



FNET Board Meeting Minutes

2nd November 2021 13:00

Present:

		From	To
Aisha Aswani	Retail Director	Sept 2020	Sept 2022
Deborah Carlin	Supplier Director	Sept 2020	Sept 2022
Victoria Dodman	Retail Director	Oct 2021	Oct 2023
Sam Ludlow-Taylor	Retail Director	Sept 2020	Sept 2022
Mel Miles	Supplier Director	Oct 2021	Oct 2023
Steve New (Chair)	Independent Director	Oct 2021	Oct 2022
Shayne Tyler	Supplier Director	Sept 2020	Sept 2022
Paul Williams	Supplier Director	Oct 2021	Oct 2023
Andy York	Supplier Director	Sept 2020	Sept 2022
In attendance:			
Chris Goodacre	Secretariat		
Louise Herring	Senior Consultant		

Apologies: None

1. Welcome and Apologies

SN welcomed everyone to the call and advised there were no apologies. SN welcomed PW as a new director to his first meeting.

2. Previous minutes

The minutes of the previous meeting (15th September 2021) were accepted.

3. Announcement (not on Agenda)

LH advised the board that she has been offered executive director of AIM progress so she would be stepping down as technical consultant with effect from 1st February 2022. She explained that would love to stay involved with FNET if possible.

SN suggested that this news meant the agenda of the meeting would have to be modified to allow time discuss this development, with LH stepping out of the meeting to allow that discussion. Given LH had prepared the papers to be discussed, however, it would be sensible to proceed with the planned agenda items. This approach was agreed.

4. Bank account and membership update

The Membership report (attached as **Appendix 1**) had been circulated to the board before the meeting. There are currently 60 members although this will change as Kerry Foods becomes part of Pilgrims.

The membership enquiries report was also circulated (**Appendix 2**). William Jackson Food Group (contact: Rachel Andrews) has expressed a desire to join. The secretariat will contact them to get them signed up. (**ACTION: SECRETARIAT**)

The Third Quarter Accounts (**Appendix 3**) were also circulated to all board.

AY asked what the suspense item on the accounts related to. This is the overpaid VAT form 2019 that still hasn't been rectified by HMRC. The accountants agree that this has been overpaid and have written to HMRC on this matter. The Risk Committee also sent a letter to HMRC. These funds will come back into FNET's account once the situation is finally sorted.

Bank Account: the current signatories are MM, VD and LH. CG now has access view statements and to make UK sterling payments. International payments are still done by sending in forms with relevant signatures.

- **Action 1 (Secretariat) contact William Jackson Food Group to get them signed up.**
- **Action 2 (ALL) If there are any changes that the board require in the way in which information for these meetings is distributed, please let SN know.**

5. FNET Strategic Planning and Budget 2022

The Board considered the paper prepared by LH that had been circulated in advance of the meeting (**Appendix 4**).

LH provided a verbal summary of the recommendations of the paper:

*The **recommendation** of this paper is FNET Board members agree to the substantive changes presented in the paper below and, subject to Board input, approve the presentation of this strategy and the attached budget to members at our January 2022 meeting.*

Substantive proposals - summary

1. **Membership fees for 2022 will "de-coupled" 121 time from standard membership.** Fees for the following year will be £3,080 with members having the ability to pre-purchase 121 time at £375 for the year. New members will be asked to pay a joining fee of £750 to pay for their 121 time. **NB: this removes the current benefit to supplier members of retailers membership subsidising their 121 time. Do we need to address this?**
2. **Support model for 2022 will transition to Executive Director (c 1 day/ week), 2 supporting technical consultants (2 days per week each) and existing Secretariat support (2 days per week)**
3. **Significant investments for the year will be made into:**
 - a. Updating FNET's website and member space - £6,750
 - b. Linking a membership database to the website - £2,750
 - c. Contracting an external consultant to support impact measurement - £4,750
 - d. Remuneration for non-exec Directors - £2,500
4. **121-time offer will be broadened** so that members can access a wider range of consultants by the end of 2022
5. **Strategic plans for existing workstreams** (see below) will be shared with each working group prior to start of next FNET year for review and comments. Working group members will be offered opportunity in Q3 or Q4 to determine whether working group should continue/ fold
6. **Twice monthly members calls will remain but focus will short to themes/ geographies**

LH added that usage of the 121-time sessions had been roughly 75% in 2019 and 40% in 2020. SN thanked her for the comprehensive paper and asked for comments and agreement on the following:

5a Proposal to decouple membership fees for 2022 from 121 time for standard membership

PW asked why people generally do not use their 1-2-1 time, as this was very surprising. LH advised that there are just some people that are not engaged (approx. 5 companies). Some just don't get round to organising the time. It takes a lot of organisation to chase them.

AA commented that provision of 1-2-1 support has been almost a block on how big FNET can become as a membership organisation as the consultant previously has a limited number of hours. VD agreed with recommendations but suggested that there should be a certain limit on when they can book, is can only book in first 6 months of the membership year. LH commented that It is important for new members to have 1-2-1 time so we can check their policies. etc and this is what the joining fee would cover.

MM added his support to the proposal and speculated on the reasons for the reduced uptake. It was suggested that FNET could approach the retailers to ask if they are willing to pay the £375 1-2-1 time fees on top of the existing membership fee, so that we have a pool for funds to use for other activities.

There was discussion of how best to communicate the move, and it was suggested to emphasise the fact that the service was offered at a subsidised rate, and that retaining it within the membership fee would limit the potential for FNET to provide other services.

5b Support model for 2022 to transition to Executive Director

AA requested that a formal decision on this be deferred the implications of LH's departure could be considered, and this was agreed by the meeting.

5c Investments

PW asked if there had been a benchmarking for the proposed investments. LH advised that for the website – proposals have been sent out and two vastly different quotes had been received (£8k and £50k); the variation relates to the level of sophistication of proposed websites and the proposed membership 'back-ends'. It appeared that the best current proposal was ~£10k for membership back-end (however, this would be an ongoing annual subscription - Hivebrite)

On Impact measurement, discussions were ongoing on benchmarking the potential cost from within a member company. It was agreed that there was a need to expand the current pool of technical support for the 121 sessions, that the proposed approach to existing workstreams was sensible, and that the emergent pattern of twice monthly calls should be maintained.

5d Budget

CG advised that the budget needs to be agreed before 31st Jan 2022, as members need to be invoiced within 15 days of year end. MM emphasised the importance of gradual rather than lumpy rises in the membership fee. DC asked if we consider any contingencies such as members resigning. Members have to give a month's notice and will be reminded of this so by December we will know the relevant numbers. PW asked if there was any option to pause membership. CG explained that firms in this situation are usually advised that they are not members for 12 months.

LH advised that in past we have communicated budget and plans to members in mid-November for the meeting in December. We should do this again for this year for the meeting in January. If fees do increase we can put a positive spin on this as members value joined up projects and collaboration, and these have taken a precedence. We can present this in a positive way for the members. VD pointed out, and it was agreed, that many of these exact decisions were contingent on the approach taken to the ED appointment in the light of LH's news, and that there would be a challenge in determining the sequencing of the decisions. Therefore, final formal ratification of these decisions on this paper were held over for subsequent discussion.

6. Revised Approach to Partnerships

The paper (**Appendix 5**) is a re-submission of a paper submitted in July 2021 with amendments based on comments from the July 2021 Board meeting. PW asked if we have a policy on how we appoint a service provider i.e. do we normally have at least three quotes before we actually appoint a provider? SL-T proposed that we add in a statement saying that three quotes will usually be sought when looking for any Services Partner. MM seconded this, and Board approved the paper with this new proposal.

- **Action 3 (LH):** LH to update Partnership paper to build in recommendation from PW about **normally** having three quotes for any services partner

7. Revised Approach to Advocacy and Lobbying

The paper (**Appendix 6**) is a re-submission of a paper submitted in July 2021 with amendments, based on comments from the July 2021 Board meeting.

PW asked if a timeframe for a deadline for board approval could be stipulated (i.e. usually 5 working days?)

VD suggested that a list of the people that FNET wished to work with could be specified (and anyone not on the list should be referred for board decision or exec director decision). ST reflected that there needs to be an opportunity for members to be heard is important, but that it was difficult to think of the exact instances in which this would be required. There needed to be thought given as to how such communication with members might be accomplished, and what mechanism there might be for members who oppose something to raise some type of appeal.

It was agreed (PW proposed; DC seconded) that LH should produce a revised paper, and that MM could share the paper with his legal team for their informal opinion. AA added that the approach could be tested with a review period. SN suggested that the revised paper might not require a full discussion, as there was general consensus about the broad approach.

Action 4 (LH) : Louise will update and recirculate to the Board for final agreement in next Board meeting

Action 5 (MM): Mel to share paper with legal team for informal opinion

8. Development of ETI MoU

The paper (**Appendix 7**) outlines proposals for developing FNET's first formal Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) as a **strategic partner** under our partnership approach (see above) with ETI Italy. LH commented that the intention was to draw up an MoU to have it finalised by end of 2021. The Board would then get to comment on this. VD pointed out the need to amend the paper given 'ETI Italy' is not a legal entity. Check what it needs to be amended to. AA asked if this initiative would this give FNET members any specific member benefits/ability to engage without payment to ETI. LH explained, no, this is more about general sharing of resources and collaboration. Subject to clarification and amendment on these points, the board accepted this proposal (ST proposed, MM seconded).

- **Action 6: (LH)** to update paper to reflect the fact that MoU is with ETI and not with ETI Italy
- **Action 7: (LH)** to move forward with ETI to develop the MoU

9. Proposal for FNET host UK Flower Covenant

The paper (**Appendix 8**) outlines a proposal received from Fairtrade about the potential for FNET to manage the development and implementation of a British Covenant for Sustainable Flowers. LH advised there were currently no budget figures for this and the proposal was to ask the board if they are comfortable with looking into the feasibility of working together. SN wondered why Fairtrade wouldn't do this themselves. LH advised that they are an involved partner and have a conflict of interest as they would not be a neutral convener.

AA asked about deadlines or timeframes and budgets, but LH explained that these were not yet clarified. VD pointed out the potential conflict of interest for FNET, as some members are members of IDH. Could use Chinese walls to differentiate what they were doing? AA suggested one or more board members should be involved in the calls made to explore this opportunity further. Subject to these points, PW proposed to accept the proposal that the further conversations pursued, and ST seconded.

- **Action 8 (LH):** Louise to update paper to reflect conflict of interest comments
- **Action 9 (LH) :** Louise to arrange follow up call with Fairtrade – to include Board member in that conversation.

10. All member meeting agenda

The room at Tesco Welwyn Garden City has been booked for 18th January 2021. This is on the FNET calendar but a save the date has not yet been sent. Tesco can host a maximum of 76 people, although this could change with any future Covid restrictions. The broad outline of agenda for the board meeting was discussed, (drawing on material in the paper at **Appendix 4**).

- Horizon scanning for 2022 – what are the big themes and what do members need to focus on- 2 hours*
 - Living Wages and sustainable livelihoods*
 - Climate change – impacts and migration*
 - Decent work*
- Presentation of operational plan for 2022 – what will FNET be doing and why – 2 hours*
- Opportunity for members to get to know each other and find common interests*
 - Working Group sessions – 1 hour*
 - Member interaction – 1 hour*

AA emphasised the need to give people the opportunity to collaborate and for interactivity. VD suggested member recognition awards etc. It was agreed to formulate agenda by exchange of email.

- **Action 10 (LH):** LH issue potential agenda in all member call for input from members and to follow up separately with individual members, including Board.

11. Future Support Model

(LH left the meeting).

ST advised that as of September 2022 he will not be re-standing; he will be leaving Fresca as a member to set up his own consultancy. It is not appropriate to comment on the support model as he had a potential conflict of interest. ST left the meeting. It was noted that improved machinery for noting and managing potential conflicts of interest should be incorporate in the board's procedures.

SN asked the board to consider the immediate steps we need to take in respect of the executive director role. VD pointed out that hitherto LH has been a contractor and not an Executive Director. It was noted that LH leaving was the highest risk on the risk register. SN commented that according to the budget plan, the ED role comprised both managerial running of FNET and provision of services to members (split roughly 60/40). It was observed that one day

per week as an ED may not be sufficient. AA pointed out that role entails engaging with the board, dealing with external partners, but that if more consultants were engaged in delivering services to members it would need to be a management role too. This had to be balanced with the requirement to provide technical support.

It was suggested that the ED should be a board member, and that the articles would need to be amended for this. (This could create a greater sense of commitment compared to a simple 'contractor' model).

It was agreed that the immediate vehicle for continuing these discussions was the Governance and Nominations (G&N) Committee, who would need to meet to generate specific proposals on role requirements, which could then come back to the board for discussion (with an additional board meeting before the next planned one). It was agreed that any other board members who wanted to attend the G&N meeting would be welcome. It was pointed out that with the departure of Sharon Cross, the committee itself now consisted of only AA and AY: Mel volunteered to be involved with this committee. SN will also be involved in the discussions as the Chair will possibly have some role in the management of any new ED.

There was discussion of the difficulty in finding a replacement who would match LH's commitment and efficiency. AY pointed out that LH's skillset was quite specific and so there was scope for re-imagining the role, including the time commitment required. There was an immediate need to agree roughly what we want as a starting point for the governance committee to go away and work on this.

There was discussion of the need for the new ED role to have deep expertise in ethical trade and the food industry, with a general consensus that this was necessary for credibility. SN raised the question of someone being able to take on the role on secondment from their main employer.

It was accepted that the uncertainty on the way forward in this aspect introduced substantial complexity and uncertainty in respect of the budget, including the need to include costs recruitment.

- **Action 11 (Secretariat):** Need to add conflict of interest to every board meeting agenda
- **Action 12 (AA):** Convene G&N committee to work on specific proposals for new role.

12. Dates for next Board meeting

There has been a couple of requests to schedule meetings well in advance. The secretariat proposed the following dates to end of 2022.

- 17th January 2022 – day before the all-members meeting
- 7th April 2022 – the month before all members meeting due in May 22
- 7th July 2022
- 22nd September 2022 – prior to the FNET AGM in Sept/ October
- 1st December 2022

The need for an extraordinary board meeting prior to 17th January was noted to deal with budget and recruitment for ED role.

AOB and Close

It was noted that LH was organising a modest 'thank you' gift for Sharon Cross.

There would be a need to announce LH to the members: SN will speak with LH and find out the details and formulate the details of the announcement.

- **Action 13 (SN):** SN speak with Louise and formulate announcement of her departure.

Actions

Name	Action	Completion date
Action 1 Sec	contact William Jackson to get them signed up.	31.1.22
Action 2 ALL	If there are any changes that the board require in the way in which information for these meetings is distributed, please let us know	ASAP
Action 3 LH	Update Partnership paper to build in recommendation from Paul about usually having three quotes for any services partner	17.1.22
Action 4 LH	Louise will update and recirculate to the Board for agreement in next Board meeting	17.1.22
Action 5: MM	share paper with legal team for informal opinion and feedback to board.	17.1.22
Action 6: LH	to update paper to reflect the fact that MoU is with ETI and not with ETI Italy	31.12.2021
Action 7: LH	to move forward with ETI to develop the MoU	31.12.2021
Action 8: LH	Louise to update paper to reflect conflict of interest comments	17.1.22
Action 9: LH	Louise to arrange follow up call with Fairtrade – to include Board member in that conversation.	17.1.22
Action 10: LH	issue potential agenda in all member call for input from members and to follow up separately with individual members, including Board	ASAP
Action 11 : Sec	Need to add conflict of interest to every board meeting agenda	17.1.22
Action 12: AA	convene G&N committee to work on Skills Matrix and role requirements	ASAP
Action 13: SN	speak with Louise and formulate announcement of her departure.	ASAP

Signed as an accurate record.

date

Relevant Board Briefing Papers are given below.

PAPER #	1
TITLE	FNET Strategic Planning and Budget 2022
DATE	02.11.2021
ACTION	FOR DECISION
PROPONENT	Louise Herring
PRESENTER	Louise Herring

Background

The below plan has been put together for FNET's activities from February 2022 – January 2023. This plan has been put together using member interviews conducted in 2021, learning from 2021 and input from FNET's technical and Secretariat support.

Input is now being sought from FNET's Board members.

The **recommendation** of this paper is FNET Board members agree to the substantive changes presented in the paper below and, subject to Board input, approve the presentation of this strategy and the attached budget to members at our January 2022 meeting.

Substantive proposals - summary

7. **Membership fees for 2022 will "de-coupled" 121 time from standard membership.** Fees for the following year will be £3,080 with members having the ability to pre-purchase 121 time at £375 for the year. New members will be asked to pay a joining fee of £750 to pay for their 121 time. **NB: this removes the current benefit to supplier members of retailers membership subsidising their 121 time. Do we need to address this?**
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9. **Significant investments** for the year will be made into:
 - a. Updating FNET's website and member space - £6,750
 - b. Linking a membership database to the website - £2,750
 - c. Contracting an external consultant to support impact measurement - £4,750
 - d. Remuneration for non-exec Directors - £2,500
10. **121-time offer will be broadened** so that members can access a wider range of consultants by the end of 2022
11. **Strategic plans for existing workstreams** (see below) will be shared with each working group prior to start of next FNET year for review and comments. Working group members will be offered opportunity in Q3 or Q4 to determine whether working group should continue/ fold
12. **Twice monthly members** calls will remain but focus will short to themes/ geographies

Critical inputs from members

Summary of member input based on responses of 75% of members to interviews conducted between May and October 2021:

- Members very satisfied with emails and twice monthly calls
- Consensus to keep working groups online and have all member meetings face to face
- No significant suggestions re working groups except an interest in climate change and human rights
- Clear to see some members strategies' are evolving and deepening and other members need basic support.

Detailed proposal: Operational and working group plan

A. Operational areas –

- Revision of roles and responsibilities - include quarterly catch up between all roles
- Launch of a professional website with an easy to navigate members' area
- Launch of members' database to manage meetings and member engagement
- Establishment of FNET supporting consultants to provide broader set of 121 support (see below)
- New member acquisition – development of strategy for bringing new members in including additional suppliers, smaller organisations, European members
- Impact measurement – external consultant brought in to develop plan for:
 - 1) Systematic measurement of FNET's activities
 - 2) Member benchmarking
 - 3) Member impact indicators.

B. Delivery against strategic objectives

2. **Create a safe, non-competitive, space for collaboration on ethical trade issues – all virtual unless otherwise requested:**
- a. **Risk Assessment and Mitigation Working Group** – aim for 2022 to 1) develop tools for members of farm-level risk assessment and mitigation of risks 2) develop enhanced mitigation guidance in line with UNGPs/ HRDD guidance
 - i. Q1 – Working groups finalize farm due diligence conversation
 - ii. Q1 – **Working Group meeting** to review progress
 - iii. Q2 – Launch of tools/ outputs
 - iv. Q2 – **Working Group meeting** to discuss – as part of HRDD what role should audits take versus other steps to mitigate risks – working group discussions and development of guidance
 - v. Q2 – Launch of tools/ outputs
 - vi. Q3 – **Working Group meeting** to discuss of future of risk assessment tool within FNET – what do members need over the next 5 years? What role for FNET?
 - vii. Q4 - Determined by member need
 - b. **Recruitment Fees Working Group** – aim for 2022 to 1) support members to map recruitment fees in their high-risk supply chains 2) clarify implications of roll out of EPP 3) Develop member case studies for the remediation of recruitment fees
 - i. Q1 – **Working Group meeting** to discuss members recruitment fees mapping
 - ii. Q1 – Presentation at Working Group meeting on progress made mapping fees/ Discussion of EPP in the UK and globally/ Emerging risks
 - iii. Q2 – Launch of tools/ outputs
 - iv. Q2 – **Working Group meeting:** Remediation discussion – presentation at working Group Meeting of members approaches to remediating recruitment fees – retailer led/ Develop case studies for remediation (Tesco) to be shared with members
 - v. Q2 – Launch of tools/ outputs
 - vi. Q3 – **Working Group meeting:** Determined by member need
 - vii. Q4 - **Working Group meeting:** Determined by member need
 - c. **Worker Representation Working Group** –aim for 2022 to 1) support members to rollout effective worker representation in UK sites and farms 2) scope out opportunities for members to work together in global supply chains on worker representation
 - i. Q1 – **Working Group meeting:** Worker voice projects update – updates from retailers and suppliers on the successes and challenges of worker voice projects
 - ii. Q1 – **Project working group** to progress rollout of Worker Representation train the trainer materials – project meetings
 - iii. Q1/ Q2 – Working Group members to use project outputs in own operations/ with suppliers
 - iv. Q2 – Launch of tools/ outputs for all members
 - v. Q3 – **Working Group meeting:** Project review and Worker Voice update
 - vi. Q4 - **Working Group meeting:** Determined by member need
 - d. **Raw Materials Working Group** – aim for 2022 to 1) support members’ spices, nuts and seeds suppliers to understand the need for HRDD risk assessment 2) support selected members’ suppliers to rollout risk assessments and HRDD
 - i. Q1 – **Working Group meeting:** Member support to develop Raw Materials horizon scanning information/ Raw Materials supplier engagement presentation/ Raw Materials risk assessment video
 - ii. Q1 – First horizon scanning raw materials update published
 - iii. Q1 – Launch of tools/ outputs – rollout by members
 - iv. Q2 – – **Working Group meeting:** Project working group reviews progress in rollout and discusses challenges and additional support needed
 - v. Q2 – Second horizon scanning raw materials update published
 - vi. Q3 - Third horizon scanning raw materials update published

- vii. Q3 – **Working Group meeting**: Working group planning session for joint supplier raw materials webinar
 - viii. Q3 – Joint supplier webinar for raw materials suppliers
 - ix. Q4 - Fourth horizon scanning raw materials update published
 - e. **Ethical Engagement Working Group** – aim for 2022 to 1) improve links between commercial and ethical teams in member organisations 2) establish consistent set of human rights KPIs for members to implement 3) enhance understanding and rollout of human rights impact assessments
 - i. Q1 – **All member webinar**: Human rights impact assessment webinar
 - ii. Q1 – Member commitments to rollout human rights impact assessments in 2022 clarified
 - iii. Q1 – **Working Group meeting**: Member KPI setting webinar – agree provisional set of indicators for members to rollout in 2022/ 2023
 - iv. Q2 – Members to develop plan for rollout of KPIs
 - v. Q2 – **Working Group meeting**: consequence management and remediation
 - vi. Q3 **Working Group meeting**: consequence management and remediation
 - vii. Q4 - **Working Group meeting**: Determined by member need
 - f. **Additional working group** - input to be sought from members re Climate Change/ Warehousing & Logistics/ Geography/ Space for ad hoc discussions
 - g. **Ad hoc - Agents Working Group** – provisionally to run for Q1 2022. Short-term need
 - h. **All Member Meetings**
 - i. **Q1 meeting –**
 - 1. **Horizon scanning for 2022 – what are the big themes and what do members need to focus on- 2 hours**
 - a. Living Wages and sustainable livelihoods
 - b. Climate change – impacts and migration
 - c. Decent work
 - 2. **Presentation of operational plan for 2022 – what will FNET be doing and why – 2 hours**
 - 3. **Opportunity for members to get to know each other and find common interests**
 - a. **Working Group sessions – 1 hour**
 - b. **Member interaction – 1 hour**
 - ii. **Q2 meeting – June**
3. **Build member capability and capacity to manage and resolve ethical trade issues in our supply chains**
- a. Review of **FNET’s tools and resources** to make sure that they are fit for purpose to meet HRDD requirements – technical support led with input from:
 - i. Members – member input sought from attendees of HRDD webinars
 - ii. External organisations – alignment with resources being developed by other initiatives including:
 - 1. SEA Alliance
 - 2. AIM Progress
 - 3. Shift
 - 4. ETI
 - 5. Stronger Together
 - 6. Association of Labour Providers
 - 7. Trade unions
 - 8. European Trade unions
 - 9. French/ German counterparts?
 - b. Expansion of **121 support** – identification of set of FNET consultants to provide 121 time for members – need to be able to access different skills and people in different countries
 - c. **Member engagement** - strategic engagement with members to ensure needs are being met and expertise is being used within the Network –
 - i. Q1/ Q2 - Focussed support for **members who aren’t engaging with the Network**

- ii. **September/ October** – member survey (following model from 2021 but send a survey and then speak in person with the unengaged members)
 - iii. **Member awards** – at the end of the year for announced Q2 meeting
 - 1. Best working group leader
 - 2. Most engaged member
 - 3. Best member case study
 - 4. Best human rights strategy
 - iv. **Tracking of member engagement** – quarterly report with input from Secretariat & technical support
 - v. **Consequences** for members who are not engaging – Board follow up to support
 - d. **Newsletters** – 4 quarterly newsletters focused on themes – fits with the discussions in the bi-weekly calls. At the beginning of the quarter understand where the members are and then support follows via a newsletter and a webinar:
 - i. Q1 – Horizon scanning and Decent Work
 - ii. Q2 – Gender, diversity and inclusion
 - iii. Q3 – Living Wages
 - iv. Q4 – Climate change
 - e. **Twice monthly member calls** – transform these from the new year to focus on topical issues/ regions on a regular basis/ opportunity to exchange challenges/ experiences on a certain topic – to align with newsletters/ and webinars – topics to be nominated by Board members/ members – Board members could moderate those meetings. Suggested topics for discussion:
 - i. **January** –
 - 1. **Half hour catch up + focus on X country/ region**
 - 2. **Climate Change** – members share experiences and challenges
 - ii. **February** –
 - 1. **Half hour catch up + focus on X country/ region**
 - 2. **Recruitment Fees** – working group presentation
 - iii. **March** -
 - 1. **Half hour catch up + focus on X country/ region**
 - 2. **Gender** - members share experiences and challenges
 - iv. **April**
 - 1. **Half hour catch up + focus on X country/ region**
 - 2. **Worker representation** – working group presentation
 - v. etc
 - f. **Buddying scheme** – rollout and expansion of buddying schemes.
4. **Provide credible, timely and relevant insights and horizon scanning on ethical trade issues that impact our supply chains**
- a. **FNET Risk Assessment Tool** – no planned activity in 2022
 - b. **Covid & human rights news support activities** –
 - i. **Q1-4 - Bi-weekly member emails** – shorter, focused on most relevant issues/ easy to share with suppliers/ tailored for particularly geographies/ move to mailchimp
5. **Work with and influence other ethical trade initiatives and stakeholders to avoid duplication and increase leverage**
- a. Engagement with initiatives through workstreams/ working groups
 - i. **ETI Italy** – recruitment fees working group
 - ii. **ETI** – worker representation and warehousing and logistics
 - iii. **ALP/ ST** – HRDD tools/ recruitment fees working group
 - iv. **AIM Progress** – HRDD tools
 - v. **Sedex** – gender/ other?

- b. Ad hoc events
- c. **TORs developed with partners** – provisional list below
 - i. Stronger Together
 - ii. Association of Labour Providers
 - iii. AIM Progress
 - iv. ETI Italy
 - v. SEA Alliance
 - vi. Spanish Ethical Trade Forum
 - vii. Sedex.

PAPER #	2
TITLE	FNET Partnerships approach
DATE	02.11.2021
ACTION	FOR DECISION
PROPONENT	Louise Herring
PRESENTER	Louise Herring

This paper is a re-submission of a paper submitted in July 2021. Amends, based on comments from the July 2021 Board meeting, are shown in red.

Background

The following paper outlines proposals for formalising FNET’s approach to partnerships.

The **recommendation** of this paper is that the following principles and processes are adopted for 2021/2022 to support and formalise FNET’s partnerships. The Board would review these principles and processes **at the end of 2022**.

Partnerships

What is a partnership? Defined as when FNET and another organisation agree to work collectively for short-term again or to achieve an objective or a goal. May be one off, ongoing or strategic (see below)

What is not considered to be a partnership? The following categories do not fall under these principles:

- Any organisation providing a mutually beneficial exchange of information e.g. for the newsletter
- Relationships with contractors providing ongoing services to FNET- unless the relationship is of strategic importance to FNET/ critical to the delivery of FNET’s objectives
- Employee and staff relationships.

When is a partnership needed? Partnerships may deliver one of three things:

1. **Project-based partnerships** – collaborations on specific one-off events or pieces of research
2. **Ongoing partnerships** – ongoing work on a specific project or workstream
3. **Strategic partners** – shared goals and objectives with multiple benefits for FNET and its members.

Partnerships may not always be the best way to achieve a goal or deliver a service. Consideration must be given on whether the partnership will deliver benefit for FNET members and whether it can be managed to ensure no risk to the organisation or its members. It must be clear in any partnership that there are clear objectives, outcomes and benefits which link to FNET’s and that the benefits outweigh any risks or costs

Partnerships will not be considered which put at risk FNET’s stated vision, mission or objectives or which put at risk the reputation of the organisation or any of its members.

What are the key principles for any partnership? The following key principles must be considered for any partnership:

- **Delivery against FNET’s objectives** – the partnership must contribute towards one or more of FNET’s stated objectives and contribute to the organisation and its members knowledge and capability
- **Shared understanding** – a formal agreement must be in place recording how the partnership operates. This should include partnership structure, purpose and aims, **intended outcomes**, activities, **roles and responsibilities**, dispute resolution, timeframe and exit strategy
- **Accountability** – clear roles and responsibilities must exist covering reporting, oversight and performance management
- **Decision making** – decision making within the partnership must be clearly allocated between the partners
- **Value for money** – an assessment must take place of costs and benefits if appropriate
- **Governance process** – agreement and sign off of deliverables must be agreed with the FNET Board.

What is considered a strategic partner? For an organisation to be a strategic partner for FNET it must have shared goals, offer multiple benefits for FNET members and be critical to the delivery of FNET’s objectives or capable of providing insight/ support/ partnership **which benefit FNET and its members.**

The table below identifies the three categories of potential FNET partnerships, the anticipated benefits of each and how they will be signed off and managed.

When is Board agreement required and how will this be managed? Board agreement and sign-off of contracts is required before starting any projects, ongoing or strategic partnerships:

1. Prior to establishing a partnership, FNET’s technical support will present in writing to the Board the key principles of the partnership (as outlined above)
2. **Principles will include: shared goals, conflicts of interest and how IP will be managed**
3. The Board will be asked to submit questions about the partnership and subject to majority support the partnership will go ahead and a contract will be drawn up
4. Contracts/ **MoUs** will be resubmitted to the Board for approval
5. **Financial contributions will require sign off by the Board**
6. Regular reports will be submitted to the Board with regards activities with, and the impact of, strategic partnerships
7. Strategic partnerships will be reviewed by the Board on an annual basis.

Category	EXCHANGE	PROJECT	SERVICE PARTNER	STRATEGIC PARTNER
Objective	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Mutually beneficial exchange of information 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Collaboration on a specific one-off event or piece of research 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ongoing work on a specific project or workstream or delivery of a specific service 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Shared goals and objectives with multiple benefits for FNET and its members
Common goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Yes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Yes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Yes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Yes
Project/ activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Presentation to workstream/ working group/ all member meeting ● Written input to newsletter ● Sharing of events/ training/ opportunities ● Sharing of research ● Sharing of documents for FNET members’ input 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Defined research/ assessment ● Organisation and running of a one-off event ● Delivery of materials e.g. training materials 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Organisation who supports ongoing activities e.g. the FNET Risk Assessment Tool or FNET website 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Sharing of best practice on an ongoing basis between members ● Ongoing conversation about strategic direction ● Sharing of tools and resources ● Shared events and activities
Intended benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Information exchange ● Best practice ● Expert advice ● Cross-sectoral input 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Delivery of research ● Support in running an event ● Development of particular tools or materials 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Delivery of a key tool or service for FNET 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Multiple benefits to members through exposure to new sectors/ tools/ activities/ events
Previous history	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Not required 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Not required 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Not required 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Required – successful completion of one-off event/ project

Category	EXCHANGE	PROJECT	SERVICE PARTNER	STRATEGIC PARTNER
Sign off required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Yes – Board (potential for delegated responsibility in future) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Yes – Board 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Yes - Board
Performance management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Technical support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Technical support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Technical support + Secretariat 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Technical support + Board
Paperwork required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Non-Disclosure Agreement (NDA) – (depending on information shared) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Non-Disclosure Agreement (NDA) – events Contract – research 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Non-Disclosure Agreement (NDA) Contract (for delivery of a service) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Non-Disclosure Agreement (NDA) Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) including ownership of outputs
Dispute resolution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> None 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Events – none Research – as per contract 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As per contract 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As per MoU
Example	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Responsible Recruitment Tool Ergon – input to newsletter Issara - presentation to Recruitment Fees working group 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stronger Together (W&L programme) SEA Alliance IDH DEFRA DWP GLAA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Anthesis (FNET RA Tool) Frost Digital (website) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> AIM Progress Stronger Together Association of Labour Providers Spanish Ethical Trade Forums

Decision required

- Are the Board comfortable approving the above approach subject to review at the end of 2022?

PAPER #	3
TITLE	FNET Advocacy and Lobbying approach
DATE	02.11.2021
ACTION	FOR DECISION
PROPONENT	Louise Herring
PRESENTER	Louise Herring

This paper is a re-submission of a paper submitted in July 2021. Amends, based on comments from the July 2021 Board meeting, are shown in red.

Background

The following paper outlines proposals for formalising FNET’s **approach to advocacy and lobbying**.

The **recommendation** of this paper is that the following principles and processes are adopted for 2021/2022 to support and formalise FNET’s partnerships. The Board would review these principles and processes **at the end of 2022**.

Advocacy and lobbying

Definitions Advocacy is generally defined as arguing in favour of a cause or idea. For FNET this could include activities, relationships or publications to influence groups including government.

Lobbying is can generally be defined as any attempt to influence a politician or public official on an issue either directly or through grassroots lobbying by members of the general public.

Does FNET currently advocate and lobby? To date, FNET has done some activities which would be **classed as advocacy** – including speaking to government (DEFRA and DWP) with regards members’ views on labour availability and exploitation issues, inputting into government consultations anonymously for example GLAA or Modern Slavery Act consultations and by running a LinkedIn account. FNET has not lobbied to date.

Why are we proposing FNET develop an approach to advocacy? The following proposal recognises the need for a formal approach to advocacy to ensure that support staff and members conduct these activities in line with the Board’s direction and FNET’s purpose.

This is not a recommendation that FNET become involved in lobbying.

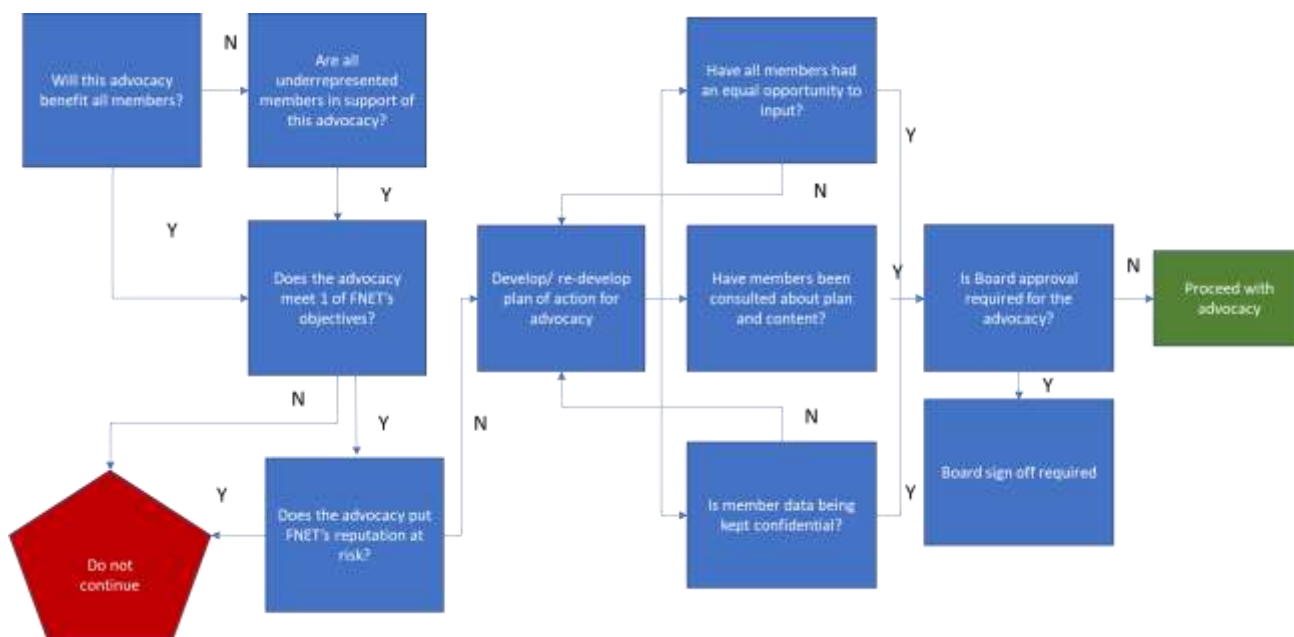
What are the proposed principles for advocacy? The following principles¹ are proposed for determining when FNET will advocate on behalf of its members:

- **Clarity of purpose** –
 - **Benefits to FNET members** – the advocacy must be on behalf of a significant percentage of the FNET membership or, in relation to an underrepresented sector of FNET membership, have the support of all affected members
 - **Delivery against FNET’s objectives** – the advocacy must contribute towards one or more of FNET’s stated objectives and contribute to the organisation and its members knowledge and capability
- **Putting members first** – members will be consulted about the plan to advocate and the content of the advocacy
- **Equal opportunities** – all members will have the ability to put forward items for FNET to advocate on
- **Confidentiality** – the views of individual FNET members will at all times be protected in any advocacy which FNET takes part in.
- **Risk management** – the advocacy must not put at risk the reputation of FNET or any of its members.
- **Governance process** – agreement and sign off of advocacy must be agreed with the FNET Board.

¹ <https://qualityadvocacy.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/Code-of-Practice-1.pdf>

Decision making framework for advocacy:

Support staff and Board members will undertake advocacy by asking the following questions:



Board approval will not be required for the following advocacy:

1. LinkedIn or other social media posts which support FNET's stated objectives
2. Liaison with external organisations, including governments, approved by members during member calls/ working group meetings.

All other advocacy activities will be presented to the Board for approval including rationale against the above principles. The Board will be asked to submit questions about the advocacy and, subject to majority support, the advocacy will go ahead. Regular reports will be submitted to the Board with regards the impact of the advocacy including any negative press coverage, complaints or feedback

This approach will be reviewed on an annual basis.

Decision required

- Are the Board comfortable approving the above approach subject to review at the end of 2022?