

**Minutes of a Meeting of the Karten Network Board**  
**10.30am-12.30pm, Thursday 10 November 2022**  
**Remote meeting – Microsoft Teams**

Directors present:

- Arwyn Jones (Chair)
- Rohan Slaughter (Vice-Chair)
- Robert Boyce
- David Webster
- Paul Doyle
- Max Bianconi
- David Finch

Others present:

- Dawn Green
- Sal Cooke
- Martin Pistorius
- Liz Howarth (for item 8)

Minutes:

- Inés Meza-Mitcher
- 1. Apologies**
    - There were no apologies to note.
  - 2. Declarations of Business Interests**
    - There were no additional interests declared.
  - 3. Minutes of the last meeting**
    - The minutes were approved as a true record by those present.
  - 4. Matters arising**
    - All matters arising would be dealt with as part of this meeting agenda.

***Items for discussion/decision/approval***

- 5. Conversion to charitable entity progress and next steps (progress update, memorandum of association, grant agreement)**
  - BDB Pitmans have submitted the application for conversion to a charity to the charity commission, and we are awaiting a decision. This could take between 6-9 months. We are keen to minimise any additional costs on this and are hopeful minimal correspondence will be required.
  - A draft MoA has been prepared and shared with the Trust, and their comments have been circulated to the sub-group. Comments were generally not complex. Anthony Davis is keen that there is effectively a license enabling the new charitable entity to use the Ian Karten branding. This is likely to incur additional cost but is unavoidable.

- There will also be some discussion on trustee responsibilities and associated best practice in governance, but these are not of immediate urgency given likely delays from the charity commission.
- Colleagues should possibly expect to receive some formal notification from the charity commission confirming their transition from directors to trustee. It was further noted that as DG is not a director, she will not automatically receive any correspondence: directors should forward anything on to her if required.
- There were no further comments on this at present.

## **6. 2022-23 Ian Karten Charitable Trust budget**

- It was noted that this budget has been approved by the Trust. Travel and subsistence costs will increase as visits resume post-covid.

## **7. Karten Centre funding and re-engagement discussion**

- An open discussion was invited on how to keep centres as engaged as possible.
- DG noted that historically Karten Centres have been in a cycle whereby after receiving a grant from the Trust, after 3 years they were invited to apply for additional funding – and in terms of re-engagement, there is no better incentive than this. The impact of the pandemic on the Trust's investment portfolio means that there have been fewer funds to distribute so this has been more difficult. DG has been trying to have conversations with organisations guiding them to additional sources of support and CPD (for example via TechAbility).
- DG also noted that organisations using tech in a creative and innovative way want to use the most up to date technology to continue their work. At the last trustees' meeting, a conversation was started around the size of grants – for example, if there is a comparable amount of funding this financial year, it will be around £80,000. If we reduce the maximum amount of funding per organisation, we could in theory support more organisations. The next trust board meeting is in March, so Dawn will need draft applications by January.
- MB felt that smaller grants, perhaps more often if possible, might be the way to go. He also wondered if it was possible to identify which centres need more specialised, expensive equipment.
- RS felt that the current grant level cap was, if anything, too low – the cost of IT equipment has rapidly risen in the current economic context.
- PD felt that it would be a useful exercise to audit centres to determine where the greatest need might be, and also to see what is currently working and what is not.
- SC felt that lower grants would not have as much impact at senior and strategic level – so this would need to be born in mind. SC also felt that new centres and what they might need should be considered. Larger organisations tend to need larger amount. Strategically we need to consider what will have the most impact.

- DF agreed that there needed to be a discussion around how the finite amount of money could be used to the greatest possible effect. For example, if someone were to apply for the maximum grant, they may not get that, but they may get part of it according to expected income in the application. We must try to be fair, but we are working within a finite budget.
- DG noted that she currently has 15 centres who are keen for funding, and this is without a general communication opening a funding call.
- RB stressed the importance of a long-term vision as opposed to short term fixes.
- DW gave his own experience on the impact of Karten funding, which was immeasurable. DW felt that perhaps a more rigorous assessment process examining what the funding will be used for, would be helpful.
- DG noted that, when talking to organisations recently, matched funding has been brought up – asking organisations to make contributions to projects themselves (e.g. by fundraising).
- MP felt that an audit of equipment would be useful to ensure nothing that could be used is “sitting on the shelf”. He agreed that it might be useful, as MB suggested, for the amount of funding granted to be adjusted to meet the need rather than having a set cap. However, doing this fairly would need to be discussed.
- RS proposed that the criteria by which we award funding should be revisited, and that DG should be supported to this. Some of this has been contentious between the Trust and the Network – for instance, making awards to organisations which are for profit (e.g former Mencap and Scope colleges).
- DG noted that to do the work necessary to work out a strategy and way forward, applications for the March trustee meeting will be developed and after that we could develop a plan for future grants and associated criteria. All directors agreed with this approach.

**Action: sub-group of Directors to meet to consider the matter in more detail and feedback to the board in February.**

## **8. Nuvoic project update and post project opportunities**

- Liz Howarth joined the meeting for this agenda item.
- LH emphasised that the progress made has been really exciting. Directors were very pleased with Liz's report, which was largely taken as read.
- It was noted that there is an ongoing financial issue at the moment affecting cash flow. Arwyn and Dawn are working with Voiceitt to resolve this matter.

**Action – AJ/DG to report back to the February meeting.**

- It was noted that the Network has fully met its deliverables in respect of the Voiceitt project. The same could not necessarily be said of other partners.

- LH noted that, now we are in the final 6 months, we are starting to plan how we hand over participants so that the transition is as smooth as possible.

## **Items for information**

### **9. KN Ltd 2020-21 and Nuvoic expenditure year end**

- It was noted that the Network was underspent on its budget.
- Annual accounts are currently being worked on and will be available for approval at the February meeting.

### **10. 2022 Strategic and Operational Plan update**

- It was noted that the planned Karten Network awards have not gone ahead as the moment had now passed – this had not been possible to achieve due to the pandemic.
- It was noted that there is a date in the diary for a Lifetime Contributions awards lunch on 23 January.

### **11. Karten Network Development Co-ordinator update**

- This report was largely taken as read. DG further noted that the Smart Home forum was brilliant, with great energy and a large number of participants.

### **12. Technology Adviser update**

- MP was thanked for this report.
- MP further noted that DG and he had me with Fil and developed a survey to be distributed throughout the Network at the TechAbility conference, to identify possible areas where support is needed.

### **13. Jewish Care**

- It was noted that no update had been received from Israel for this meeting. DG has been in touch with Debbie Ben-Tal to check that all is well.
- MB gave a presentation to directors on Jewish Care's current work. The Karten Centre at Jewish Care is in Golders Green, London. A new extension of the initial centre includes a day centre and a specialist dementia day centre, alongside other services.
- Jewish Care have recently worked on a large marketing campaign due to launch next month. After Covid, there were problems with parking and capacity in the centre itself so this is being addressed. Jewish Care are also working to raise awareness with other organisations to increase referrals.
- Additionally, there has been focus on safeguarding and training in this area to keep people safe.
- Directors were shown a video from Jewish Care further showcasing their work.
- MB agreed to ask permission from video participants, so that the video could be distributed to trustees.



- Directors agreed presentations like this were extremely valuable, and we should try to do more of them.

#### **14. Any other relevant business**

- It was agreed that some form of thank you should be arranged for the Nuvoic team (Geena and Sean) to recognise their contribution. DG agreed that she and RS would put some thought into how best to do that.
- It was agreed that the November and February meetings would take place on Teams, and DG would send out invitations in due course. It was hoped that an in-person meeting would happen in July, at Jewish Care.
- There were no additional items for AOB.