



Minutes of the Board meeting 8 February 2007
Board Room, 9th Floor, Riverside Tower, Lanyon Place, Belfast

Present

Ian Carson (Chairman)
Richard Adams
Geraldine Donaghy
Ruth Laird
Jim Jamison
Lilian Jennett
Patricia McCoy
Connor Mulholland
Colin Reid
Austin Smith

Officers of the Board present

Stella Burnside (Chief Executive)
Robert Graham (Committee Administrator)
Theresa Nixon (Director of Operations, Social Services)
Phelim Quinn (Director of Operations, Nursing)
John Stewart (Director of Corporate Services)

Apologies

Joan Harbison
Allen McCartney
Una O'Kane

Apologies

Caroline Humphrey (Medical Director)

PUBLIC SESSION

07.1 Welcome and Chairman's remarks

07.1.1 The Chairman welcomed Board members, Officers of the Board and members of the public to the Board meeting.

07.1.2 The Chairman reported apologies from Joan Harbison, Allen McCartney and Una O'Kane.

07.2 Guest speaker: Mr. Paul Martin, Chief Social Services Officer, DHSSPS

07.2.1 The Chairman introduced Mr. Paul Martin, Chief Social Services Officer, DHSSPS to the Board meeting.

07.2.2 Mr. Martin outlined the historical role of the Social Services Inspectorate

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(SSI) and how this has now changed with the establishment of RQIA. He indicated that his branch is now primarily concerned with policy development, the development of standards and focusing more on outcomes and the importance of engaging with service users.

- 07.2.3 Mr. Martin drew the Board's attention to the recent Child Protection Overview Report and outlined the methodology in producing this report. He stated that the report contained many recommendations and that it was necessary for trusts to prioritise and put timescales on the completion of these.
- 07.2.4 Mr. Martin emphasised the huge breadth of responsibility that now rests with RQIA, and the need to prioritise its work carefully, and be explicit in all its reports.
- 07.2.5 Mr. Martin expressed concerns about the future of children's services in areas such as adoption, care planning, assessment and communication with families, professionals and agencies. He outlined the increasing public awareness of these issues and the need to get it right. Mr. Martin advised Board members that Northern Ireland is comparably worse off than the rest of the UK in the area of investment in family and child care.
- 07.2.6 A Board member queried whether Mr. Martin would be meeting the Chief Executives of the 5 new trusts and advising them of their responsibilities based on the report. Mr. Martin advised that he had attended Board meetings of the new trusts and indicated that the new Chief Executives were made aware of the priority which must be afforded to addressing child protection concerns.
- 07.2.7 The Director of Operations, Social Services advised Mr. Martin of her unease of being asked to sit on the proposed new Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland given RQIA's role to monitor this Board and safeguarding activities in the HPSS. Mr. Martin agreed with this point.
- 07.2.8 The Director of Operations, Social Services also queried the high number of Case Management Reviews and if this is going to be reviewed by DHSSPS in terms of application of learning. Mr. Martin pointed out that although he wished to see this burden reduced, the creation of a new Assembly could see more calls for independent enquiries.
- 07.2.9 The Director of Operations, Social Services questioned whether RQIA would be involved in the regulation of Early Years Services. Mr. Martin advised that this policy role was currently with the Education and Training Inspectorate and it should remain in their remit. Further clarity is required in respect of the future regulation of Early Years Services.

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07.2.10 The Chairman thanked Mr. Martin for his overview and indicated the Authority's willingness to maintain close contact into the future. Mr Martin left the meeting.

07.3 Minutes of the meeting of the Board held on Thursday 14 December 2006, Armagh City Hotel, Friars Road, Armagh [Paper 07/min/06]

The Board **APPROVED** the minutes of the meeting of the Board held on 14 December 2006.

07.4 Matters arising from minutes

06.102 Chef Executive's Report

The Director of Corporate Services advised the Board that work was currently underway in relation to training for line managers on attendance management.

07.5 Chairman's report [Paper C/01/07]

The Board **NOTED** the report provided by the Chairman.

07.5.1 The Chairman advised Board members that he would circulate 3 important letters recently received from DHSSPS for their information relating to:

- progress on commissioning;
- progress against 'Safety First'; and
- organisational changes within the DHSSPS which will see the sponsorship of RQIA fall under the remit of the new Chief Medical Officer

Resolved Action

Committee Administrator to distribute correspondence to Board members

07.6 Chief Executive's report

07.6.1 The Chief Executive advised Board members that senior representatives from the Northern Ireland Audit Office had met with the Executive Team to discuss three main areas of mutual interest:

- Specific joint projects e.g. Value For Money.
- Shared learning.
- Mutual advice.

07.6.2 The Chief Executive advised Board members that the meeting had proved constructive and both sides were keen to move forward.

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- 07.6.3 The Chief Executive updated Board members on recent work carried out by the Chief Medical Officer in England and the Healthcare Commission in reviewing the National Patient Safety Agency. She advised that the Department are keen to establish a formal Service Level Agreement with NPSA. She welcomed the 'Safety First' initiative as it links with the World Health Organisation 10-point charter for Safety in Healthcare.

The Board **NOTED** the report provided by the Chief Executive.

07.7 Audit Committee - Draft minutes of meeting, 7 December 2006 - Chairman of Audit Committee [Paper D/01/07]

The Board **NOTED** the minutes of the Audit Committee meeting of 7 December 2006.

- 07.7.1 The Chief Executive advised Board members that the Financial Memorandum with DHSSPS would shortly be signed off under the proviso that the £10,000 limit of capital expenditure was not acceptable.

07.8 Appointments and Remuneration Committee - Verbal report of meeting, 23 January 2007 - Chairman

- 07.8.1 The Chairman updated Board members with the work undertaken by the Appointments and Remuneration Committee in setting the strategic objectives for the Chief Executive and Directors and advised that 2 further meetings will be held in February and March 2007.

- 07.8.2 The Chairman advised Board members that a circular had been received from DHSSPS concerning Senior Executive Pay for 2006/07 and a decision had been taken regarding the award for the Chief Executive and Directors.

The Board **NOTED** the report provided by the Chairman.

07.9 Quarterly report - Director of Corporate Services [Paper E/01/07]

- 07.9.1 The Director of Corporate Services presented the Quarterly Report to the Board members.

- 07.9.2 The Chairman thanked John Stewart and his team for another comprehensive report. Given that Board Members will have read this in detail, he suggested that they be invited to make comments or raise any queries.

- 07.9.3 In response to a question from a Board member concerning an apparent reduction in the number of inspections being carried out by the Authority, the Chief Executive pointed out that the previous Registration and Inspection Units carried out a lot more inspections in facilities as a follow up to complaints. Now that an increasing number of complaints are being resolved by local resolution, this has reduced the inspection burden on the Authority. It was agreed this should be clarified in the Annual Report.
- 07.9.4 Another Board member queried the Authority's use of the Yellow Pages to find details of independent facilities which require to be registered. The Director of Operations, Nursing pointed out that this was the same methodology as is used in England. It was suggested that RQIA strategically place advertisements to call upon independent facilities to register with RQIA.
- 07.9.5 The Director of Corporate Services outlined the financial position of the Authority as at 31 December 2006. He advised the Board members that it had been difficult to fill vacant posts due to such factors as Agenda for Change and RPA and that 24 posts were currently vacant in the Authority. Consequently the Authority will be surrendering £275,000 to DHSSPS. The Chief Executive pointed out that the Board had previously been advised of the current difficulties in the recruitment of staff, particularly administrative staff.

The Board **NOTED** the Quarterly Report.

07.10 Presentation on the development of an Organisational Development Strategy - Director of Corporate Services

- 07.10.1 The Director of Corporate Services presented to Board members an overview on the RQIA approach to a new organisational development strategy.
- 07.10.2 It was noted that this development would require employing an external consultancy. Following questions from Board members concerning the cost and availability of suitable expertise, the Director of Corporate Services advised that a detailed specification and tender had been forwarded to Regional Supplies Service.
- 07.10.3 The Chairman suggested that Board development should also be included in the new strategy.

Resolved Actions

The Board APPROVED the approach recommended by the Director of Corporate Services

**07.11 Board Calendar - Director of Corporate Services
[Paper F/01/07]**

- 07.11.1 The Director of Corporate Services presented to Board members a proposed calendar for Board meetings.
- 07.11.2 The Chairman outlined the purpose of the calendar was to allow improved preparation of papers, and better co-ordination of Board business. It should also reduce the number of Board business meetings and allow greater use Board workshops to deal with items which may require more in-depth discussion.
- 07.11.3 The Chairman advised Board members of the joint workshop with Mental Health Commission on 5 March, the joint workshop with Northern Ireland Social Care Council on 12 April and his intention to plan a series of other meetings with the new CMO, Dr. Michael McBride, Martin Connor and other key stakeholders, in future workshops.
- 07.11.4 In light of the above, the Chairman indicated to Board members the intention to cancel Board meetings in May, August and January for 2007/08. He indicated that he would confirm dates and content of Board Workshops as soon as possible.

Resolved Action

The Board APPROVED the Board calendar as a means of conducting Board business.

07.12 RQIA Vulnerable Adults Procedure - Director of Operations, Social Services [Paper G/01/07]

- 07.12.1 The Director of Operations, Social Services presented to Board members a paper outlining the current difficulties between trusts and RQIA in understanding RQIA's role in Vulnerable Adults investigations.
- 07.12.2 The Director of Operations, Social Services advised Board members that RQIA's role is to ensure providers' adherence to regulations but that the duty of investigation and care of the individual remains with the provider and the host trust. She also advised that trusts' confusion in this matter arises from correspondence from Minister and stated RQIA's intention to clarify this matter with boards and trusts through a series of workshops. She also confirmed that RQIA would shortly be issuing its own guidance in respect of Vulnerable Adults procedures.

- 07.12.3 Following a comment from the Chief Executive who felt there was no ambiguity in Minister's correspondence, the Chairman suggested that workshops would place a significant burden on the Authority and its staff, and he proposed that the DHSSPS write to trusts and boards to clarify the matter.

Resolved Actions

The Board APPROVED the RQIA approach in this matter and AGREED that the issue of confusion should be resolved with DHSSPS. The Chief Executive will raise this matter at the next accountability review.

**07.13 Overview Report on Child Protection - Director of Operations, Social Services
[Paper H/01/07]**

- 07.13.1 The Director of Operations, Social Services presented to Board members a paper outlining the key findings of the Overview Report on Child Protection and expressed serious concerns about these findings.
- 07.13.2 The Director of Operations, Social Services noted that many of the staff involved in the front line of social services work were either young and inexperienced or were people who had been in the same role for a long period of time and had become complacent. It was also noted that progress to improve the system was slow and that many of problems outlined has been around for many years but had still not been resolved. The Director of Operations outlined the key failings and advised Board members of likely media coverage which would involve RQIA participation.
- 07.13.3 The Director of Operations, Social Services advised the Board members of measures already taken by the DHSSPS in 2006/07, including the setting up of a new Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland and welcomed this initiative.
- 07.13.4 One Board member emphasised that unless the RQIA and DHSSPS act now to ensure full implementation of the recommendations, the problems would remain for the foreseeable future.
- 07.13.5 In response to a question from a Board member the Director of Operations, Social Services explained that the reviews would begin from April 2008 to allow the Trusts time to implement the many recommendations and for RQIA to then monitor progress. The Chief Executive stressed to Board members that RQIA would not be engaging in merely checking that work has been done but would be engaged in

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an in-depth review of all aspects of child protection. The Director of Operations, Social Services further clarified this point by stating that RQIA would not tolerate having to continuously reiterate the same recommendations.

Resolved Action

The Board APPROVED the RQIA's planned governance review across child protection services in 2008 using the clinical and social care governance standards.

07.14 Draft Reform Order of Health and Social Services - Director of Corporate Services [Paper I/01/07]

- 07.14.1 The Director of Corporate Services presented a paper outlining the key points of the draft Reform Order of Health and Social Services which outlines the future role of the DHSSPS, the setting up of the new Strategic Health and Social Services Authority, and Local Commissioning Groups.
- 07.14.2 The Director of Corporate Services drew the attention of Board members to the section concerning the proposed transfer of functions of the Mental Health Commission to RQIA.
- 07.14.3 The Director of Operations and Chief Advisor for Nursing updated the Board members on progress which had been made to date and advised that a Project Manager had recently been appointed to oversee this merger and that a workshop was being held on 5 March with the 2 organisations and Board members were encouraged to attend.
- 07.14.4 The Board expressed concern about the new Patient Client Council and its remit to enter HSS premises at any time and felt this to be inappropriate.

The Board **NOTED** the report from the Director of Corporate Services.

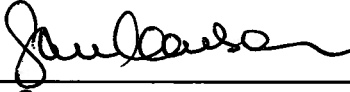
07.15 Any other business

- 07.15.1 The Chairman raised 2 items for discussion.
- 07.15.2 The Chairman advised that under the Northern Ireland Assembly Disqualification Act, Board members were ineligible to stand for election in the new Assembly and that a circular would be distributed clarifying this.
- 07.15.3 The Chairman requested an update on the Clinical and Social Care Governance Reviews from the Director of Operations, Nursing.

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- 07.15.4 The Director of Operations, Nursing advised that the review programme was on target and that 10 reviews out of 25 had been completed. He expressed concern about the time required to write up the reports and pointed out the pressure that staff were under as the review team was small. The Director of Operations also pointed out problems populating review teams, particularly with medical and social care staff.
- 07.15.5 Following a question from a Board member, the Director of Operations, Nursing stated it was too early to report on any emerging key themes but noted that the review programme was due to finish in March and he hoped to have a report of the key findings to present to the Board in June.
- 07.15.6 There was no further business and the Chairman drew the Public Session of the Board meeting to a close.

**Date of next meeting:
8 March 2007 at 2pm
Silverbirch Hotel, Omagh**

Signed 

Dr Ian Carson
Chairman

Date 8th March 2007

