

Oxfam GB

Council of Trustees – 14 July 2005OXFAMCOUNCIL OF TRUSTEES

Chair's Report on the Council Meeting held on Friday 22 April at Oxfam House

PRESENT

Rosemary Thorp (Chair)	John Gaventa	Richard Jolly
Frank Kirwan	Scarlett MccGwire	Norman Sanson
Angela Sealey	Richard Taylor	Shriti Vadera (a.m. only)

APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Jackie Gunn, Adebayo Olukoshi and Stan Thekaekara.

IN ATTENDANCE

The Director (Barbara Stocking), the Directors of the International Division (Jasmine Whitbread), the Trading Division (Chris Coe), the Human Resources Division (Jane Cotton) and the Fundraising and Supporter Marketing Director (Edward Fox), the Acting Director of the Campaigns and Policy Division (Becky Buell), the Finance and Information Systems Director Designate (John Shaw), the Company Secretary (Joss Saunders) and the Policy and Trustees Officer (Anne Gornall).

Chair's report on the Business of the meeting and principal outcomes:

The chief items which occupied the time of the meeting were the following:

- receiving and discussing a substantial updating from CMT on the Make Poverty History Campaign, and on the utilisation of Tsunami funds
- Discussing the newly-created Oxfam International Charitable Fund for Tsunami money, where significant concerns on the terms of reference of the Fund and the form of accountability were raised
- Looking ahead to the Oxfam International Strategic Planning process, where it was important to give a steer to the Director and Chair, who would be actively involved in taking this forward over the coming year.
- Considering the OGB Annual Plan, budget and corporate objectives.

- Reviewing trustees' own effectiveness (in this meeting the effectiveness of the trustee audit and finance group was considered, and the lead member for finance and fund raising reported on his areas of responsibility).
- Reflecting on the topics to be debated in the CMT/trustee awayday in July to discuss strategic issues

Principal outcomes:

OI Tsunami Fund: A subgroup of trustees was appointed to follow progress on areas where greater clarity or modifications were felt to be desirable. The Chair undertook to inform the OI Board of Council's concerns.

Annual Plan and Budget. Approved with a recommendation that work should continue on expressing success criteria with greater clarity in the Plan and the Corporate Objectives.

OI Strategic Planning. Discussion focused on the number of affiliates and whether it should grow, on fund-raising in countries where we do not work, and on strategic collaboration among the different Oxfams at the country programme level. Our general view was that the upcoming period of strategic planning was an important opportunity to build the unity, common sense of mission and degree of confidence of the confederation.

Limits to Institutional Support to Oxfam. This represented a re-statement of existing policy (previously agreed by Council in 2002) with one significant change: a limit stating that the 'combined' income from any one government should not exceed 20% of 'total charitable expenditure'. The paper also provided a clarification on restricted income as requested by Council. Trustees formally approved the amended policy.

Corporate Risk register. The new format and framework were approved, as were the key management actions to manage risk

Publication of Council minutes.

Trustees formally approved the recommendation that the outcomes of Council meetings should be published on the Oxfam website, once an acceptable pilot had been run. It was resolved that the wider publication of minutes plus related issues of transparency should be reviewed at a later date.

Rosemary Thorp
Chair