

MINUTES

**Minutes of the 64th Meeting of the Public Health Agency board
held on Thursday 17 April 2014 at 1:30pm,
in Public Health Agency, Conference Rooms,
12/22 Linenhall Street, Belfast, BT2 8BS**

PRESENT:

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| 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 |
| Mrs Miriam Karp | - Non-Executive Director |
| Mr Thomas Mahaffy | - Non-Executive Director |

IN ATTENDANCE:

- | | |
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| Mr Simon Christie | - Assistant Director of Finance, HSCB |
| Mr Tony Rodgers | - Assistant Director of Social Services, HSCB |
| Mr Robert Graham | - Secretariat |

APOLOGIES:

- | | |
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| Alderman Paul Porter | - Non-Executive Director |
| Mr Owen Harkin | - Director of Finance, HSCB |
| Mrs Fionnuala McAndrew | - Director of Social Services, HSCB |
| Mrs Joanne McKissick | - External Relations Manager, Patient Client Council |

Action

49/14 Item 1 – Apologies

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| 49/14.1 | The Chair noted apologies from Alderman Paul Porter, Mr Owen Harkin, Mrs Joanne McKissick and Mrs Fionnuala McAndrew. The Chair welcomed Mr Tony Rodgers, who will be attending meetings while Fionnuala McAndrew is acting Chief Executive of the HSC Board. |
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50/14 Item 2 - Declaration of Interests

50/14.1 The Chair asked if anyone had interests to declare relevant to any items on the agenda. None were declared.

51/14 Item 3 – Minutes of the PHA Board Meeting held on 20 March 2014

51/14.1 The minutes of the previous meeting, held on 20 March 2014, were approved as an accurate record of the meeting. The minutes were duly signed by the Chair.

52/14 Item 4 – Matters Arising

46/14 *Update on Inter-sectoral Programme Boards*

52/14.1 The Chair asked members to confirm which of the three programme boards they wished to join. It was agreed that confirmed dates would be distributed and members could advise which group(s) they wished to join.

53/14 Item 5 – Chair's Business

53/14.1 The Chair advised that the PHA Business Plan for 2014/15 had been approved by DHSSPS and would be published on the PHA website shortly.

53/14.2 The Chair said that she had visited the Arc Health Living centre in Irvinestown to see the range of community projects and said that it was an excellent example of integrated working and collaboration.

53/14.3 The Chair had attended the launch of the recent LGBT guidelines for older people and had heard a range of both good and bad individual stories. She added that this was an important piece of work for PHA.

53/14.4 The Chair reminded members that anyone wishing to attend the NHS Confederation annual conference in Liverpool from 4 to 6 June 2014 should advise the Secretariat as soon as possible.

53/14.5 The Chair shared correspondence with members from Patient

Client Council regarding the HSC Online User Feedback System. The correspondence was noted by members.

54/14 Item 6 – Chief Executive’s Business

- 54/14.1 The Chief Executive advised that he had attended some very positive projects over recent weeks including the Eden Village project run by FASA in Ballywalter and the Incredible Edible project in Cloughmills.
- 54/14.2 The Chief Executive said that he had met with representatives from the Waterside area who wished to establish a health hub in the area.
- 54/14.3 The Chief Executive said that he had met with representatives from families who were expressing concern about the impact of having wind turbines near their homes. He said that this was a complex issues and that he had agreed to follow up with some of the families that he had met.

55/14 Item 7 – Local Government: Development of Community Planning

- 55/14.1 Mr McClean welcomed Ian Maye from DOE and Nigel McMahon from DHSSPS to the meeting. Mr Maye introduced his colleagues, Keith Ruffles, Nicola Gregg and Catherine McKinney and delivered a presentation on the local government reform programme.
- 55/14.2 Mr Maye outlined the new model of 11 Councils and the new powers they will have. He gave an overview of the new governance arrangements with particular focus on the new general power of competence.
- 55/14.3 Mr Maye talked about community planning and the role of PHA in community planning. He said that the new Councils had to be clear about the priorities in their areas and work with partner organisations. He added that it was important that this work commenced as soon as possible and that it linked with Transforming Your Care, Delivering Social Change and the new Public Health Framework. He acknowledged that there would not be a “one size fits all” approach. Ms McKinney said that she was aware that the PHA had been working proactively with local

councils and hoped that this work would continue.

- 55/14.4 Alderman Ashe said the joint working would be critical to the success of the new Councils taking forward the public health agenda.
- 55/14.5 The Chief Executive stated that the Health and Social Care legislation places a duty of health and wellbeing on PHA which has allowed it to work flexibly with all bodies across all of Northern Ireland. He said that the local government reform programme provides a significant opportunity and he added that it was critical that all government departments involved worked together to achieve success, and to make it work, particularly in the areas of health and wellbeing.
- 55/14.6 Mr McClean cited section 41 of the Community Planning Foundation Programme and the reference to equipping communities with the skills to enable them to engage effectively in community planning. Mr Maye said the responsibility for engagement with the community and voluntary sector will fall to the new Councils. Ms Gregg said that some community planning work had taken place and Ms McKinney added that there had been examples of community organisations amalgamating as part of the community planning agenda. Mr Maye cited Mid and East Antrim as an area where this had worked well.
- 55/14.7 Mr Coulter suggested that PPI represented an excellent opportunity area for joint working. He added that he was particularly interested in seeing how health inequalities could be tackled with collaborative working. Mr Maye said that he hoped that the new arrangements would make a difference.
- 55/14.8 Mr McClean said that his biggest concern was the transition period for areas where health improvement and health protection worked closely with existing environmental health functions, and dealing with uncertainty until new arrangements were clear. Mr Maye said that he hoped to work with all of the Chief Executive Designates to ensure that there would be a smooth transition.
- 55/14.9 Mr Rodgers said that the next year will present particular challenges but added that within HSC, work had been undertaken in community planning and developing performance indicators and he hoped that the existing processes would be

used instead of creating new ones. Mr Maye said that there may be some minor changes with regard to health, but this may not be case with regard to education.

55/14.10 The Chair thanked Mr Maye and his colleagues for their presentation. Members noted the update on community planning.

**56/14 Item 8 – Finance Update
PHA Financial Performance Report (PHA/01/04/14)**

56/14.1 Mr Christie presented the Finance Report and said that the report indicated that at the end of February, there was a year to date surplus of £1.3m. He added that since the report was produced, a significant amount of investigative work had been undertaken by HSCB finance staff and he was now satisfied that the projected expenditure for the months of February and March would be spent before the year end. He said that the current projected end of year position is a surplus of £169k.

56/14.2 Mr Christie said that the prompt payment statistics had improved and he added that almost two-thirds of invoices had been paid within 10 days.

56/14.3 Mrs Karp asked whether there was any greater assurance that could be provided regarding the year end position. Mr Christie said that a significant amount of work had been undertaken during March to complete the accounts and to quality assure them, and that this work was half complete. However, he was optimistic that PHA would achieve a break even outcome. He added that there is always a concern around the year end with the amount of projected expenditure during February and March.

56/14.4 The Chair asked whether it was possible to avoid having this year-end bulge. Mr Christie said that there is room for improvement, but noted that until PHA receives confirmation of its financial allocation, it is difficult to fully plan the annual expenditure. Furthermore, PHA has been receiving additional funding in recent years to spend in new areas.

56/14.5 The Chief Executive said that each year PHA is seeking to improve its planning processes and for 2014/15, members had seen the draft Investment Plan. He acknowledged that there

remain some systems issues and room for improvement.

56/14.6 Members noted the Finance Report.

**57/14 Item 9 – Governance and Audit Committee Update
(PHA/02/04/14)**

57/14.1 Mrs Erskine said that the minutes of the Governance and Audit Committee meeting of 6 February were available for noting by members.

57/14.2 Mrs Erskine advised that, at the meeting of the Committee on 10 April, the Committee had reviewed the Assurance Framework. She added that following consideration of the Internal Audit end of year follow up reports, 90% of outstanding audit recommendations had been completed. She added that the Internal Audit work plan for 2014/15 had also been considered.

57/14.3 Mrs Erskine said that the Committee had received an update on finance, fraud and BSTP. With regard to BSTP, she said that there were some outstanding issues regarding customer service and communication and to this end, the Committee had invited Paddy Anderson and Hugh McPoland to attend a future meeting.

57/14.4 Mrs Erskine said that the Governance Committee Annual Report had been considered, as well as the Declaration of Assurance from SBNI.

57/14.5 Members noted the update from the Committee Chair.

**58/14 Item 10 – HSC Research and Development Division Update
(PHA/03/04/14)**

58/14.1 Dr Janice Bailie joined the meeting and gave members an overview of the work of the Research and Development (R&D) Division. She outlined the role of the division and highlighted some of the key achievements during 2013/14 and finished with a look forward to 2014/15.

58/14.2 Dr Harbison thanked Dr Bailie for her presentation and acknowledged the amount of activity undertaken. He commended the ability for Northern Ireland researchers to access UK funding and how £4.5m worth of funding had already been

leveraged. He asked about Horizon 2020 and the ability of Northern Ireland researchers to access EU funding.

58/14.3 Dr Bailie said that she was aware of some of the proposals, but she noted that there was an issue for HSC staff having the skills and wherewithal to access EU funding. She added that to receive £350k of funding during 2013/14 was a positive step and she hoped this would increase in 2014/15.

58/14.4 Mr Coulter commented that there is a good spread of work in the areas where grants had been awarded and asked whether this is monitored. He also asked about research in social care. Dr Bailie said that R&D would be responsive to policy requests for research funding, and would also look at Programme for Government targets. She said that research projects have evaluations carried out by independent panels to ensure they are of good quality and that there is a good spread of research topics.

58/14.5 With regard to social care research, Dr Bailie said that there is work ongoing in this area as the PHA has appointed a Programme Manager and HSCB a Project Lead, who will both work in this area. She said she would encourage them to link in with the Northern Ireland Public Health Network. She said that there is a challenge to get discussions with Trusts and universities in this area.

58/14.6 Members noted the update on the R&D Division.

59/14 Item 11 – Management Statement / Financial Memorandum (PHA/04/04/14)

59/14.1 Mr McClean presented the Management Statement and Financial Memorandum and explained that this is required to be brought to the Board annually for noting and that there had not been any revisions made.

59/14.2 Members noted the Management Statement and Financial Memorandum.

60/14 Item 12 – PHA Procurement Plan

60/14.1 Mr McClean presented the current PHA procurement plan and

explained that the plan has been developed in line with EU social care procurement requirements. He said that procurement is not new to PHA as for many years PHA has been awarding programme funding using tenders. He added that both Internal Audit and the Northern Ireland Audit Office will be closely monitoring this area of PHA's work to ensure it complies with EU requirements as appropriate.

- 60/14.2 Mr McClean advised that procurement is a complex area and that PHA is grateful for the input it receives from Orla Donachy (PALS) and Catherine Thompson (Legal), who he introduced to members. He said that PHA would also be looking at how to maximise the impact of social clauses and was mindful of the recent Central Procurement Directorate (CPD) guidance on developing key performance indicators.
- 60/14.3 Mr McClean advised that the PHA organised a series of roadshows, which had been attended by over 200 organisations, and developed a series of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) to assist these organisations understand the approach it was taking.
- 60/14.4 Mr Mahaffy suggested that across the UK, different organisations were interpreting the laws differently and he asked about how the health system in Northern Ireland was looking at the issue of the living wage. Ms Donachy advised that the CPD had issued guidance which covered a range of performance indicators in areas such as health and safety, fair payment terms, apprenticeships and work placements for students. She said that PHA would consider these, where appropriate, but she added that PHA was being innovative in terms of promoting PPI and engagement activity. With regard to the living wage, Ms Thompson advised that this was a policy issue, rather than a legal issue, and probably beyond the scope of the PHA to apply unilaterally. Ms Donachy added that it was within the capacity of the Northern Ireland Assembly to approve a policy on the living wage.
- 60/14.5 Mr Mahaffy enquired about social clauses being within the award criteria. Ms Donachy said that PHA can look at this, but cannot be seen to be discriminating against other providers. Mr McClean agreed that this was the crux of the issue. He said that to maximise community benefits, it is important to address not only award criteria, but also ensuring as much detail as possible

in the service specification, in advance of the procurement stage in order to ensure social benefits could be maximised.

- 60/14.6 Dr Harbison expressed a concern that although PHA is attempting to restructure the large number of contracts that it has and to strengthen links with the local community, there is a concern that smaller community organisations might face difficulties in meeting the requirements and that instead of encouraging these organisations, it would discourage them. Mrs Erskine also expressed concern that the new arrangements could provide difficulties for the capacity of both PHA staff and the organisations involved.
- 60/14.7 Mr McClean said that the need to find balance made it important that “bundling” of contracts needed to be at the right scale as there are benefits for local communities by having localised contracts instead of situations where there is one contract for a service across all of Northern Ireland.
- 60/14.8 Mr Coulter asked if PHA obtains feedback from organisations which have had experience of PHA’s procurement processes in order to help build capacity for other groups. Ms Donachy said that feedback can be provided if required, but she acknowledged that there is room for improvement in this process as it would be a reactive approach, rather than a proactive one.
- 60/14.9 Mr Christie said that, with regard to the living wage, PHA would not have the authority to create policy in this area, and that the DHSSPS would not have this authority, this would have to be directed by the Northern Ireland Assembly.
- 60/14.10 The Chief Executive said that many groups had approached PHA to seek funding to help with capacity building, and explained that there was an onus on organisations to think collaboratively if they wish to survive in this new environment. Mr McClean said that Belfast City Council had organised capacity building workshops and the PHA would be encouraging other Councils to do likewise.
- 60/14.11 Mr Mahaffy asked about taking forward the recommendations in the Marmot Review, and he expressed concern about the terms and conditions for staff in domiciliary care agencies. Mr McClean said that as part of the PHA’s new Corporate Strategy, it would be looking at areas emanating from the Marmot Review.

60/14.12 Members noted the procurement plan.

61/14 Item 13 – Any Other Business

61/14.1 The Chief Executive advised members that a paper outlining the proposed development of the next PHA Corporate Strategy would be brought to the May Board meeting.

61/14.2 Mr Coulter asked if there had been any comments received from DHSSPS regarding the draft Commissioning Plan. Members were advised that there was no update.

61/14.3 There was no other business and the Chair drew the meeting to a close.

62/14 Item 14 – Date and Time of Next Meeting

Date: Thursday 15 May 2014

Time: 1:30pm

Venue: Public Health Agency

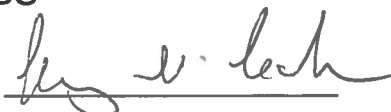
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Signed by Chair: 

Date: 15/05/14