

**Raidió Teilifís Éireann**  
**Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of RTÉ**  
**held on Monday 28 November 2024 at 9am at RTÉ and via Teams**

**Present:** Terence O'Rourke (Chair RTÉ Board) (Teams) TOR  
Kevin Bakhurst (KB)  
Noreen O'Kelly (NOK)  
Shirley Bradshaw (SB)  
Jonathan Ruane (JR)  
David Harvey (DHA)  
Daire Hickey (DHI)  
Neasa Hardiman (NH)  
Aideen Howard (AH)  
Terri Moloney (TM)  
Susan Ahern (SA)

**In Attendance:** [REDACTED] (Board Excellence Ireland) (Item 2) [REDACTED]  
Mari Hurley (CFO) (Items 6, 10) (MH)  
Gavin Deans (Commercial Dir) (Items 6&7) (GD)  
Adrian Lynch (Deputy DG) (Items 6, 9, 10) (AL)  
Grace Berkery (Hd of Strategy) (Item 6) (GB)  
[REDACTED], Core) (Item 7) ([REDACTED])  
Vivienne Flood (Hd of Public Affairs) (Item 8) (VF)

**1. Declarations of Interest, Minutes and Matters Arising**

There were no declarations of interest. The minutes of the meetings of 4<sup>th</sup> November and 25<sup>th</sup> October were approved.

KB said the Director of Audio, Patricia Monahan, would conduct audience research in January which would inform a broader examination of the portfolio and when this work was done, the requested session on 2fm would take place. RS undertook to update the Action Tracker.

The Chair paid tribute to the contribution made to the organisation by the recently deceased David Davin-Power and Kathleen Watkins.

**2. Board Evaluation**

[REDACTED] presented the results of the Board evaluation report. The report commended the transparency, trust and inclusivity evident in the conduct of Board business. The report made several recommendations, including the need to take stock with regard to the recommendations of various reports and the need to move forward with an ambitious agenda.

It recommended the Board would meet offsite in the New Year, would consider changes to the format of Board papers, would give consideration to raising its financial approval limits, would include training in its agendas and consider the structure of its committees. It also recommended that culture and engagement with staff and stakeholders would be given more consideration.

The report was welcomed by Board members and discussed.

The findings of the report were accepted by TOR who requested that its recommendations be placed on the Board's 2025 workplan for decisions to be made. ACTION point.

[REDACTED] said Board Excellence would continue to provide support to the Board over the next year.

The Board thanked [REDACTED] for her work. [REDACTED] left the meeting.

### 3. Committees and Subsidiaries

DHA informed the Board of ongoing efforts to improve [REDACTED] revenues which were discussed at a meeting of the Board of CE DAC.

AH informed the Board of the recommendation for approval of the [REDACTED] contract at the most recent Programme Committee meeting and of a detailed briefing and note from the Head of Broadcast Compliance on election coverage rules which was recommended to the Board.

JR outlined the work done at the Strategy Committee in preparing the alignment of goals under the Strategy with the 2025 Budget.

SA told the Board that no complaints had been received by the Fair Trade Committee during the period in review. An update to RTÉ's Fair Trade Policy and Procedures was underway and would incorporate new codes from Coimisiún na Meán. The Committee had received an update on commercial compliance.

SA also gave details about the most recent meeting of the Audience Council. SA requested that a briefing on the Broadcasting Bill (2024), assuming its reintroduction in the next Dáil, would be provided as it contained proposals on the Audience Council. ACTION point.

NOK outlined the work conducted by the ARC at its meeting earlier that week. Its recommendations for approval would appear throughout the Agenda, particularly Budget 2025.

[REDACTED]

DH brought the Board up to date with the affairs of 2m and its approval of a [REDACTED] dividend to the parent company. DH also provided detail on the suspension of work on a potential solar farm at its Summerhill site and [REDACTED]. Its chairman and executive director had been invited to present to the RTÉ Board. ACTION point.

### 4. DG's Report & LT Minutes

KB appraised the Board of the ongoing election coverage and the preparations in place for the election count.

The implications of the delay in the approval of the VEP scheme were discussed.

A recent agreement to prolong the current pay deal until the end of April 2025 was outlined and welcomed by Board members. The agreement also encompassed the payment of a €1,000 voucher to all staff in early 2025.

KB also updated the Board on progress in relation to the ongoing Scope inquiry.

The company's position in relation to CSRD reporting was explained. This had also been relayed to the ARC and remained on its agenda. There was some discussion of the approach outlined. It was accepted that the organisation had to be seen to be working towards best practice in this area.

The loss of the rights to [REDACTED] was discussed with additional discussion regarding the communication of the progress of the bid. KB also updated the Board on GAAGO.

The IRT ruling on Travel and Subsistence was discussed as was the proposed restructuring of Audio and Video referenced in the LT minutes.

SB requested an organisation chart be provided for staff. TOR asked that it also would be shared with the Board. ACTION point.

The importance of agreeing a cultural framework to wrap across all pillars of the Strategy was also emphasised.

The Board took a short break.

## 5. Financial, Commercial and Strategy Update

MH, GD, AL and GB entered the meeting.

AL set out the external industry environment facing the organisation. It was requested that AL's slides be uploaded to the DT platform and this was done.

TOR said it was important for Strategy to be aligned with the financial planning process, as this had often not been the case in the past.

TM said there was not enough in the Strategy to emphasise the importance of a cultural framework.

AL said the shortfall in funding from the initial Strategy plan meant that progress on the site would be slower next year, with more planning work and less expenditure on independent productions.

The Board questioned whether momentum was being lost and questioned delays in project delivery and the capacity of the organisation to deliver multi-year projects.

KB said progress on key programmes like Fair City would be very high profile, as would the move of some production to Cork. However, progress had been hampered by the delay in approval of the VEP. [REDACTED]

MH then outlined the parameters of Budget 2025.

The remainder of public funding for 2024 was expected to be decided later in December. The forecast for 2025 [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

A list of further potential savings was also highlighted.

The view was expressed that the Budget left little room for maneuver. Both the Strategy Plan 2025 and Budget 2025 were approved by the Board.

## 6. Overview of Digital Advertising in Ireland

[REDACTED] entered the meeting and delivered his presentation.

The themes included the forecasted growth in the digital market, the attraction of digital advertising to SME's, the predominance of video, [REDACTED] the importance of MSI and the growth of YouTube, particularly with younger audiences.

The increasing use of AI in the industry was highlighted as was the need for more investment in digital audio, which was considered a growth area.

The Board thanked [REDACTED] for his presentation. [REDACTED] left the meeting.

## 7. Cultural Framework

VF briefed the Board on plans regarding a cultural framework for the organisation which would involve an analysis of surveys conducted during the crisis period and an updated staff survey. The intention would be to create KPI's to enable both the Board and the LT to track cultural factors across the organisation.

It was agreed that VF would engage with the REMCO and report back to the Board on completion of the work.

## 8. Financial Approvals & Commissions

### 8.1 Horse Racing Ireland

The proposed two year Horse Racing Ireland production contract was approved.

### 8.2 URC

[REDACTED].

### 8.3 Six Nations

[REDACTED].

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED].

### 8.5 IMRO

[REDACTED].

### 8.6 HR System Post-Tender

The post-tender proposal to award [REDACTED] the contract for a new HR system was approved.

## 9. Board Matters

### 9.1 RTÉ Loan Facility

The Board approved the extension and amendments to the RTÉ Loan Facility.

### 9.2 RTÉ Pension Trustee Appointments

The Board approved a one-year reappointment of Eamon Treacy as a trustee of the RTÉ Superannuation Scheme, with effect from 1 November, 2024.

The Board approved a three-year term for Gareth Ivory as a trustee of the RTÉ "50/50" Risk-Sharing Pension Scheme (the "50/50" Scheme), with effect from 1 November, 2024.

The Board deferred a decision on the reappointment of the Chair of the "50/50" and Defined Contribution schemes.

### 9.3 Financial Threshold Memo

The Board approved the Memo on the Financial Threshold for Board Approval.

9.4 **Audit Engagement Letters**

The Board approved the external audit Engagement Letters.

9.5 **Approval of Policies**

The Board approved the update to the Treasury Policy and the Energy Hedging Policy.

10. **Board Reflection**

The Board discussed its conduct of the meeting and views were exchanged on the appropriate depth of engagement on various issues. The idea of an away-day in the New Year was welcomed.

11. **Board Meeting in the absence of RTÉ Executives**

(KB and RS left the meeting)

The Board conducted its private meeting.

There being no more business to conduct, the meeting ended.



Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
Chair