

Title of Meeting	118 th Meeting of the Public Health Agency Board
Date	23 January 2020 at 1.30pm
Venue	Fifth Floor Meeting Room, 12/22 Linenhall Street, Belfast

Present

Mr Andrew Dougal	- Chair
Mrs Valerie Watts	- Interim Chief Executive
Mr Edmond McClean	- Interim Deputy Chief Executive / Director of Operations
Dr Adrian Mairs	- Acting Director of Public Health
Mr Rodney Morton	- Director of Nursing and Allied Health Professionals
Alderman William Ashe	- Non-Executive Director
Mr John-Patrick Clayton	- Non-Executive Director
Mr Leslie Drew	- Non-Executive Director
Ms Deepa Mann-Kler	- Non-Executive Director
Alderman Paul Porter	- Non-Executive Director
Professor Nichola Rooney	- Non-Executive Director
Mr Joseph Stewart	- Non-Executive Director

In Attendance

Mr Paul Cummings	- Director of Finance, HSCB
Mr Robert Graham	- Secretariat
Ms Jenny Redman	- Boardroom Apprentice

Apologies

Dr Aideen Keaney	- Director of Quality Improvement
Ms Marie Roulston	- Director of Social Care and Children, HSCB

1/20 Item 1 – Welcome and Apologies

1/20.1 The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were noted from Ms Marie Roulston.

2/20 Item 2 – Declaration of Interests

2/20.1 The Chair asked if anyone had interests to declare relevant to any items on the agenda. No interests were declared.

3/20 Item 3 – Minutes of previous meeting held on 5 December 2019

3/20.1 The minutes of the previous meeting, held on 5 December 2019, were approved as an accurate record of that meeting.

4/20 Item 4 – Matters Arising

4/20.1 There were no matters arising.

5/20 Item 5 – Chair’s Business

5/20.1 The Chair advised members that the next meeting of the UK Public Health Network will take place in Belfast on Tuesday 12 May. He agreed to forward to members some further information regarding some of the issues to be discussed at the meeting.

5/20.2 The Chair informed members that following the demonstration at the last meeting he had received correspondence from Participation and the Practice of Rights (PPR) regarding suicide. Mr Stewart commented that some of the issues raised within the letter were outwith the remit of PHA. Mr Clayton said that the letter highlighted some challenges and said that PHA should seek to further engage with them. The Interim Chief Executive **agreed** that she would, with inputs from senior officers, send a response on behalf of the PHA Board.

5/20.3 The Interim Chief Executive said that the target for Northern Ireland should be Zero Suicide and she said that at this week’s senior management team meeting there had been a presentation on the Zero Suicide initiative. Alderman Ashe said that it was important that people who need help can access it highlighting the issue where people presenting at Emergency Departments under the influence of drugs or alcohol may be turned away. Dr Mairs advised that there are pilot de-escalation initiatives in both the Belfast and South Eastern Trusts, but Alderman Ashe said that there are many examples of individuals falling through the system.

5/20.4 Ms Mann-Kler queried whether there was an opportunity with the Assembly being back in place, that PHA can ensure the issue of suicide is approached in the most strategic way possible, working across many Departments. Mr McClean suggested that it may be useful for members to receive an update on what is happening with regard to Protect Life 2 in the PHA and across the HSC, and the nature and extent of the services being provided. Dr Mairs said that there is a range of services for people in distress, but it is a very complex picture and there is a need for more joined up working.

5/20.5 Professor Rooney said that suicide is not solely a health issue, and that a more strategic approach is needed. Dr Mairs agreed saying by the time individuals reach de-escalation services, it may already be too late. Alderman Porter added that people may present to HSC services with

suicide risk issues, but have to wait too long to access services. He noted that other countries, where there are higher rates of deprivation, have lower suicide rates than Northern Ireland.

- 5/20.6 Mr Morton said that there is a need to address the issue of people being turned away from Emergency Departments. Professor Rooney said these individuals are advised to attend addiction services before they can attend mental health services. Mr Morton reiterated that this needs to be reviewed.
- 5/20.7 The Chair gave an overview of the Four Nations Committee meeting that took place in Glasgow on 17 January. He said that Professor Maggie Rae, incoming President of the Faculty, had delivered a presentation on the Faculty of Public Health's new strategy.

6/20 Item 6 – Chief Executive's Business

- 6/20.1 The Interim Chief Executive advised members that she, along with the Chair, had attended the PHA's Accountability Review meeting with the Permanent Secretary and the Chief Medical Officer on 10 January. She said that there was a particular focus on staffing issues and that she was able to provide an update on the progress PHA was making, particularly with regard to the filling of public health consultant vacancies.
- 6/20.2 The Interim Chief Executive advised members that an interim solution has been agreed whereby the PHA and the Northern Ireland Medical and Dental Training Agency (NIMDTA) can enter a co-operative relationship for the purpose of extending the existing medical specialty training programme to those from backgrounds other than medicine. She said that this agreement will last for 2 years in the first instance and will also future public health training posts to be open to both medical and non-medical graduates.
- 6/20.3 The Interim Chief Executive said that NIMDTA also intends to develop a new speciality programme in dental public health, and that Dr Denise O'Hagan will establish this new programme.
- 6/20.4 The Interim Chief Executive confirmed to members that Professor Hugo van Woerden will be taking up post as Director of Public Health at the beginning of March 2020. She again expressed her thanks to Dr Adrian Mairs for covering the post on an interim basis.
- 6/20.5 The Interim Chief Executive informed members that PHA has launched a video on social media to raise awareness about Type One Diabetes in children. She explained that Type 1 diabetes cannot be prevented and occurs when the pancreas is no longer able to produce insulin. She added that it is the most common type of diabetes in children and young adults, and that every year between 100 and 130 children develop type 1 diabetes in Northern Ireland. She shared with members the video which features the PHA's Amanda O'Neill and her son Caolan. She said

that the video has been on Facebook for only a few days and has already received more than 62,000 hits. She added that PHA has begun using more video case studies as they are reaching audiences it struggled to reach with more traditional PR methods.

6/20.6 Ms Mann-Kler commended the reach and suggested that if there are any comments on the video they should be analysed to understand how far the video has reached.

7/20 Item 7 – Finance Report (PHA/01/01/20)

7/20.1 Mr Cummings explained to members that although PHA has a year to date surplus of £2.9m this has to be set in the context of the overall HSC position where funding is required to cover the costs of any Agenda for Change pay deal. He advised members that correspondence had been issued by the Department requesting that it be notified of any slippage and he was confident that the Department will seek the return of funding non-recurrently to cover current HSC pressures.

7/20.2 Mr Drew asked how the £2.9m surplus would have been allocated. Mr McClean explained that it would have covered a range of both Screening and Health Improvement initiatives. He said that some of the funding would have gone to non-statutory providers to cover a range of areas of priority to the PHA. Alderman Porter suggested that when PHA returns any funding it should state how the funding would have been utilised. Mr Clayton asked how much of the £2.9m will be the final year-end surplus. Mr Cummings said that the spend towards the year-end will see the surplus reduce, but he anticipated that at least £1m will be returned.

7/20.3 Members noted the Finance Report.

8/20 Item 8 – Update from Chair of Governance and Audit Committee (PHA/02/01/20)

8/20.1 Mr Drew began his update by referring to the approved minutes of the Governance and Audit Committee meeting on 3 October. He explained to members that the one key finding relating to the Lifeline audit referred to KPIs regarding performance management, the issue being not that calls weren't being answered quickly enough, but that there was no measurement in place.

8/20.2 Mr Drew advised that the Committee met on 5 December and that there will be an update on the Family Nurse Partnership at a future Board meeting. He noted that the Northern Ireland Ambulance Service had completed its PPI self-assessment, and that an audit on risk management has been deferred.

8/20.3 Mr Drew said that he had received the BSO Annual Assurance letter and that there remained issues in regard to payroll, although there has been

- good progress in implementing some of the previous audit recommendations.
- 8/20.4 Mr Drew advised that the Committee had considered the latest version of the Corporate Risk Register, and that one new risk had been added relating to industrial action. He added that an update on fraud had been received and that there were no new cases. He also said that the main issue emanating from the latest Information Governance action plan related to the uptake of mandatory training, but that measures were being taken to address this. Finally, he said that the latest report on Direct Award Contracts showed that there had been a slight increase in the number of these, but this was due to additional initiatives through Transformation funding.
- 8/20.5 The Board noted the update from the Chair of the Governance and Audit Committee.
- 9/20 Item 9 - Review of PHA Standing Orders, Standing Financial Instructions and Scheme of Delegated Authority (PHA/03/01/20)**
- 9/20.1 Mr McClean advised that the Standing Orders, Standing Financial Instructions and Scheme of Delegated Authority had been reviewed and updated, with the key updates relating to the constitution of the Agency Management Team with the appointment of a Director of Quality Assurance, and the change in terminology from Single Tender Actions to Direct Award Contracts.
- 9/20.2 The Board **approved** the PHA Standing Orders, Standing Financial Instructions and Scheme of Delegated Authority.
- 10/20 Item 10 - Business Continuity Management Revised Plan and Policy (PHA/04/01/20)**
- 10/20.1 Mr McClean said that the PHA Business Continuity Plan had been revised following a “walk through” of the Plan which had taken place last year following a requirement by the Department of Health to provide an assurance that all Plans were fit for purpose in the event of a No Deal EU Exit. He said that a number of adjustments had been made and that the Plan will be continually kept under review.
- 10/20.2 The Board **approved** the Business Continuity Management Plan and Policy.
- 11/20 Item 11 - Update on Personal and Public Involvement (PHA/05/01/20)**
- Mr Martin Quinn, Ms Bronach McMonagle and Ms Torie Tennant joined the meeting for this item*
- 11/20.1 Mr Morton introduced the Report and said that it was good to see strides

- being made in terms of service users being involved in decision making. He said that the Report also gave an update on a range of Transformation programmes and also the development of a remuneration policy that properly recognises those with lived experience.
- 11/20.2 Mr Quinn informed members that PHA had been able to access up to £500k of Transformation funding which he said stimulated a lot of PPI-related activity. He said that he would wish to bring a fuller report on all of the work carried out to a future meeting. He explained that there were now Involvement officers within each Trust and he said that there was beginning to be a change in attitude towards PPI.
- 11/20.3 Mr Quinn advised that UK-wide standards on involvement in research were recently launched as there has been great interest in the research community regarding these. He added that PHA continues to provide a range of professional advice and guidance and is also delivering a training programme. He highlighted the Engage website and said that it has had more than 5,000 visitors.
- 11/20.4 Ms McMonagle gave members an overview of the recent Involve Fest event which took place in November. She said that it was a week-long celebration with over 60 events and 56 different organisations being involved, the highlight of which was a one-day conference hosted by Paul Clark. She explained that there were four objectives for the conference. She invited Ms Tennant to give her observations on the event.
- 11/20.5 Ms Tennant said that she felt involved in the event from the start and that as a service user her views were taken into account. She said that she got a lot out of the event and that it was a success.
- 11/20.6 The Chair said that he had attended the event and noted the commitment and enthusiasm of all in attendance and he offered his congratulations to those involved in the planning.
- 11/20.7 Ms Mann-Kler thanked the team for their presentation and asked what key outcomes they had been seeking from the Involve Fest conference. Ms McMonagle said that she was hoping that this would become an annual event and she said that everyone involved wanted to make it as meaningful as possible. In terms of outcomes, she highlighted awareness raising and getting people to become involved in co-production and co-design. Ms Tennant said that involvement can take all forms and that instead of talking about PPI, we should talk about involvement. Mr Quinn said that the people involved in the planning felt motivated because they could see their involvement being recognised. He said that a Post Project Evaluation will be written. He added that it was important to maintain the momentum gathered from the event.
- 11/20.8 Mr Morton said that Mr Quinn and his team are currently working on an

outcomes framework which will clearly show that involvement does make a difference.

- 11/20.9 Mr Clayton commended the work being done, but noted that the input of staff is equally important because there is a perception that PPI is only about service users and carers. Mr Quinn said that the contribution of staff is beginning to be recognised and that staff want to be involved. Ms McGonagle said that in terms of training, Ulster University is looking at developing training in PPI for AHPs
- 11/20.10 Ms Tennant noted that people can become involved in PPI if they wish to become involved. She said that she had become involved through her work with a charity.
- 11/20.11 The Chair thanked Mr Quinn, Ms McMonagle and Ms Tennant for their presentation.
- 11/20.12 The Board noted the update on Personal and Public Involvement.

12/20 Item 12 - Epidemiology of Tuberculosis in Northern Ireland Annual Surveillance Report 2018 (PHA/06/01/20)

Mr Mark O'Doherty and Ms Emma Dickson joined the meeting for this item.

- 12/20.1 Dr Mairs introduced the Report saying that although the number of cases of tuberculosis is relatively low, it remains an important issue for PHA, both in terms of the number of cases and the follow up treatment. He invited Mr O'Doherty to present the Report.
- 12/20.2 Mr O'Doherty advised that the rates of tuberculosis in Northern Ireland are low with a rate of 3 per 100,000. He said that as the numbers are so low, a 3-year moving average is used to monitor trends. Of the cases recorded, he said that 57% were non-UK nationals. He added that the rates are higher in males in the working population and people over the age of 65.
- 12/20.3 Mr O'Doherty advised that PHA pays particular attention to cases of pulmonary tuberculosis and that 70% of cases in Northern Ireland had a pulmonary component. He said that among Trusts, the highest levels are in the Southern Trust area, due to the high immigrant workforce. He added that the Belfast Trust has seen a downward trend in cases.
- 12/20.4 Mr O'Doherty explained that when a laboratory test is carried out to confirm a pulmonary case there is an 80% target for having a culture confirmed but Northern Ireland is currently sitting at 76%. In terms of resistance to drugs, he advised that Northern Ireland still has a low resistance to frontline drugs.
- 12/20.5 Mr O'Doherty said that of the 70 notified cases of tuberculosis in 2017,

PHA had received follow up on 64 of these cases, and that 78% had completed their treatment and in 13% of cases the patient either died or their treatment was extended.

- 12/20.6 Mr O'Doherty advised that there is an action plan which is focusing specifically on the Belfast and Southern Trusts to reduce the incidence of latent tuberculosis.
- 12/20.7 Alderman Porter asked if the countries whose immigrants are more likely to have tuberculosis are identified. Mr O'Doherty said that as the number of cases is low this could make individuals identifiable.
- 12/20.8 Mr Clayton suggested that within the Southern Trust area, there are community groups who could be approached and he suggested STEP in Dungannon. He said that people may be reluctant to speak to their employers but may approach a local community group to seek advice. Mr Morton also suggested the Homeless Inclusion Hub.
- 12/20.9 The Chair thanked Mr O'Doherty and Ms Dickson for their attendance at the meeting.
- 12/20.10 The Board noted the Epidemiology of Tuberculosis in Northern Ireland Annual Surveillance Report 2018.

13/20 Item 13 – Any Other Business

- 13/20.1 There was no other business.

14/20 Item 14 – Details of Next Meeting

Thursday 20 February 2020 at 1:30pm

Fifth Floor Meeting Room, 12/22 Linenhall Street, Belfast, BT2 8BS

Signed by Chair:



Date: 20 February 2020