

LONDON

& PARTNERS

MINUTES OF LONDON & PARTNERS BOARD MEETING
Thursday 21 February 2019 | 09:00 – 12:15
London & Partners, 2 More London Riverside, London SE1 2RR

Present:

Directors:

Rajesh Agrawal, Chairman (RA)
Laura Citron (LC)
Andrew Cooke (AC)
Catherine McGuinness (CM)
Sandie Dawe (SD)
Vernon Everitt (VE)
Massy Larizadeh (ML)
Mark Taylor (MT)
Jo Wright (JW)
Sacha Romanovitch (SR)

Observers:

Ben Johnson (BJ), GLA
Leah Kreitzman (LK), GLA
Justine Simons (JS), GLA

Present

Hanna Ostling (HO), GLA
Nabeel Khan (NK), GLA
Sneha Patel (SP), GLA

Apologies:

Mike Brown (MB)
Robert Lechler (RL)
Tamara Rajah (TR)

Management Committee:

Jayne Barr (JB)
Allen Simpson (AS)
Jules Chappell (JC)

Minutes

Gill Manners (GM)

Additional attendees:

Simon McCaugherty (SM) L&P
Zanine Adams (ZA) L&P
Alistair Sergeant (AS) L&P

1. Welcome and Apologies

- 1.1 Apologies were received from Robert Lechler, Tamara Rajah and Mike Brown (Vernon Everitt will be standing in for Mike Brown).
- 1.2 Sneha Patel, senior advisor on communications at City Hall, was welcomed to the meeting. It was noted that Laura Citron has been paired as Sneha's champion as part of City Hall's "Our Time" project and she has been shadowing Laura Citron at a number of London & Partners' management meetings.

2. Declaration of Interests

- 2.1 No declarations of interest in relation to items on the agenda were noted.
- 2.2 Board members were asked to complete a new Declaration of Interest form for 2019 if they hadn't already done so.

3. Minutes of last Meeting

3.1 The minutes of the Board Meeting held on Thursday, 22nd November 2018 were approved.

4. Matters Arising

Rent Review

4.1 Andrew Cooke provided an update on the progress with the rent review due in December 2019.

4.2 The rent reviews in 2 More London have been slow due to several rent reviews ongoing in the building. Negotiations are currently ongoing with the 8th floor which the landlords wish to settle first. London & Partners are using the same agents as the 8th floor.

4.3 The Board was advised that the negotiations are now progressing at a better pace. Andrew Cooke explained the agent believes that London & Partners will settle with a £1 cheaper square foot charge than the 8th floor with a net rental of £51 per square foot. The aim is to conclude negotiations by the end of March. Andrew Cooke advised lease expiry is in December 2020 and that negotiations with the landlord and consideration on whether to remain at 2 More London or consider other options would need to commence before the end of the calendar year.

CRM

4.4 Andrew Cooke updated the Board on the progress on the implementation of the new CRM system which is progressing on time and budget.

Collaboration with MedCity

4.5 The Board was updated on the collaboration with MedCity which was discussed at the last Board meeting. MedCity and London & Partners have discussed potential future options for collaboration but that no decisions should be made until there was further clarity about MedCity's future funding. It was agreed that it remained important for the two organisations to be strategically aligned and to review the position later in the year when funding was clearer.

Domestic tourism promotion

4.6 Laura Citron updated the Board on discussions with the tourism industry about domestic tourism. London & Partners convened a meeting with key tourism stakeholders in December including a number of the business improvement districts, TfL and GLA to discuss how best to support the industry address the decline in domestic tourism which has occurred since the terror attacks in 2017. It was agreed to form a consortium led by the industry with London & Partners managing the consortium and delivering the marketing activity on their behalf. GLA have committed to provide core funding for the initiative and TfL to become one of the Strategic Partners. Laura Citron advised that a minimum commitment of £1.4m in total was required for the first year and that she was confident that the remainder of the funding would be confirmed in the following few weeks. Laura Citron stated that it was hoped the promotion would get signed off and launched from 1st April 2019.

4.7 The Board observed that this had been well received by the tourism industry and demonstrated London & Partners role as a convener.

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

5. Business Plan 2019/20

5.1 The Chairman informed the Board that following the board meeting in November a draft business plan had been submitted to the London Assembly so that it could be considered as part of their scrutiny of the Mayor's overall budget. There had been no response from the Assembly although Laura Citron and Andrew Cooke were appearing before the Budget and Performance Committee on 5th March. Since then further work had been taken to refine the activities in the plan, review the income and expenditure budget and clarify KPIs and targets.

5.2 The Chairman invited Laura Citron to highlight the key changes to the plan.

5.3 Laura Citron presented the London & Partners Business Plan 2019/20 to the Board and summarised the key amendments to the Plan:

- Amendments to KPIs and targets
- Greater clarity on Brexit risks which informs London & Partner's Brexit strategy
- Refinement of core market priorities
- More detail about London & Partner's sector priorities and propositions. (which would be scaled back for the version of the plan for publication as they contain valuable intelligence)
- Amendments to the budget

5.4 A discussion was held on the amendments to KPIs.

5.5 Changing the leisure tourism evaluation methodology was discussed. The Board was informed that there was a new methodology for calculating GVA for leisure tourism. However, the new methodology does not cover all of London & Partners' channels which is problematic when the strategy is to increase focus on influencing customers earlier in their decision-making process rather than conversion where the industry has more influence. The Executive team's recommendation was that engagement and perception targets were a more appropriate measure rather than GVA for leisure tourism. The Board supported this recommendation.

5.6 Action: The Board asked for clarification on how engagements are sourced and the percentage that is purchased rather than generated through organic content. Jayne Barr agreed to provide the information.

5.7 Action: It was agreed that a deep dive on marketing will be presented at the next Board meeting, including a discussion on promotion to attract international students.

Retention

5.8 Jules Chappell lead the discussion on changing the retention target to a growth target. The Board was informed that London & Partners has changed the nature of its activity with existing investors in London during the two and a half years since the EU referendum to support the retention of existing jobs and growth opportunities. Companies have understandably been reticent to provide information where jobs have been under threat. However, the team has had much more success in supporting companies to grow in the capital.

5.9 The board supported the recommendation to change the target to reflect this.

5.10 A discussion took place on the new methodology developed to measure GVA resulting from London & Partners' trade and growth programmes (Mayor's International Business Programme and Business Growth Programme).

5.11 London & Partners recommend introducing these measures as part of the broader Direct GVA target. The Board supported this recommendation.

5.12 The Board approved the budget amendments and for the business plan to be submitted for final sign-off by the GLA.

6. London & Partners Brexit Response

6.1 The Chairman invited Allen Simpson to talk about London & Partners response to Brexit.

6.2 Allen Simpson updated the board on how London & Partners has been responding to the changing circumstances, what the approach has been to date, how the additional funding received from the additional GLA grant has been spent and steps being taken to identify and manage risks for the period immediately before and following Brexit.

6.3 The Board was informed that London & Partners are responding in a number of ways, including focussing on retention of businesses and talent, enhancing London & Partners' global footprint, and developing a positive, credible narrative for London which refocuses our audiences on our long-term strengths. London & Partners are also ready to respond in the period after the end of Article 50 to support investors and audiences who may be concerned about the outcome.

6.4 The Board noted the breakdown of the spend relating to the additional GLA grant to fund London & Partners' Brexit response. This activity will continue into 2019/20, supported by the grant. Across this grant-funded activity a target has been set for an uplift in net additional impact on the London economy from London & Partners (measured through gross value added) of 30% (or £30m). This is on course to be met.

6.5 The Board was advised that in addition to these specific activations, London & Partners has responded to Brexit by ensuring that our wider planning, messaging and strategy reflects the changed environment. Front line staff have been equipped with messages and data to ensure they are able to effectively make the case for London.

6.6 Allen Simpson outlined the acute risk management associated with the period immediately before and following Brexit. These may include currency impact on London & Partner's overseas costs, Visas for staff in EU offices, ensuring effective command and control over the Brexit weekend, and ensuring that information flows allow for effective communication to our stakeholders and key audiences. A risk mitigation working group is underway to identify and manage these risks, and ensure effective coordination with the wider London family, central government and key providers.

6.7 The Board congratulated Allen Simpson on the thoroughness of the Brexit response planning and preparation work.

6.8 The Board noted the London Business Awards event next week, organised by London & Partners, celebrating the tech community, founders, inward investors. It was noted that the Mayor would be speaking and presenting the first award. It was agreed that London & Partners would share the plan to project unicorns onto iconic buildings with the GLA Press team.

6.9 The Board agreed to the approach outlined.

7. MAJOR EVENT PROJECT PLAN

Zanine Adams, Major Event Project Manager, joined the meeting

7.1 The Chairman informed the Board that since the last board meeting there has been significant work in developing plans for the proposed event to celebrate human ideas and experiences. The Chairman invited Jules Chappell and Zanine Adams to update the Board on the plans.

7.2 Jules Chappell updated the Board on changes since the previous Board presentation on the concept of creating a major new event to showcase the city as an international hub for innovation as part of the Future of London initiative. Since then, we have:

- Tested the concept and made it tighter with potential partners, funders and London creatives.
- Considered changing the date from November 2019 to May 2020, using November 2019 to launch the concept and to get the conversation started. The aim is for an event that paints a positive picture for London's future.
- Reviewed the funding model and the use of commercial sponsors.

7.3 The Board discussed the revised concept.

7.4 The Board expressed concern at the new timing of the event which would be one week after the Mayoral election, with the final preparations for the event during the three months purdah period in the lead up to the Mayoral election. The event would also take place one month before Euros 2020 Championships. It was also noted that London Technology Week would likely take place in June 2020.

7.5 It was suggested that a launch moment was planned in November 2019 with the event in November 2020.

7.6 There were suggestions about other locations rather than Trafalgar Square for the event including Kings Cross, Queen Elizabeth Park or Royal Docks.

7.7 A discussion on funding took place. Crowdfunding was considered but decided not to be appropriate for Year one. It was agreed that taking out a loan was too risky.

7.8 The Board was supportive of the concept and continued development of it. It was agreed to revisit the timing of the event, venues and funding proposals.

7.9 Jules Chappell agreed to share the presentation with the Board.

Zanine Adams left the meeting.

8. Transparency Policy and Consultation

8.1 The Chairman reminded the Board that following further criticism by the Assembly and the subsequent summons to provide detailed information the Board agreed at the last meeting to develop a transparency policy which was circulated in January 2019.

8.2 Andrew Cooke outlined the responses received to the public consultation circulated to the Board with the board papers.

8.3 Andrew Cooke advised the Board that there had been nine responses to the survey with a range of additional recommendations.

8.4 The board agreed to adopt a number of recommendations –

- to publish numbers of senior staff within brackets of £10k increments (subject to there being five or more staff within each bracket to preserve anonymity);
- more detailed breakdown of spend within London & Partners Annual Review;
- and to publish details of all companies assisted by London & Partners (except where they had specifically requested for their details to be kept confidential).

8.5 It is intended to implement most of the recommendations by the end of March 2019.

8.6 The Board agreed that the consultation on the transparency policy was a very useful exercise and suggested that the board should review transparency measures on a regular basis.

8.7 The Board agreed to accept the proposed amendments to the transparency policy ahead of its publication.

9. Staff Engagement and Culture

Simon Joy, Director of HR, joined the meeting

9.1 It was noted that Laura Citron circulated a paper to the board before Christmas with the initial results of the staff survey. Since then London & Partners has been working with an employee engagement consultant to get under the skin of the findings.

9.2 Simon Joy, Director of HR, was welcomed to the meeting.

9.3 Andrew Cooke and Simon Joy updated the Board on the work that has been taken since then to understand the underlying issues behind the results of the survey and proposed next steps. These included:

- Clarity on how the strategy links to the business plan, targets and activity
- Clarity on decision-making processes so that decisions can be taken efficiently, the right people are empowered to make the right choices and reduce internal meeting time.
- Better prioritisation and understanding of the relevant importance of different activity.
- Ensuring that all our people feel valued and that there is clarity on opportunities for development and progression.

9.4 The Board agreed that following a major reorganisation these results were not surprising. Discussion included agreeing that messaging, sharing of information should continue with consistency on how decisions are made. It was noted that people often want thanks and praise. Managers can help with this and advise their Directors.

9.5 The Board agreed the recommendations and offered their support to the Executive team to help in any way they can.

Simon Joy left the meeting

10. Business Cases

Simon McCaugherty, Director of Marketing Strategy, and Alistair Sergeant, consultant Chief Technology Officer, joined the meeting.

10.1 The Chairman informed the Board that there were two technology business cases that required Board approval as they were above the £150k threshold.

10.2 Andrew Cooke gave an overview of the cases outlining that they would both following the public procurement regulations that London & Partners was now adopting.

Digital Infrastructure Migration Acceleration business case

10.3 Jayne Barr outlined the business case for the next phase of the project to migrate London & Partner's digital infrastructure to the Sitecore Platform. Simon McCaugherty advised the Board that the Sitecore migration is critical for the integration with CRM.

10.4 The Board approved the business case.

Cloud Migration business case

10.5 Alistair Sergeant outlined the business case to futureproof the company's technology infrastructure by migrating servers away from an on-premise environment to a cloud environment.

10.6 The Board approved the business case.

Simon McCaugherty and Alistair Sergeant left the meeting.

ITEMS FOR NOTING/UPDATES

11. Chief Executive Officer's report

11.1 Laura Citron invited the board to ask any questions relating to her report. There were no questions or comments.

12. Audit and Finance Committee

12.1 Jo Wright provided feedback on the Audit and Finance Committee meeting of 13th February 2019.

12.2 Jo Wright noted that there were ongoing discussions with the registry provider for Dot London regarding renegotiation of the contract which could have an impact on London & Partner's financial position. Jo Wright advised that Andrew Cooke and Anna Burman are reviewing mitigating actions.

12.3 The Audit and Finance Committee also discussed governance issues include circulating Terms of Reference for Boards and Committees, a review of Bank Mandates and a delegation of authority matrix. These would be circulated to the Board.

13. Dot London Domains / London & Partners Ventures Boards

13.1 Andrew Cooke provided feedback in the absence of Tamara Rajah on the meetings of the Dot London and London & Partners Ventures boards on 12th February 2019.

13.2 Andrew Cooke advised the Board that Dan Hill, Director of Ventures had resigned. Fiona Mulliner, currently Director of Marketing Campaigns, will move into the role. It is intended that the domestic tourism work will be run out of London & Partners Ventures.

14. Nomination Committee

14.1 Massy Larizadeh provided feedback on the meeting of the Nomination Committee on Wednesday, 13th February.

14.2 Massy Larizadeh advised the Board that the Committee had discussed succession planning. The Committee reviewed the board composition and recommended focusing on individuals who with experience of working for public-funded organisations as well as individuals with business to consumer marketing experience. Massy Larizadeh asked Board members to forward any suggestions of individuals to her Andrew Cooke. It was recognised that there is an ongoing ambition to make the board more diverse. Nabeel Khan recommended BAME Recruitment agency.

14.3 The Committee discussed the need to recruit a board for the proposed new subsidiary company to manage the new major event. It had reviewed the job description for the role. It was noted that the creation of a new subsidiary company required the approval of the Mayor which was currently in train.

14.4 The next Nomination Committee will take place in six months.

15. Any Other Business

There was no other business.

The meeting concluded at 12.15 pm

Next Board Meeting: 9.00 am -1.00 pm, Thursday 23rd May 2019