**Minutes of the People & Planet Board of Trustees Meeting, 21st September 2024**

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| **Item 1: Welcome, Apologies, Declaration of Conflict of Interest**Apologies: Adam McGibbon, Floyd CodlinAttendees: Peter Ferguson (Chair), Annie Pickering (Vice Chair), Audrey Opara (Vice Chair), Kate Tokley (Treasurer), Paris Palmano, Diana Volpe, Lavanya Rajendran, Sam Gee, Damon Boughen (part)Staff in attendance* Virginia Moffatt(as Company Secretary)
* André Dallas (Migrant Justice -Divest Borders)
* Graham Gillions (Fundraising)
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| **Item 2: Action Points from previous meeting****~~AP: Diana to send Virginia the photos in question so we can ensure this year’s action guides are up to date.~~**This has been done and Rosie has developed a policy to deal with this in future, which covers the concern.**~~AP: Trustee signal admin to add new trustees to the Signal Group, Virginia to sort out Next Cloud and P&P email list.~~** Peter will check everyone’s on the Signal Group.**~~AP: Virginia to collect trustee applications till July and update trustees.~~ This includes the vacancy Annie has left****~~AP: Finance training to be rescheduled.~~****~~AP: Virginia to let Individual Fundraising Group know trustees are keen to be involved in fundraising.~~** |
| **Item 3: Updates**There were updates from HR, Governance Sub Groups, Quarterly Review of Strategy and Risk Register. The following questions were raised:**Is the 4 day working week based on 35 or 28 hrs?**A: 28.**What is the Frontline Solidarity Review mentioned in Quarterly Review. For which campaign?**The 'Frontline Solidarity Review' was Laura looking at our policy on frontline solidarity - working with groups affected by the issues we are campaigning on. As noted in the minutes, Laura is working on revising the current policy to make it clearer and more accessible. I don't think we had an update at the September meeting because Laura was off, I can ask her for an update when she is in.**There was nothing to report on financial management in the Quarterly Review. Is this because it’s all going well or not happening?**The updates on each part of the strategy are in the quarterly report spreadsheets. The minutes will record discussion which usually focus on areas where there may be struggles or complications or there's a lot going on. If an area doesn't get mentioned it usually means everything is going well. The finance section can be found in Aim 3.4 and the main work (accounts and budgeting) were on green in June. The two areas on amber (review of financial controls and long term budget) were progressing so didn't need a comment.**Regarding the risk register, do we still have the financial risk of bank collapse meaning we’d lose money?**It is still an issue, but not as much as last year when we had a lot of money across the two accounts (Co-op and CAF). We are struggling to find a third ethical bank account as CCLA who were looking at couldn’t guarantee they weren’t investing unethically**Do we review the risk register annually?**Yes, we completed this in January and have been looking at in MT monthly. Will review in Jan 2025. |
| **Item 4: Trustee Handbook**Governance Group have accepted minor changes to the handbook and have questions on the following:**Page 8*** **Are the following roles needed: mentors, learning coordinator?**

There was a general feeling that we should remove mentors for chair as this role is fulfilled by vice trustee chair role.Role of training coordinator – not sure if this was needed as Virginia often fulfils this roleKate – induction programme is great, - maybe chair has chats about culture and further training?Sam maybe buddy system and training coordinator could be combined* **A volunteer student buddy is needed to assist Kate**

We need to strengthen the buddy system.Paris NEU structure has a number of roles and people step up each year.Maybe people could start as a buddy and move on to other roles.* **Does HR sub group need another member?**

It’s OK with 2 people but if another person wanted to join they would be welcome.**Page 14 – Are people happy with the amendments around communication with staff?****Page 15-17 – Are the proposed systems for induction, support and handover still helpful?**Don’t think we need appraisal system too much.Handover process is good – Virginia can keep an eye on this.**Page 19– Virginia is checking with Campact and Graham whether the ideas about outreach and fundraising are still relevant.****AP: Virginia will make amendments and Governance Sub-Group will check over and bring final version back.** |
| **Item 5: Finance****Paper 5.3 Recasting the 2024/5 budget**This item was taken first.Virginia outlined the differences between the old and new budget. Old budget had expectations of 50% for Wallace Global and Patagonia, 25% for Passionists. We got 100% for all. Expenditure has changed too as Wallace Global funding enabled us to fund a third intern, and the 4 day working week has upped salaries of 2 people who were 3 days pro rata on 5 and now are pro rata on 4.**Should we be concerned about £16K deficit?**This is less than original budget which was £23K. Obviously preference is for a break even position, but we are monitoring carefully. We have been able to carry forward surplus for the last two years, but will be able to use reserves to cover any deficit. Trustees were asked to approve the revised budget.**This was passed with full consensus.****Paper 5.1 Management accounts August 2024****Paper 5.2 Cashflow August- December 2024**Income and expenditure are now matching the budget thanks to Ian’s adjustments**Paper 5.2 Management accounts\_\_\_Planet\_-\_Compare\_PAPSAL (36). - Why are intern salary amounts different?**This was actually the wrong paper sent in error (right papers are now in the folder), but can be answered. Most of it is due to differences in tax because some people have previous employment and different pension contributions. Fossil Free Careers is also higher because instead of employing a new intern in 23/4 we continued one contract on a slightly higher rate to July 24.**You say we’re running at a surplus budget of about 10k? And also say that we’re going to run a deficit in the year of about 10k? I'm a little confused.**Ian has revised the budget and it is still projecting a deficit by the end of the year (£16K). However, Ian is reporting that at this point in the year we are currently up £10K on where we thought we'd be. His projections suggest that as we go on and we get less grant income in (as usually happens in the second half of the year) and the adjustments for four day working week settle in, we will end the year on that small deficit.**I feel like the budget variance column is written strangely and hard to understand (or maybe just me?) -On column E - the Variance - the difference is written as a minus number where we haven’t spent a budget line (so underspend), and where we have overspent on a budget line as a plus (positive number). Is this how one would normally do this? And would be good to explain this as this took me a while to make sense of the numbers, cos at first it looks like there is loads of negative/loss money**This question was sent in advance but didn’t get answered.**AP: Virginia to ask Ian to explain about variance at the next BoT.** |
| **Item 6: Campaign Update, Divest Borders**Andre presented this report.**Highlights.**This has been a good and challenging year. Sasha was a force of nature getting people on board, getting Divest Borders to places we hadn’t been. Day of Action was amazing. Really impacted FalmouthExeter negotiation and Sussex VC followed us on twitter.Hoping to have some consultancy funding to look at investment, to get a defined list to advise best university finance managers practice for investmentTomi our new intern has good SU experience so that will be really helpful in building up the connections with universities at Freshers.Good that STAR has taken on the Divest Borders campaign. Hopefully will help get a link with University of Sanctuary.Not that many wins in UL this year but hoping to push Falex over the line.**This is so awesome. University bursars have led a request for an ethical bank for universities, is that something we are pursuing**?We’re following it, the Chief Finance Officer of Dundee is involved and wants to do good things, if there’s enough interest from universities could be worth exploring.**All really exciting. Very excited that STAR has taken on the campaign How can we make sure we support STAR, and BDS groups? Do we join demands, work separately? Will we do another day of Action?**We’re joining with STAR on big national training day and offering them divestment training, then session for staff and sanctuary committee about why divestment matters. Then will try and offer campus groups strategy workshops.We’re finding ways to work together, Tomi has set up a slack channel with other groups, for Divest Borders, seeing how that goes and may spread to whole of P&P campaigns.Yes we’ll definitely do a day of action.We are working with lots of groups on divestment – Stirling is a good role model for divesting from everything. Tomi is very interested in all of this and was involved in the encampments and their dissertation is about what worked and what didn’t.The heart of this is coalition between arms trade/human rights/borders campaigners, trying all things at once.**This all looks fantastic. What does partial divestment eg Microsoft look like?**This is something we developed with Eva. To help universities who were embedded with lots of companies – we identified the worst – deportation and physical borders for partial, and border surveillance added in for full. So far this has been quite simple and the option is there.**This is really good. Anything the Board can do? How are we for funding?**A: We are well funded for 2 years with PHF and Unbound. Board can help us at the next democracy process in 2 years when we will be choosing the next ‘people’ campaign. Also help us by getting people to Power Shift.**This all sounds great. Really shows importance of sticking with a campaign. At the beginning we weren’t in the Migrant Justice space, but the work done on Undoing Borders and then Divest Borders has built up our reputation. Which takes time.**Undoing Borders didn’t have a clear corporate ask but Divest Border does. And we’re helping students use their power in solidarity with the cause. We’ll need to reflect on this in the democracy process, as students might want to choose a different ‘people’ campaign and if that happens we’ll need time to build up to it and move on. We’re hoping they’ll stick with Divest Borders! **It’s good that the reputation is being built up on common cause and coalition building eg Oxford UCU is asking help from Oxford Divest Borders.**That’s great. Tomi is going to work on links with Sus.Andre thanked trustees for their support. He is happy to chat any time!Andre was thanked for his excellent report |
| **Item 7: Preplanning meetings**Audrey proposed that sub-groups and training planned for set days in the month so people can plan for them better,eg first Tuesday of the month or a different group meeting each week.There was general agreement that more structure would be good.**AP: Virginia to send out some suggestions for times for BoT to approve.** |
| **Item 8: Time without staff****No issues arose** |
| **Item 9 : Fundraising****Paper 9.1 Grant Fundraising Update**Graham noted that P&P grants have risen over the last few years, bucking the trend. But in fundraising groups its clear grants are becoming scarcer. Bulk of Graham’s work is grant fundraising, campaigns team are also heavily involved. A lot of time is spent in developing relationships.**Paper 9.2 Individual Fundraising Updates**Individual funding is decreasing year on year which is typical of the sector. We are trying to ensure we don’t decrease further.Graham highlighted 3 initiatives on individual fundraising:* Paying for exernal consultant – led to a winter appeal that wasn’t very cost effective but taught us some useful ways of working.
* Winter ring round which trustees helped with which helped increase individual donations, gift aid etc.
* Spring appeal organised by Paula on short term contract which didn’t raise much money but helped set up our automated systems and has provided us with some learnings. The timing with so much going on for Palestine didn’t help, it is hard raising funds from the main list and we need to think carefully about what we are raising funding for.

Two appeals being planned:End of October/beginning of November – fundraiser for Power Shift associated with launch, targeted particularly at former participants of Power Shift.Next Spring – another ring round of current donors to ask them to raise their donation/gift aid etc. It would be great to have BoT volunteers for this and we’ll be in touch nearer the time.**This is great. I’m up for fundraising. Do we know graduation year of students on the database? Can we be sending emails related to this?**A: Our data isn’t that great, particularly for long term donors, so we don’t often have that. We are trying to ensure that we collect people not just as the main contacts but those who are attending groups and we’re trying to get both university addresses and private so we have them for people when they leave.**Having had Paula as fundraising worker, would it be helpful to have a dedicated fundraiser again?**A: More capacity would be useful, but that role was funded by a particular grant that has ended, so it’s not a strategic priority right now as it would give us less campaign capacity.Sam noted Damon has a strong fundraising background.**It was good to see the Spring Appeal happening again, will it be an annual event? Annie would be willing to help even though she is leaving trustees. Great to see the individual giving group going.**The original idea was to alternate between telephone fundraiser and appeal. We are reviewing this. Rosie is going to be developing a termly newsletter and we may be able ot fundraise from it.**Is the PELF training mentioned in strategy going to happen?**Graham noted that PELF is part of the database and the difficulty has been no-one has had capacity to develop it. Rosie is doing some work on database protocols and willd o some training which Graham can then build on.Graham noted future trends were likely to be grants falling and individuals to stabilise. We are taking a cautious approach to grant fundraising going forward as we have lost funders in the last 18 months. |
| **Item 10: Equal opps data****Paper 10.1 Staff Equal Opps data**It was noted that there was a typo in the Migrant Justice section on gender.**AP: Virginia to sort out the typo in the Equal Opps paper.****Is the MJ intern role only open to people of colour?**A: Yes**Did we seek legal advice when setting the ring fenced intern role up?**A: Liberty pioneered this approach and we used their legal advice. |
| **Item 11: AOB**Next meeting 30th November 2024 in person at Resource for London 11-3pmThe following meetings were agreed as 22nd March, 7th June. |
| **Item 12: What Went Well?**A quick debrief of the meeting.Great to hear from staff.Good to see great Divest Borders work and hear from Andre.Papers clear and weren’t too long.Good to hear current stuff.Enjoyed hearing about Divest Borders.Clear explanations of strategy from staff, appreciated that.Earlier start was good.Good mix of process, governance and campaigns,Good learning experienceGood hearing from Andre and Graham |