

MINUTES

**Minutes of the 53rd Meeting of the Public Health Agency board
held on Thursday 18 April 2013 at 1:30pm,
in Public Health Agency, Conference Rooms,
12/22 Linenhall Street, Belfast, BT2 8BS**

PRESENT:

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

IN ATTENDANCE:

Mrs Mary Black	- Assistant Director, Health Improvement (<i>For item 11</i>)
Mr Paul Cummings	- Director of Finance, HSCB
Mrs Fionnuala McAndrew	- Director of Social Care and Children, HSCB
Mr Robert Graham	- Secretariat

APOLOGIES:

Alderman William Ashe	- Non-Executive Director
Mrs Maeve Hully	- Chief Executive, Patient Client Council

		Action
41/13	Item 1 – Apologies	
41/13.1	The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.	
42/13	Item 2 - Declaration of Interests	
42/13.1	The Chair asked if anyone had interests to declare relevant to any items on the agenda. None were declared.	

43/13 Item 3 – Chair’s Business

- 43/13.1 The Chair informed members that a donation had been made to WAVE, as requested by Ronnie Orr to mark his departure from the PHA board. With regard to the process for recruiting a replacement board member, the Chair advised that shortlisting and interview dates had been arranged for May 2013.
- 43/13.2 The Chair said that the Board self-assessment would be brought to the meeting in May for approval by the board. She added that at the May meeting, there would be a presentation from Belfast Positive Ageing.
- 43/13.3 The Chair reminded members to complete their appraisal forms and she said that a meeting of the Remuneration Committee had been scheduled for 17 May.
- 43/13.4 The Chair proposed that members convene at midday on 16 May to have a workshop with a presentation from Dr Sloan Harper on integrated care partnerships.
- 43/13.5 The Chair reminded members of the Francis Inquiry seminar on 24 April and added that a further breakfast seminar was being arranged for 17 May, facilitated by RQIA. The Chair requested that members hold 11 September for a full day workshop.
- 43/13.6 The Chair moved on to update the board on meetings she had attended since the last meeting. This included a stakeholder event on gender equality organised by the University of Ulster, a Belfast Health Cities lecture on health inequalities and a Connected Health event held in the Long Gallery at Stormont.
- 43/13.7 The Chair advised that she had been asked to attend a meeting of the Bamford Project Board. She said that the meeting was very useful and that she would asked Aidan Murray to update the board at a future meeting on some of the initiatives discussed.

44/13 Item 4 – Chief Executive’s Business

- 44/13.1 The Chief Executive told the board that he had recently attended the final event in the Belfast Healthy Cities 25th anniversary seminar series. The keynote speaker, Ilona Kickbusch had attended an informative breakfast meeting earlier that morning.

44/13.2 The Chief Executive advised that he had also attended the Opportunity Youth 20th Anniversary conference which was on the theme of Drugs and Alcohol and also the Annual General Meeting of the All Party Group on Heart Disease & Stroke.

44/13.3 The Chief Executive completed his business by saying that, along with the Chair, he had met with a delegation from the NIC-ICTU Health Services sub-committee.

45/13 Item 5 - Minutes of the PHA board Meeting held on 21 February 2013

45/13.1 The minutes of the previous meeting, held on 21 March 2013, were approved subject to the amendments.

45/13.2 Members agreed the proposed amendments to paragraphs 34/13.1 to 34/13.3 which were tabled by the Chief Executive to which gave further detail on the discussions at that point.

45/13.3 Amendments were also agreed to paragraphs 36/13.4, 38/13.6 and 39/13.3.

46/13 Item 6 – Matters Arising

46/13.1 Alderman Porter advised that the issue he had raised under Any Other Business regarding a shortage of bus drivers had been resolved but he agreed to discuss the matter with Mrs McAndrew following the meeting.

**47/13 Item 7 – Finance
PHA Financial Performance Report (PHA/01/04/13)**

47/13.1 Mr Cummings gave an overview of the current situation with regard to the proposed timetable for the auditing of the end of year accounts. He said that due to ongoing issues with regard to the reliability of the new financial system, the audit process may be extended by two weeks. He said that there are a lot of payments within the goods and services accounts that need to be appropriately coded and that staff are under pressure to complete this work.

47/13.2 Mr Cummings went on to highlight issues with the payroll system

and how it interfaces with the general ledger. He stressed that, to date, he was not aware of any member of staff who had been paid incorrectly. He said that attempts were being made to resolve these issues with the supplier, but so far without success. He advised the board that a Post Project Evaluation would be undertaken and those responsible for the implementation will be held accountable for the lack of system testing.

47/13.3 Mr Cummings moved on to the Finance Report and said that at the end of February 2013, PHA had approximately £9m of programme expenditure to be allocated during March 2013.

47/13.4 Alderman Porter expressed concern that smaller community groups may be experiencing difficulties due to delays in receiving payments. Mr Cummings said that if any organization contacted PHA regarding an outstanding payment, this could be resolved by undertaking a manual process to authorize their payment.

47/13.5 Dr Rooney said that, following recent discussions with budget managers, he was confident that all of the funding that was due to be issued had been issued. The Chair asked if it was possible for PHA to discharge funding earlier in the financial year. Dr Rooney said further progress will be made to make this happen but PHA would not be able to correct this until new procurement arrangements were in place.

47/13.6 Dr Harbison queried the £2m underspend in research and development but Mr Cummings assured him that the budget had been fully spent. Dr Harper confirmed that this was the case.

47/13.7 The board noted the Finance Report.

48/13 Item 8 – Director of Public Health Annual Report 2012 (PHA/02/04/13)

48/13.1 Dr Harper presented the fourth annual Director of Public Health report to the board and said that the theme of this year's report had been older people. She thanked the staff who had worked to compile the report and explained that the target audience is practitioners and interested members of the public. Dr Harper said that the report would be launched at the Public Health annual conference in June 2013.

- 48/13.2 Dr Harper said that the key messages emanating from the Report showed that the population is ageing, life expectancy has increased and that older people are contributing to society and to the economy. However, there remain challenges in areas such as poverty, social isolation and reliance on the state pension.
- 48/13.3 Dr Harper moved on to give an overview of some of the articles within the report. She made reference to the AAA Screening Programme for which there will be a media campaign in 2013. Dr Harper also made reference to the self-management programme with regard to pulmonary rehabilitation and also, the effectiveness of drugs to treat neovascular age-related macular degeneration (wet AMD).
- 48/13.4 Dr Harper advised that, in terms of the flu vaccine, Northern Ireland has the highest rate of uptake in the UK and that Dr Richard Smithson was currently attending a meeting in London regarding flu.
- 48/13.5 Dr Harbison welcomed the report and said that it contained a good blend between reporting on initiatives that PHA has already delivered on, but also looked at future initiatives. He noted that PHA is involved in rolling out many programmes across each Trust area and queried whether there should be an increased focus on programmes being rolled out centrally to ensure consistency of approach. Dr Harbison queried, in regard to fuel poverty, whether PHA had a target in terms of the number of home safe assessments it wished to carry out.
- 48/13.6 The Chair asked about the bowel screening programme and what the expected uptake was. Dr Harper said that Northern Ireland currently had a 48% uptake which is slightly below the target of 55%. The Chair asked whether there was a point where it may be determined that a screening programme may not be worthwhile. Dr Harper said that it was PHA's goal that people could have an informed choice regarding whether they wished to take up an invitation for screening.
- 48/13.7 Alderman Porter asked about the process for developing media campaigns. It was explained that workshops are carried out with a number of groups and that each aspect of the campaign e.g. the choice of actor, the wording, the phraseology, is based on the outputs from the research.

48/13.8 Dr Harbison asked about the progress of the Public Health Strategy. Dr Harper advised that the draft Strategy was currently being revised following the responses received from the public consultation and she anticipated that the updated Strategy would be ready by the summer. Dr Harbison then asked about the Strategy for Older People. The Chief Executive agreed to follow this up with OFMDFM.

48/13.9 The Chief Executive said that there is a challenge for PHA to identify programmes that are worthwhile and will impact on those that need them and to also identify potential partner organisations to deliver these. In terms of programmes which relate to older people, he said that good building blocks have been put in place but PHA should continue to see where it can make further improvement.

48/13.10 Members noted the Public Health Report.

**49/13 Item 9 – Governance and Audit Committee Meeting
(PHA/03/04/13)**

49/13.1 Mrs Erskine advised board members that at the Governance and Audit Committee meeting, members had given consideration to the report on how the recommendations emanating from the recent audit of contracts with the community and voluntary sector were being implemented. She reported that 73% of the Internal Audit recommendations had been fully implemented and she commended the work of staff to achieve this.

49/13.2 Mrs Erskine said that the Committee had considered and approved the draft Annual Report and the Governance Statement. She highlighted the issues regarding BSTP and said that she would be writing to the Chair of the BSO Audit Committee highlighting the Committee's concerns.

49/13.3 The Chair expressed her thanks to the staff who are working to resolve the difficulties. Mr Mahaffy noted that there are issues of accountability in relation to those who agreed to implement the system without adequate testing.

49/13.4 Members noted the update from the Committee chair.

50/13 Item 10 – Review of Standing Orders and Standing Financial Instructions (PHA/04/04/13)

50/13.1 Mr McClean advised members that Standing Orders and Standing Financial Instructions had been updated in line with relevant DHSSPS guidance and circulars. Mr Cummings added that the Standing Financial Instructions had been updated to reference the new financial systems. Members were advised that the changes had been approved by the Governance and Audit Committee.

50/13.2 Members approved the review of Standing Orders and Standing Financial Instructions.

51/13 Item 11 – Health and Social Wellbeing Improvement Update (PHA/05/04/13)

51/13.1 Mrs Black presented the update on Health and Social Wellbeing Improvement to the board. She said that the purpose of the report was to give an update on the various aspects of PHA's Health Improvement agenda, focusing particularly on examples of work under four building blocks based on the Marmot Review, namely Give Every Child and Young Person the Best Start in Life, Build Sustainable Communities, Work with Others to Ensure a Decent Standard of Living and Make Healthy Choices Easier.

51/13.2 Under Give Every Child and Young Person the Best Start in Life Mrs Black made reference to infant mental health programmes and initiatives to increase levels of breastfeeding. Under Work with Others to Ensure a Decent Standard of Living, Mrs Black gave an overview of MARA and also the Fareshare initiative.

51/13.3 Mrs Black made reference to the Farm Family Health Check Scheme under Build Sustainable Communities and outlined how 1,500 clients have accessed this service. She also told members about the Resurgam Programme and work with Older People.

51/13.4 The final area that Mrs Black updated members on was Making Healthy Choices Easier. She outlined initiatives regarding obesity, including a partnership initiative with DRD. Mrs Black gave members details of a pilot programme PHA had developed in the South Eastern Trust area as part of its sexual health programme. Finally, she gave an update on the self-harm registry and said that this had been rolled out across all five HSC trusts.

- 51/13.5 Mrs Black concluded by saying that during 2013/14, the Health Improvement team within PHA will look to review its business management processes following the completion of a new manual. In terms of new initiatives, Mrs Black informed members about the “Homelessness and Health” programme.
- 51/13.6 Mrs Karp thanked Mrs Black for the overview and offered her congratulations to the team for delivering all of the outcomes detailed in the report.
- 51/13.7 Alderman Porter asked whether MARA was available across all of Northern Ireland. Mrs Black said that this funding is available throughout all of Northern Ireland and that opportunities to apply for funding are widely advertised.
- 51/13.8 Mr Mahaffy asked about PHA’s role with respect to the LGBT Strategy and the issue of homophobic bullying within schools. He also raised concerns about ensuring that domiciliary care workers have a decent standard of living. Mrs Black said that there is an RSE curriculum for schools and this has identified LGBT groups as being particularly vulnerable. She acknowledged that there are issues with regard to ensuring a decent standard of living for individuals but PHA has provided briefings following the recent welfare reforms.
- 51/13.9 Dr Harbison asked about the evaluation of MARA which showed that £9 has been saved for every £1 spent and how this had been conducted. Mrs Black undertook to forward the evaluation to Dr Harbison.
- 51/13.10 Members asked about how PHA makes the general public aware of its initiatives and their success. Dr Rooney said that the Minister would attend launches and PHA events but he acknowledged that PHA needs to give further consideration to the branding of the activities it supports.
- 51/13.11 Members noted the update on Health Improvement.
- 52/13 Item 12 – Any Other Business**
- 52/13.1 Dr Harbison asked about Northern Ireland’s immunisation levels for measles in light of the current outbreak in Wales. Dr Harper said that Northern Ireland’s uptake is the highest in the UK at over

95%. She said that a small number of cases had been detected but added that extra clinics for carrying out vaccinations could be made available. She added that measures are in place to ensure that any child displaying symptoms would be isolated in hospital and anyone exposed offered vaccination. Dr Harper advised that PHA has undertaken training with GPs and helped produce an FAQ leaflet for parents.

53/13 Item 13 – Date and Time of Next Meeting

Date: Thursday 16 May 2013
Time: 1:30pm
Venue: Public Health Agency
Conference Rooms
2nd Floor
12-22 Linenhall Street
Belfast
BT2 8BS

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'.

Date: 16 May 2013