

## MINUTES

**Minutes of the 69<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Public Health Agency board  
held on Thursday 16 October 2014 at 1:30pm,  
in East Belfast Network Centre,  
Templemore Avenue, Belfast, BT5 4FP**

### **PRESENT:**

Ms Mary McMahon	- Chair
Dr Eddie Rooney	- Chief Executive
Mrs Pat Cullen	- Director of Nursing and Allied Health Professionals
Dr Carolyn Harper	- Director of Public Health/Medical Director
Mr Edmond McClean	- Director of Operations
Alderman William Ashe	- Non-Executive Director
Mr Brian Coulter	- Non-Executive Director
Mrs Julie Erskine	- Non-Executive Director
Dr Jeremy Harbison	- Non-Executive Director
Mr Thomas Mahaffy	- Non-Executive Director
Alderman Paul Porter	- Non-Executive Director

### **IN ATTENDANCE:**

Mr Paul Cummings	- Director of Finance, HSCB
Mr Robert Graham	- Secretariat

### **APOLOGIES:**

Mrs Miriam Karp	- Non-Executive Director
Mrs Fionnuala McAndrew	- Director of Social Services, HSCB
Mrs Joanne McKissick	- External Relations Manager, Patient Client Council

		<b>Action</b>
<b>132/14</b>	<b>Item 1 – Welcome and Apologies</b>	
132/14.1	The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and noted apologies from Mrs Miriam Karp, Mrs Fionnuala McAndrew and Mrs Joanne McKissick.	
<b>133/14</b>	<b>Item 2 - Declaration of Interests</b>	
133/14.1	The Chair asked if anyone had interests to declare relevant to any items on the agenda. No interests were declared.	

**134/14 Item 3 – Minutes of the PHA Board Meeting held on 18 September 2014**

134/14.1 The minutes of the previous meeting, held on 18 September 2014, were approved as an accurate record of the meeting, subject to an amendment in paragraph 121/14.4, the paragraph should start, “The Chair informed...”

**135/14 Item 4 – Matters Arising**

*117/14.2 Update on Accommodation*

135/14.1 Dr Harbison asked if there was any further update on accommodation. Mr McClean advised that PHA had been contacted by Asset Management, DHSSPS regarding our requirements, and that although there were no further options at the moment, PHA would continue to look for possible locations.

**136/14 Item 5 – Chair’s Business**

136/14.1 The Chair apologised to members for missing the annual Board away day. She said that members would have the opportunity to reflect more on the workshop at the next meeting once the write-up has been completed.

136/14.2 The Chair advised members that the recruitment process for the appointment of a new Chair and members for PHA would not commence until November 2014 and may take up to four months to complete. She said that Julie Erskine had agreed to take on the role of Acting Chair until a new Chair had been appointed.

136/14.3 The Chair said that she, along with the Chief Executive, had met with the Chair and Chief Executive of RQIA.

136/14.4 The Chair informed members of her attendance at the eHealth conference, and said that there had been some excellent presentations. She said that she had also attended the Institute for Public Health conference, as well as the annual Bryson conference which was on the theme of young unemployment and the cycle of deprivation.

136/14.5 The Chair advised that she had attended a Healthy Hearts event in Carrickfergus, as well as the NHS Change Day.

## **137/14 Item 6 – Chief Executive’s Business**

137/14.1 The Chief Executive said that he had twice met with Mervyn Storey, MLA, in the first instance with regard to the MAST Service, and subsequently when Mr Storey was appointed as Minister at DSD at the launch of the Ballysillan masterplan. He added that he had also visited a wind turbine farm in Killaloo and met with families concerned about the potential health impact of wind turbines.

137/14.2 The Chief Executive advised that he had attended a meeting of the Local Council Chief Executive’s Forum to deliver a presentation on Making Life Better.

## **138/14 Item 7 – Finance Update**

### **• PHA Financial Performance Report (PHA/01/10/14)**

138/14.1 Mr Cummings informed members that the financial situation in both HSCB and PHA will be impacted by the overall HSC financial situation and that comments were requested by DHSSPS today from HSCB outlining how savings could be made. He said that the additional £60m offered would not put the health budget into balance and that the last 48 hours had been spent finalising contingency plans. He explained that the likely impact on PHA would be a reduction of £1m-£1.5m in the revenue resource limit. However, he advised that PHA had a contingency of £600k already in place.

138/14.2 Mr Cummings moved onto the PHA Finance Report and said that PHA is currently reporting a surplus of £1m, but this is largely due to a timing issue with regard to the R&D budget. He said that the year-end projection is a surplus of £200k.

138/14.3 Alderman Porter expressed concern that if PHA is currently running with a financial underspend, that DHSSPS may seek to claw back additional monies. Mr Cummings said that DHSSPS would not have had information of this type as part of its decision making. The Chief Executive said that a baseline review of all of PHA’s programmes would be completed to see where additional savings can be found, if required.

138/14.4 Mr Mahaffy asked about the Trust delivery plans which had accompanied the Commissioning Plan. Mr Cummings advised

that the Commissioning Plan had not yet been approved, and that it would be unlikely that a revised Plan would be requested at this stage.

- 138/14.5 Mr Coulter asked if the contingency plans had been prepared for PHA. Mr Cummings explained that these are prepared by Trusts when they reach a point of knowing that they will not achieve financial balance. Dr Harper added that an exercise had taken place yesterday where HSCB was reviewing the contingency plans and PHA officers were providing professional input. She added that there are difficult options being considered which may impact on patient and client care.
- 138/14.6 Mr Cummings said that the HSCB has not yet held a Board meeting to discuss these proposals, but he pointed out that the contingency plans were not being considered against an approved Commissioning Plan. Dr Harper advised that the Plan has been sent to the DHSSPS as a “fit for purpose” response to the Commissioning Direction.
- 138/14.7 The Chair noted that the Commissioning Direction was issued by DHSSPS, and has not been amended, therefore consideration is being given to amending a Plan that does not currently have any status. The Chief Executive said that there are governance issues in implementing a Plan that has not been approved, but Mr Cummings said that many of the initiatives within the Plan had not yet commenced because the funding had not been approved.
- 138/14.8 Members raised a number of concerns around the governance aspects. The Chair said that when the Commissioning Plan was considered by the PHA Board, there was a shortfall of £160m already identified. Alderman Porter asked how Trusts could be in deficit if initiatives had not commenced that they had not received funding for. Mr Cummings said that Trust were in deficit as savings targets had not been achieved and costs incurred above what was initially projected and that the £160m also included an amount to recognise this.
- 138/14.9 Mr McClean commented that clarity was needed as to whether the Commissioning Planning process was now set to one side. He indicated that the legislation and HSC Framework set out the PHA’s input within the context of the Commissioning Plan. The Chief Executive noted this was a complex process and how the

PHA Board had spent time discussing the process at its last away day.

138/14.10 The Board noted the Finance Report.

**139/14 Item 8 – Governance and Audit Committee update (PHA/02/10/14)**

139/14.1 Mr Coulter updated members on the last meeting of the Governance and Audit Committee which had taken place on 8 October. He said that the Committee had met with David Bingham, Chief Executive and Paddy Anderson, Director of Finance from BSO to discuss the issues highlighted by both the Governance and Audit Committee and the Board with regard to the new financial systems.

139/14.2 Mr Coulter said that Mr Bingham began by apologising for the apparent failures in the new system, but pointed out that the system was less costly than comparative systems used in the public sector, however the running costs of the system had not been taken into account at the procurement stage.

139/14.3 Mr Coulter said that a new Customer Forum was being established, but it had not yet met given the recent change in Permanent Secretary. He said that it had been pointed out to the Committee that PHA had received an unqualified audit opinion on its accounts in each of the previous two years, but the Committee had said the key issues regarding the system related to efficiency and value for money and that PHA had received Priority One recommendations regarding the systems from both Internal and External Audit.

139/14.4 Mr Coulter advised members that there had been discussion about the status of the Service Level Agreement between PHA and BSO and also the issue of bridging finance. He said that there had been a full and frank exchange of all of the issues and that it had been a worthwhile meeting.

139/14.5 Mr Coulter said that the Committee had considered a PAC Report on AccountNI and it was available if members were interested.

139/14.6 The Chair asked about the SLA with BSO. Mr McClean said that

there is an SLA in place, and that it does include draft schedules in place for shared services, but that the metrics with regard to BSTP could not yet be agreed as this depends on further confirmation from BSO in due course.

139/14.7 Mr Coulter advised members that the Committee had also considered the Mid-Year Assurance Statement and that there were no significant issues. He said that the Corporate Risk Register had also been considered.

139/14.8 Members noted the update from the Committee Chair.

**140/14 Item 9 – PHA Mid-Year Assurance Statement (PHA/03/10/14)**

140/14.1 The Chief Executive presented the Mid-Year Assurance Statement which he said is a formal requirement to be submitted to DHSSPS.

140/14.2 Members APPROVED the Mid-Year Assurance Statement for submission to DHSSPS.

**141/14 Item 10 – Second Annual International Family Nurse Partnership Report (PHA/04/10/14)**

141/14.1 Mrs Cullen advised that there is a regional stakeholders group which is chaired by the Chief Executive of PHA and that Kate Billingham, Senior International Consultant for FNP had attended that meeting. Mrs Cullen invited Deirdre Webb to give members an overview of the Report.

141/14.2 Ms Webb advised members that there are currently three teams in Northern Ireland and that this is the Second Annual Report. She explained that the format of the Report is determined by the University of Colorado and outlined to members some of the key highlights within the Report, namely an increase in the percentage of mothers breastfeeding, increased engagement with fathers and increased numbers of young people returning to education and employment.

141/14.3 Ms Webb said that there remain a number of challenges. She noted that although the reporting of illegal drug use suggests that this is low, this is not reflective of the culture in Northern Ireland, but progress was being made. She added that a research

project was being considered in the area of domestic violence.

- 141/14.4 Ms Webb informed members that overall feedback on the programme from users and their wider families had been positive. She said that although the team is small, it is well-established and all members are aware of their roles and responsibilities.
- 141/14.5 Dr Harbison congratulated Ms Webb on what he said was an interesting, positive and optimistic report. He asked about the eligibility for mothers on the programme. Ms Webb outlined the role of the Research Officer who researches specific areas and studies a range of factor to select those eligible for the programme.
- 141/14.6 Dr Harbison asked how additional resources could be used if they were available. He asked about additional coverage. Ms Webb noted that teenage pregnancy rates had dropped, but she said that the size of the team would need to be doubled in order to cover the whole of Northern Ireland, particularly in areas where vulnerable families live and there is deprivation.
- 141/14.7 The Chief Executive said that his recollection was that at the outset of the programme, a pool of 2,000 was seen as the target. He said that although a significant number of mothers had benefitted from the programme, this did not represent total coverage.
- 141/14.8 Mr Cummings said that from an equity point of view, there would be implications in the future if the programme was not rolled out across all of the Trust areas. He felt that the levels of engagement with fathers were low. Ms Webb said that since the inception of the programme, there had been increased engagement with fathers, but that not all fathers were suitable to engage with the programme. Dr Harper noted that although it would be ideal to have the fathers involved, the prime relationship for any child is with its mother. Ms Webb said that information packs on the programme are given to fathers.
- 141/14.9 Dr Harper said that, in terms of numbers, the programme should move beyond teenage mothers and look at mothers in socially complex situations. She said that there is scope to engage with the national programme.

- 141/14.10 Mr Coulter asked about the data analyst. Ms Webb said that this was an important post as the range of data available is complex. In response to Mr Coulter's query, she said that the research plan had not yet commenced.
- 141/14.11 The Chair asked about illegal drug use, and whether this covered misuse of prescribed medication. Ms Webb confirmed that this was the case. The Chair asked whether there any lessons to be learnt from the drop in teenage pregnancies. Ms Webb said that this was as a result of a number of different strategies coming together.
- 141/14.12 Dr Harbison asked how success of the programme could be measured. Ms Webb said that there are three key aims of the programme, which are to ensure that children get improved parenting, children are more able to learn, and that families can move out of poverty. She said that this could be measured through an evaluation. Dr Harper suggested that that areas such as educational attainment and health behaviours e.g. alcohol, sexual practices and drug use could be measured as part of the research evaluation.
- 141/14.13 Members noted the Second Annual Family Nurse Partnership report.

**142/14 Item 11 – Any Other Business**

- 142/14.1 There was no other business.

**143/14 Item 12 – Date and Time of Next Meeting**

Date: Thursday 20 November 2014  
Time: 1:30pm  
Venue: Conference Rooms  
12/22 Linenhall Street  
Belfast  
BT2 8BS





Signed by Chair: Sam W. Decker

Date: 20/11/14