

BRITISH FILM INSTITUTE
BOARD OF GOVERNORS

MINUTES
24 FEBRUARY 2015

Minutes of the meeting held from 13:30 to 17:00 on 24 February 2015 in the Pinewood Room, BFI, 21 Stephen Street, London W1T 1LN.

Present:

Greg Dyke (<i>Chair</i>)	Pat Butler	Oona King
Libby Savill (<i>Deputy Chair</i>)	Charles Cecil MBE	Pete Czernin
Josh Berger CBE	Alison Cornwell	Matthew Justice
		Tim Richards

In attendance:

Amanda Nevill	<i>Chief Executive</i>	
David Parkhill	<i>Director of Finance & Resources</i>	
Iain Thomson	<i>Board Secretary</i>	
Heather Stewart	<i>Creative Director</i>	<i>Item 3</i>
Ben Roberts	<i>Director Film Fund</i>	<i>Item 4</i>

1. APOLOGIES AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Apologies

Tom Hooper	Jonathan Ross OBE
Ashley Highfield	Andrea Wong
Peter Kosminsky	

Declarations of Interest

- Amanda Nevill declared an interest as a Trustee of the BFI Trust. Iain Thomson declared an interest as Secretary to the BFI Trust. It was agreed that the nature of these interests was such that they would not be required to leave the room during this meeting.
- Also noted were the interests of most Governors in different aspects of the film industry and various related parties. It was agreed that the nature of these interests was such that none of these Governors would be required to leave the room during the meeting.

2. MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 20 JANUARY 2015 AND MATTERS ARISING

Board of Governors Meeting 20 January 2015

- 2.1** The minutes of the meeting held on 20 January were noted and it was resolved to approve them as an accurate record of the meeting.

3. BFI BUDGET AND BUSINESS PLAN 2015-16

Finance Report

- 3.1** David Parkhill outlined the pertinent elements of the Finance Report and Period 9 management accounts that were noted by the Board.

Budget and Business Plan 2015-16

- 3.1** Pat Butler advised the Board that the Finance Committee met on 16 February to consider the Budget and Business Plan 2015-16. The revenue increase contained in the budget had been considered in detail and it was felt there was a good balance between priorities and budget allocation. The Board noted that the Budget and Business plan had been approved by the Committee.
- 3.2** Funding relating to the London Film Festival (LFF) was the key risk. In addition, the closure of Odeon West End had given rise to income challenges that were in the process of being addressed.
- 3.3** The Board discussed Lottery overheads and noted that a benchmarking exercise was currently being undertaken to assess the overheads of other lottery distributors. This exercise would be completed by May 2015. A paper would be brought to a future meeting of the Board in relation to Lottery overheads.
- 3.4** The Board discussed staff pay and the potential for introducing mechanisms to properly reward staff. Amanda Nevill informed the Board that she was aware of a build-up of pressure in this area and it was vital that staff knew that their concerns were being addressed. Work was being undertaken by the Executive in this area that would be considered by a future meeting of the Board. It was confirmed that all staff were on or above the London Living Wage. It was agreed that there was a huge amount of goodwill in the organisation.
- 3.5** The Board resolved to approve the Budget and Business Plan 2015-16.

4. DEVELOPING THE BFI LONDON FILM FESTIVAL

Part of this minute has been removed for reasons of confidentiality

Heather Stewart joined the meeting.

- 4.1** Heather Stewart updated the Board on the progress made in developing the LFF.
- 4.2** PwC had been engaged to consult on the Triennial Review recommendation relating to options for increasing sponsorship levels and for a new commercial model of delivery, including significantly decreasing the level of on-going governmental support, and adapting the LFF to a greater 'trade market' focus. The final report was scheduled to be delivered at the end of the week.
- 4.3** Initiatives introduced in this area over the last few years were discussed. PwC did not identify any festival in the world that existed without public subsidy. The limited options for development that PwC had identified to date were considered and discussed.

Heather Stewart left the meeting.

5. FILM FUND – HOW ARE WE DOING?

Ben Roberts joined the meeting.

- 5.1** The paper before the Board was noted. Ben Roberts gave a presentation outlining the activity of the Film Fund.
- 5.2** Recent successes were discussed. The film adaptation of Colm Tóibín's novel *Brooklyn* recently premiered at Sundance and Fox Searchlight closed a distribution deal for the film, paying \$9 million for world rights, (minus the UK, Canada and Australia). Louise Osmond's *Dark Horse* was a documentary selected following the BFI's first ever pitching session held in partnership with Sheffield Doc/Fest. Largely financed by the BFI, the documentary raised all its money after BFI support was granted through the pitch. The documentary went on to win the Audience Award in the World Documentary competition at Sundance.
- 5.3** Jerry Rothwell's *How to Change the World* won the Best Editing prize in World Documentary competition at Sundance. The documentary tells the story of a seaborne adventure-cum-nuclear protest in the early 1970s that led to the founding of Greenpeace. The worldwide rights have just been sold to Netflix.
- 5.4** British actors Charlotte Rampling and Tom Courtenay won the best actress and best actor award at this year's Berlin Film Festival for their roles in Andrew Haigh's *45 Years*. Co-financed by BFI and Film 4, the film would not have been made without the BFI.

- 5.5** Matthew Warchus' *Pride* was received very well in the UK and writer Stephen Beresford and producer David Livingstone won a BAFTA for outstanding British debut.
- 5.6** Yann Demange's *'71* was an example of the Film Fund backing a film from the early stages. Yann Demange was a socially engaged, intelligent filmmaker that was being backed to make larger, studio films.
- 5.7** *Mr Turner* represented the best ever critical and commercial response to a Mike Leigh film. Timothy Spall was the most high-profile British winner at Cannes, accepting the award for best actor for his role as J.M.W. Turner.
- 5.8** *Belle* was the first film that Ben Roberts supported as Director of the Film Fund. This film would not have been made without BFI support. The film was very successful commercially in the US and has greatly enhanced the careers of director Amma Asante and principal lead Gugu Mbatha-Raw. In this instance the BFI had a script and proceeded to put the pieces together.
- 5.9** The Board discussed the nature of success and the balance between recoupment and creative success and development and agreed that the correct balance was being struck in this regard.

Pete Czernin left the meeting.

- 5.10** The Board noted that there was some indication of a harder, more commercial investment approach being adopted by Film4. Along with the BBC and the BFI, Film4 investment had always been seen as an essential development fund for future talent and as it was now moving away from this, increased pressure and risk would inevitably be put on the BFI.

Tim Richards and Alison Cornwell left the meeting.

- 5.11** The Board noted that the BFI was not a commissioner in the same way that Film4 was, although a discussion may be required in this regard in the future. The way in which the BFI will be expected to respond to an area that it has historically shared with Film4 will need to be carefully considered. Ben Roberts advised that he will be meeting with Film4 in the coming weeks to discuss these issues and will be closely monitoring developments.
- 5.12** In line with the Three Ticks initiative adopted by the BFI Film Fund, Oona King advised that Channel 4 had set out a commitment to diversity with the launch of its 360° Diversity Charter in January 2014. Leadership objective setting and incentivisation within the Charter ensured that all Channel 4's senior managers and editorial staff had specific and measurable diversity objectives and that their success in meeting them was linked to annual variable pay.

Ben Roberts left the meeting.

6. Board Committees and Normal Business

BFI Activity – CEO Report

- 6.1** Amanda Nevill outlined the pertinent elements of the CEO Report that were noted by the Board. The Board was advised that the changes that the Board approved to the BFI Royal Charter did not go through the Privy Council this month as planned, because at the very end of the consultation period, the Welsh Government had raised objections to the proposals. It has requested a Welsh representative nominated by the Secretary of State for Wales. DCMS was currently in discussions with the Welsh Government with a view to resolving this issue.
- 6.2** The Board warmly welcomed and encouraged the new proposal of a BFI Ambassador scheme that seeks to engage high profile actors and individuals to engage with BFI activities and further its cultural and commercial objectives.
- 6.3** The Board noted that concerns had been expressed from exhibitors in relation to the BFI Neighbourhood scheme. The Board was advised that the BFI takes great care to check the geographic distance from the nearest cinema, the sort of programming on offer, and even takes into consideration transport issues. The BFI was in the process of supplying all the data to the Cinema Exhibitors Association and has offered to meet their Board directly to discuss their concerns further if they wish.

Greg Dyke left the meeting.

7. Appointment of Chair of the BFI

- 7.1** Libby Savill led a discussion on the process for the appointment for the Chair of the BFI that would be followed when Greg Dyke's term ended in February 2016. The draft job description and skills requirements were noted and discussed.
- 7.2** The type of candidates that might best suit the organisation and its present and future requirements were discussed. It was agreed that Libby Savill would keep the Board apprised as to developments in relation to this process.