

**Minutes of the 34th Meeting of the Public Health Agency board
held on Thursday 15 September 2011, at 1:30pm,
The Board Room, Gransha Park House,
15 Gransha Park, Clooney Road, Londonderry, BT47 6FN**

PRESENT:

- Ms M McMahon - Chair
- Dr E Rooney - Chief Executive
- Mrs M Hinds - Director of Nursing and Allied Health Professionals
- Mrs J Erskine - Non-Executive Director
- Mr T Mahaffy - Non-Executive Director
- Mr R Orr - Non-Executive Director

IN ATTENDANCE:

- Ms J Jackson - Chief Executive's Office/Committee Manager
- Mrs M Black - For Director of Public Health
- Dr M McCartney - Consultant in Public Health
- Dr A Wilson - Consultant in Public Health
- Mr S Murray - Senior Manager Performance and Planning
- Mr S Christie - For Director of Finance, HSCB

APOLOGIES:

- Mrs F McAndrew - Director of Social Care and Children, HSCB
- Mr P Cummings - Director of Finance, HSCB
- Dr J Harbison - Non-Executive Director
- Mr E McClean - Director of Operations
- Dr C Harper - Director of Public Health/Medical Director
- Mrs M Hully - Chief Executive, Patient Client Council
- Mrs M Karp - Non-Executive Director

95/11

Declaration of Interest

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and asked if anyone had interests to declare before the meeting commenced. None were declared.

96/11

Chair's Business

The Chair updated members on several events she had attended since the previous board meeting. Of particular note were the following:

1. Sir Keith Pearson, Chair, Confederation in UK, was in NI on a 2 day visit and Chair was invited to attend one of the events marking the visit. Key messages from his speech included:
 - Public Health has to be at heart of HSC
 - Centre of health care needs to be home and community, not hospitals
 - Tele health, Tele-medicine and Tele-coaching are the way forward
 - Deficits must be dealt with
2. Chair was invited to speak at the Community Focus Learning Awards at Long Gallery in September. This local group promote health through learning by various means such as IT courses, Engaging with Arts, Minding ME and Disability Awareness amongst others. Over 80 certificates were given on the day and it offered participants an opportunity to celebrate their achievements.
3. Chair attended the 'Changing the Culture 2010' launch at Parliament Buildings on 14th September where the guests included Dr Bharat Patel. Further detail of the event will be covered in the November 2011 HCAI report to board.
4. Chair advised members of two upcoming NI Confederation Events:
 - Governance Seminar on 4 October in BHC from 2-4pm
 - Annual Conference 23 February, Armagh City Hotel

Chair concluded her business by advising that the recruitment process for 2 new Local Government Members had been completed and a Ministerial decision is awaited.

97/11

Chief Executive's Business

The Chief Executive provided feedback to board members on a series of Patient and Client Council Roadshows which commenced 7 September 2011 in Newry and are due to complete in October. Dr Rooney attended the first two and advised that while there had been a strong emphasis on local services there was also a keen interest on community services and in particular around prevention issues.

Dr Rooney suggested that one area for further consideration is communication and how PHA engage with the public and stakeholders. Initial feedback from the Roadshows had indicated that the public prefer face to face contact and PHA

need to ensure that this is considered in any engagement exercises.

The Chief Executive attended a workshop held by the Belfast Strategic Partnership on 8 September 2011. This partnership was formed from a number of groups and provides a cohesive approach to working together for the community, voluntary and statutory sectors. It will influence PHA strategy and assist in the working relationship with Local Government.

PHA Accommodation Issues

Dr Rooney advised members that an offer of accommodation on the 4th Floor, Linenhall Street, has been made to PHA by the Chief Executive of the HSCB. While there are still staffing and governance issues to be finalised, Dr Rooney notified the board that he does intend to accept the offer and move PHA HQ to Linenhall Street.

Information gathering will be completed in the next week and once plans are finalised, Dr Rooney agreed to write to board members updating them on progress.

Dr Rooney

98/11 Minutes of the PHA board Meeting held on 18 August 2011

Members agreed the minutes of the meeting held on 18 August 2011 as an accurate record of the meeting. The minutes were duly signed by the Chair.

99/11 Matters Arising

Trust Delivery Plans

Mr McClean informed members that HSCB had proposed a workshop for reviewing and signing off the Trust Delivery Plans in the period of 22 to 27 September 2011.

Mr McClean will liaise with Mr Bloomfield regarding confirmation of the date and time for the workshop.

Event: Trust Delivery Plans – Workshop

Date: 27 September 2011

Time: 11.30am - 1:30pm

HSC R&D Division Update

Dr Michael Neely provided a verbal update on the HSC R&D Division to members on the progress against the PHA corporate objectives and the R&D business plan for the period

April 2011- August 2011. Dr Neely also circulated the R&D Newsletter to members for information.

The Chair asked for a copy of this report to be posted directly to Dr Jeremy Harbison.

Electronic and Hard Copy sent to Dr Harbison 19 August 2011

Somalia Fundraising Update

Mrs Hinds circulated a brief summary of what events had taken place to raise money and reminding all of the reasons behind the event. She thanked all those who had taken part and informed the board that to date a total of £4,292.75 has been raised.

The Chair thanked Mrs Hinds and all those involved for their achievements.

Finance Report

100/11

Mr Christie summarised the Finance paper which detailed the PHA financial performance report up to 31 July 2011. He advised that a similar pattern had been maintained from the previous month, with a surplus of Programme Funds standing at £7.527m. He asked members to note the following in relation to the surplus:

- Subject to normal business ongoing, it is anticipated that the current surplus will reduce in the second half of the year
- PHA have identified a number of initiatives where any surplus in funding could be used including an opportunity to use some of the surplus for additional campaigns
- There may be an obligation to surrender funds to DHSSPS in the near future.

Several board members expressed concern at the amount of underspend and requested that a more detailed breakdown of expenditure be included in the Finance Performance Report for the October 2011 board meeting. Queries were also raised at how any underspend may be used and assurances sought that this would be linked to current priorities.

Mr Cummings

The Chief Executive assured members that any unused funds will be allocated judiciously and that he is confident that each line of expenditure can be explained. A huge effort has been

made to identify each budget line and allocate spend to each programme, however Dr Rooney acknowledged that further work needs to be done to reassure board members on the robustness of the Agency's financial systems.

Members thanked those staff involved for all their work to date and agreed that progress should continue to be monitored.

101/11 PHA Management of Seasonal Flu 2011/12

Dr McCartney presented PHA plans for management of seasonal flu in 2011/2012 which included the following:

- Surveillance
- Vaccination Programme
- Outbreak/incident management
- Communications overview

Dr McCartney advised that based on evidence of a quieter season in the Southern Hemisphere this year, health professionals are cautiously optimistic that a similar pattern may be experienced in the Northern Hemisphere. She also presented statistics of Vaccination uptake rates for 2010/11 which showed a very good uptake amongst the 65+ and under 65 "at risk" population.

Mr Orr acknowledged the good uptake amongst some target groups but asked if the 18% uptake amongst Trust staff was cause for concern. Dr McCartney admitted that this figure was disappointing however she assured board members that a lot of effort has been made to raise the uptake amongst this group for the incoming season.

Another query was the provision of vaccination for nursing home staff and Dr McCartney agreed to check that this is provided by Trust Occupational Health units.

Dr McCartney

Members noted the paper and thanked Dr McCartney and all her team for their efforts in ensuring that PHA is prepared for the 2011/12 season.

102/11 Surveillance of Influenza in NI

Dr McCartney briefed members on the surveillance arrangements and epidemiology of influenza in N. Ireland for winter 2010-11. She confirmed that higher than normal levels

of seasonal influenza were experienced, with Clinical indices peaking end December/early January period. The age group most affected by influenza were the 15-44 age group and 31 deaths associated with influenza were confirmed.

Members noted the paper.

103/11 Health and Social Wellbeing Update

Mrs Mary Black provided an update on a number of key areas for the quarterly report. She advised members that the development of a new Public Health Strategy is underway; a Project Board has been established, chaired by Chief Medical Officer, Dr Michael McBride, and membership includes both Dr Rooney and Dr Harper.

Mrs Black also outlined progress and actions on 4 key areas – Tobacco, Obesity, Minority Ethnic Health and Wellbeing and Travellers Health and Wellbeing. She described many achievements to date but acknowledged that challenges still remain which can only be achieved by partnership working with HSCB and others.

104/11 PHA:HSCB:BSO Joint Response Emergency Plan

Dr Wilson presented the plan to the board for approval. She reminded members that this is a joint BSO-HSCB-PHA plan and advised that it will be presented to all 3 boards this month for approval.

Training on the plan has been carried out for all key staff and it was noted that a test of the plan was carried out for real during the severe weather of December 2010. The plan proved fit for purpose with only a few amendments to be made.

Mrs Erskine queried PHA governance arrangements for the Plan; she noted that Internal Audit had identified the Governance & Audit Committee as the most appropriate group for the Plan to be added as a standing agenda item, however to date this had not been presented to the committee. Mrs Erskine asked that further detail be included on when this would take place.

Dr Rooney also requested that the Plan be more explicit on when the Chief Executives would be briefed, preferably simultaneously.

Dr Wilson

Dr Wilson

The Chair advised that the Joint Response Emergency Plan has been included in a draft board calendar for PHA. Members approved the paper subject to the suggested amendments.

105/11 Annual Review of Progress to the Equality Commission 2010-11

Members were asked to approve the paper which is due for submission to the Equality Commission by 30 September 2011. Mr Murray explained that the rationale for the paper is to ensure that statutory duties are met and that organisations develop an evidence base for their equality obligations. The main challenge is to embed equality into all aspects of work and PHA has developed a screening template which must be completed for all new policies and other initiatives. Members discussed governance of mainstreaming equality and how this could be addressed. One suggestion was that equality should be a standard item for consideration at each PHA board workshop.

Members approved the paper.

106/11 PHA Performance Management Update

The Performance Management report provided an update on the priority targets identified in the "Commissioning Plan Directions" and on the outstanding Priorities for Action 2010-11.

Of particular note were the four targets which remain red; these are the Regional Obesity Prevention Framework, the Mental Health and Wellbeing Promotion Strategy, reduction of suicide rates and the introduction of the bowel screening programme. Given that the first two of these are dependent on publication of DHSSPS reports, members debated whether wording on these could be amended to state more explicitly that achievability is dependent on the actions of other organizations.

Members noted the report.

107/11 Any Other Business

Mrs Hinds informed members that Mr Eddie Ritson's had been unable to accompany Minister Poots to the USA; the trip had to

be postponed due to the adverse weather conditions at the time.


Date, Time and Venue of next meeting

Date: 20 October 2011

Time: 1:30pm

Venue: The Board Room
Farset International
466 Springfield Road
Belfast
BT12 7DW

Signed by Chair:

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mary Mc Mahon". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'M' and a long, sweeping underline.

Date: 20 October 2011