chair the one of the themed "sprint" groups (Growth) recommended in the Economic Forum Report. He reported that the first meeting of the group now taken place

and he agreed to share a copy of the minutes with the Board. **Action: GS**

The Board noted that the group considered various options that are not currently being undertaken by any of the ALOs and GS agreed to engage with several entrepreneurs to “road test” the group’s ideas. However, he proposed working with them on a one-to-one basis initially to ensure their time is managed appropriately in the event the group’s recommendations are not progressed by the GOJ. He added that there are not yet any terms of reference for the group. However, he agreed to share the initial thoughts of the group with the Board and feedback the Board’s views to the group.

13. **Date of Next Meeting - IT WAS NOTED** that the next meeting was scheduled for Wednesday 26th January 2022 at 9am.

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was closed at 10.50am.


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Chairperson


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Date Signed