

MINUTES

RQIA Board Meeting 18 March 2008

Innovation Centre, Northern Ireland Science Park, Belfast, 12pm

Present

Ian Carson (Chairman)
Richard Adams
Joan Harbison
Jim Jamison
Lilian Jennett
Allen McCartney
Patricia McCoy
Connor Mulholland
Una O'Kane
Colin Reid

Officers of the Board present

Alice Casey (Interim Chief Executive)
Robert Graham (Committee Services Manager)
Phelim Quinn (Director of Operations)
Theresa Nixon (Director of Quality Assurance)
David Stewart (Director of Service Improvement)
John Stewart (Director of Corporate Services)

Apologies

Geraldine Donaghy
Ruth Laird
Austin Smith

Apologies

None

PUBLIC SESSION

08.23 Welcome and Chairman's remarks

08.23.1 The Chairman welcomed Board members and Officers of the Board to the meeting. He noted apologies from Ruth Laird, Austin Smith and Geraldine Donaghy.

08.24 Minutes of the meeting of the Board held on Tuesday 12 February, Comfort Hotel, Antrim [Paper min/Feb/08]

08.24.1 The Board **APPROVED** the minutes of the meeting of the Board meeting held on 12 February 2008.

08.25 Matters arising from minutes

08.25.1 The Chairman referred Board members to the Action List and noted that the actions lists had all been completed.

08.26 Chairman's report [Paper C/02/08]

08.26.1 The Chairman presented his report to the Board. In relation to the non-executive director development programme, he advised Board members that he would be asking them to complete a short questionnaire as part of their appraisals.

- 08.26.2 The Chairman advised the Board that the recent meeting with the Permanent Secretary and the Chief Medical Officer had been useful and that they expressed confidence in how the Authority was conducting its work.
- 08.26.3 With regard to the appointment of a new Chief Executive for the Authority, the Chairman indicated that he had reached agreement with the Department concerning the new pay band. He confirmed that the post would be advertised at the end of March / beginning of April with interviews taking place in late May or early June with a view to the successful applicant taking up post at the end of September / beginning of October 2008. This timescale will be conveyed to the Department of Finance & Personnel (DFP), and Alice Casey's responsibilities as Interim Chief Executive and Accounting Officer will extend until then.
- 08.26.4 The Chairman drew Board members' attention to the recent DHSSPS consultation document "Proposals for Health and Social Care Reform" and noted that it was important for the Authority to submit a response. A Board member suggested that the Board should discuss the proposals and it was **AGREED** that a workshop be held to discuss the Authority's response. The Chairman confirmed that this would be considered at the next Board meeting. The Chairman requested that all comments on the consultation document be sent to the Director of Corporate Services in the first instance.

The Board **NOTED** the Chairman's Report.

08.27 Chief Executive's report [Paper D/02/08]

- 08.27.1 The Interim Chief Executive presented her report to the Board and began by advising that the new organisational structure agreed at the last Board meeting had been implemented and that staff were generally pleased.
- 08.27.2 The Interim Chief Executive reported on the outcome of the judicial review and advised Board members that the Director of Quality Assurance had prepared a more detailed briefing paper. It was noted that the key issue in the case was around the Authority's investigation of the original incident. The Director of Operations advised that key staff needed to further develop investigation skills. In response to a Board member's suggestion that a checklist be drawn up for inspectors to use, the Director of Service Improvement advised that the DHSSPS had issued guidance on how investigation reports be completed.
- 08.27.3 The Interim Chief Executive advised Board members that the recent appointment of a Complaints Manager and the creation of a Serious Concerns Group would help to ensure that all investigations were

carried out properly, timely and thoroughly and that regular reports on investigations would be brought to the Board.

- 08.27.4 The Director of Operations updated Board members on the programme of inspection activity and advised that the 2007/08 inspection programme would be completed on schedule. He added that the introduction of a performance management system had seen significant improvements in how inspections were done and how quickly draft reports were being issued and then becoming open reports.
- 08.27.5 The Director of Operations advised Board members that the programme of Clinical and Social Care Governance Reviews was under way and on schedule. A Board member suggested that Board members who had had the opportunity to participate in the reviews should offer feedback on how the process may be improved in advance of the third year. It was **AGREED** that this would be discussed at the workshop on 22 April.
- 08.27.6 The Interim Chief Executive noted that the Maternity Services Review in the Northern Health and Social Care Trust was ongoing and that the Authority would continue to have an independent monitoring role in this review. She added that once the review was complete, the Authority could fully address how it should be involved in future reviews of this type. A Board member suggested that the Authority check if other regulatory bodies in Great Britain have protocols in this area.
- 08.27.7 The Director of Operations advised Board members that the Authority had commenced unannounced inspections of acute hospital facilities at the Minister's request and that six further inspections were planned before the end of June.
- 08.27.8 The Director of Service Improvement distributed to Board members a scoping paper outlining the work to be carried out by the Clostridium Difficile Review team. He noted that the feedback questionnaires had been returned and that the second phase of the review was due to be complete by 14 April. He added that the timescale for the review was very tight and that the review team could not commence its work in the Northern Health and Social Care Trust until the outbreak had been contained. The Chairman noted that this was a very significant piece of work for the Authority and would greatly enhance the profile of the Authority.
- 08.27.9 The Interim Chief Executive advised Board members that all members of Authority staff, with one exception, had been assimilated onto Agenda for Change pay scales. She also noted the continuing decrease of the sickness absence rate.

The Board **NOTED** the Chief's Executive's Report.

08.28 Audit Committee update - Audit Committee Chairman

08.28.1 The Audit Committee Chairman updated the Board on the recent work of the Committee and shared with Board members the minutes of the meeting of 1 November 2007.

08.28.2 The Committee Chairman advised Board members that the Committee had met on 6 March to discuss progress on the audit action plans. He added that the Committee had recommended that the terms of reference of the Governance and Risk Management sub-committee be revised to increase the scope of its work.

08.28.3 The Committee Chairman also noted that the Audit Committee would be preparing its own report for the purposes of the Board.

The Board **NOTED** the update from the Committee Chairman.

08.29 Corporate Risk Register Update - Director of Corporate Services [Paper E/02/08]

08.29.1 The Director of Corporate Services presented the up to date Corporate Risk Register to the Board and noted progress to reduce some of the key risks.

08.29.2 A Board member asked if risks from directorate risk registers formed part of the Corporate Risk Register. The Director of Corporate Services confirmed that the Executive Team regularly reviewed the Risk Register and that part of the role of the Governance and Risk Management sub-committee could be to check and challenge the Authority's processes for reporting risk management.

08.29.3 The Chairman noted that the risk surrounding the effective transfer of functions from the Mental Health Commission was dependent on a strong project board. He asked that Board members interested in joining this board contact him in the first instance.

08.29.4 A Board member queried if risks which were marked in red should be the responsibility of the Chief Executive. It was **AGREED** this amendment would be made in future.

The Board **NOTED** the Corporate Risk Register update.

08.30 Information Management Strategy Implementation Plan - Director of Corporate Services [Paper F/02/08]

08.30.1 The Director of Corporate Services outlined how the Information Strategy, approved by the Board in November 2007, would be implemented. He advised that the first part of the plan would focus on registration and inspection activity and the second part would focus on the transfer of responsibilities from the Mental Health Commission.

- 08.30.2 The Director of Corporate Services advised Board members that he had visited the offices of CACI]in Skelmersdale to look at a software package which would assist the Authority to improve its in house information systems. He advised that an additional £80,000 of capital funding would be required in 2008/09 to introduce this system.
- 08.30.3 A Board member asked how much the Authority had spent to date on IT systems and how the money had been spent. The Director of Corporate Services noted that a lot of money had been spent on upgrading the existing IT infrastructure when the Authority moved to Riverside Tower and that new laptops had been purchased for inspectors as part of the new homeworking initiative. Board members suggested that the Chief Executive should ascertain that the additional funding is necessary.
- 08.30.4 The Chairman noted that one of the key areas in the DHSSPS consultation document is "information" as there are two information directorates within the DHSSPS, DIS and the Information and Analysis branch. RQIA may wish to consider the future location of these directorates as part of the consultation on the Minister's proposals.

The Board **NOTED** the Implementation Plan.

08.31 Proposed Framework for the Annual Report and Accounts 2007/08 - Director of Corporate Services [Paper G/02/08]

- 08.31.1 The Director of Corporate Services presented a proposed framework for the publication of the Annual Report and Accounts and advised that the timetable had been set by the Department of Finance and Personnel.
- 08.31.2 The Director of Corporate Services advised that the timetable had been discussed at the recent meeting of the Audit Committee with the External Auditors and that they reinforced that the Annual Report had to be completed by 19 May.
Board members **NOTED** the timetable **APPROVED** the suggested content.
- 08.32 RQIA Staff Survey - Key Findings and Action Plan - Director of Corporate Services [Paper H/02/08]**
- 08.32.1 The Director of Corporate Services advised Board members that the requirement to undertake a staff survey had arisen from the Organisational Development strategy and that Ipsos Mori had been given the contract to conduct three annual surveys. He added that the survey used was similar to that used by the Healthcare Commission.

- 08.32.2 The Director of Corporate Services gave an overview of the key

findings and noted that there were both positive and negative comments. He added that the Communications Manager would be responsible for engaging groups of staff to take forward the key issues raised by staff.

08.32.3 A Board member noted that the survey findings were not surprising given that the Authority had undergone a difficult period but expressed unease at benchmarking the Authority with the public sector as a whole.

08.32.3 A Board member expressed disappointment at the length of time to prepare the report from the time the survey was conducted and suggested that the second survey be carried out in six months time. He also suggested incentives for staff or groups of staff for timely completion of the survey. He added that it was important that the staff should feel valued and that celebrating achievements would improve morale.

08.32.4 The Chairman added that staff should be aware of how appreciative the Board are of the work that they do and that staff should be informed at their regular meetings. Other suggestions put forward by Board members included small team meetings where Board members could attend and away days for the new teams once the structure is fully in place.

08.32.5 Board members agreed that there were a lot of positives emerging from the survey and noted that the Action Plan was a very important next step.

Board members **NOTED** the content of the staff survey and **APPROVED** the approach outlined in the Action Plan.

08.33 Update on Implementation of Organisational Development Strategy - Interim Chief Executive [Paper I/02/08]

08.33.1 The Interim Chief Executive presented an update on the implementation of the Organisational Development strategy and noted that the headings used were the same themes as outlined in the "Progressing the Future" paper.

08.33.2 The Interim Chief Executive noted that learning and development was a key area and that it was also important to create the right atmosphere for the workforce. She added that homeworking policies were being developed and that staff had received awareness training in Data Protection.

The Board **NOTED** the update.

08.34 Introduction of new Minimum Care Standards - Director of Quality Assurance [Paper J/02/08]

- 08.34.1 The Director of Quality Assurance advised Board members that the new minimum standards for Care Homes and Residential Homes were now available. She added that the Authority would be facilitating awareness sessions for providers in May and that providers would be asked to complete an Annual Quality Statement, an analysis of which would be brought to the Board in July.
- 08.34.2 A Board member asked if there had been any reaction to the new standards. The Director of Operations noted that the Independent Healthcare Providers (IHCP) had raised concerns about financial implications for homes.
- 08.34.3 A Board member asked if the Authority would be able to assist homes in the drafting and implementation of all of the policies required in the standards. The Director of Quality Assurance noted that the Authority was looking at improving how it communicates examples of good practice to homes.
- 08.34.4 A Board member asked if the standards would be amended at a point in the future. The Director of Quality Assurance pointed out that this was not a role for the Authority but that the Authority could advise the DHSSPS of any changes it felt were necessary.


The Board **NOTED** the update provided by the Director of Quality Assurance.

08.35 Any other business

- 08.35.1 The Chairman proposed that the April Board meeting, scheduled for 8 April be cancelled, and if any formal matters need to be addressed by the Board, then a meeting of the Board can be convened following the workshop on 22 April. Board members **AGREED** with this decision.
- 08.35.2 With there being no other business the Chairman drew the meeting to a close at 3:30pm.

**Date of next meeting:
10 June 2008, Venue TBC**

Signed



Dr Ian Carson
Chairman

Date

10 June 2008

