the promise scotland

Meeting SIXTEEN
of the
Directors of The Promise Scotland (SC693269)
on Tuesday 18TH February at 12.00 to 15.00
at The Promise Scotland, South Charlotte Street, Edinburgh

Attendees - Directors

Fiona Duncan (FD)	Chair
Anna Black (AB)	Director
David Garbutt (DG)	Director
Fraser McKinlay (FMK)	Director and Chief Executive
Jackie Brock (JB)	Director
Jane O'Donnell (JOD)	Director
Jim Savege (JS)	Director
Philip Rycroft (PR)	Director
Victoria Underwood (VU)	Director

Apologies:

In attendance –	**The Promise Scotland**
Claire Burns (CB)	Strategy & Development Lead (Item 6)
Gillian Graham (GG)	EA and Governance Coordinator (minutes)
Morag Burnett (MB)	Head of Governance and Operations
Nick Wilkie (NW)	Observer - Board Effectiveness Review

1. Closed session

2. Welcome, introductions, apologies and purpose of meeting

Fiona Duncan (FD) welcomed Directors to the meeting. Nick Wilkie who has been appointed to carry out the board effectiveness review was introduced and was observing the meeting.

No topics were suggested for the white space discussion. The chair welcomed any potential discussion points as the meeting progressed and agreed that more time would be allowed for any agenda items that required it.

MB gave a brief update on the board effectiveness review. In line with the governance principles – independence; assurance; proportionate and transparent, its components include: observation; a survey for Directors, followed by a one-to-one interview; meetings with key stakeholders; a workshop at the next Directors meeting, followed by a report.

3. Minutes and action log

The minute of meeting FIFTEEN held on 3rd December 2024 was approved as correct.

The minute of the 6th February 2025 Finance Committee was approved by its chair, JS and members of the committee. The approved minute will be posted on the website.

It was noted that all other items on the action log were either covered in the agenda, on the forward plan for a future agenda, on track, or complete.

4. Declarations of Interest

There were no interests to declare in relation to the business of the meeting.

5. Quarter Three Reporting & Management Accounts

FMK presented the Quarter Three Reporting & Management Accounts to December 2024.

Directors thanked all involved in the huge collaborative effort to devise and publish the Promise Progress Framework, especially the co-developers CoSLA and the Scottish Government. FMK will share 'lessons learned' with Directors at the May Strategy Day. FMK highlighted the Framework was already being used across the sector, will help shape future important work, and its further development is underway.

FMK reported that the Promise in Places initiative had not been fully delivered. Directors discussed at length the challenges this type of work encounters, noting these are not unique. In support of wider learning, Directors agreed structured learning around why the initiative hadn't gone as planned should be undertaken and a short thought-piece produced. FMK will set up a meeting between key Directors involved to enable this. FMK reiterated that, although the objective had not been achieved, The Promise Scotland is very much involved in facilitating work across the country, including in areas other may feel uncomfortable in.

The Directors approved the Quarter Three Report & Management Accounts for submission to Scottish Government.

A summary report on progress against the work programme will be prepared and published at the same time as the new Strategic Work Programme.

6. Strategic Work Programme and Budget

CB joined the Directors meeting and presented the strategic work programme.

Directors noted that development of route maps in Plan 24-30 is essential and will be resource intensive. They recognised that The Promise Scotland's facilitation role may well be difficult and offered help and leverage if any resistance is encountered,

Directors approved the Strategic Work Programme and delegated to the Chair and Chief Executive sign off of a version for publication in March 2025.

The associated budget was recommended by the Finance Committee to Directors. Directors were given assurance that the Finance Committee had taken account of the impact of national insurance increases on a flat cash budget and had considered the weighting of investment across the work programme. MB explained the need for specialist work, for example legal advice on The Promise Bill.

Directors approved the budget for submission to the Scottish Government and requested confirmation in writing of the grant award as soon as possible.

7. Chief Executive's Update

FMK presented an update to the Directors on the activities and events since the December meeting.

On 5th February at the Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisation's annual conference, The Gathering, The Oversight Board launched Report THREE. Directors expressed their gratitude to The Oversight Board for all the work that had gone into Report THREE and noted they found it well-balanced and effective at highlighting the need for an increase in pace. Directors were also impressed by the breadth and quality of press coverage. FMK reminded the Directors that The Oversight Board are hosting a Parliamentary Reception on the 27th February. FMK thanked MB and The Promise Scotland team who provide secretariat support.

FMK gave an update on cross-party meetings that are taking place and Directors restated the need to retain this support in the run up to the 2026 Scottish elections.

8. White Space

There were no items for white space discussion.

9. Strategic Risk Register

Directors noted the Audit & Risk Committee will take a deep dive into the Strategic Risk Register at their next meeting (April) to consider content and scoring.

MB was asked to work on a contingency plan should the Board lose its chair. A paper will be circulated before the next meeting.

10. Forward Plan and any other business

The May meeting will comprise of two parts – a strategy session and the standing items with the ordering determined by the Permanent Secretary's availability.

The Strategy session will include:

- An invitation to the Permanent Secretary
- Update on The Promise Bill.
- Consideration of the Board Effectiveness Review conducted by Nick Wilkie.