

Minutes of the 25th Meeting of the Public Health Agency board held at 1:30pm Thursday 20 January 2011, in the Conference Room, PHA, 18 Ormeau Avenue, BT2 8HS

PRESENT:

- Ms M McMahon - Chair
- Dr E Rooney - Chief Executive
- Mr E McClean - Director of Operations
- Dr C Harper - Director of Public Health/Medical Director
- Mrs M Hinds - Director of Nursing & Allied Health Professionals
- Mrs J Erskine - Non-Executive Director
- Mrs M Karp - Non-Executive Director
- Cllr C Mullaghan - Non-Executive Director
- Cllr S Nicholl - Non-Executive Director
- Mr T Mahaffy - Non-Executive Director
- Mr R Orr - Non-Executive Director
- Dr J Harbison - Non-Executive Director
- Mrs M Hully - Chief Executive, Patient and Client Council

IN ATTENDANCE:

- Mr S Christie - Assistant Director of Financial Management (on behalf of Mr Cummings)
- Ms J Jackson - Secretariat

APOLOGIES:

- Mrs F McAndrews - Director of Social Care and Children, HSCB
- Mr P Cummings - Director of Finance

01/11	Chair's Business	Action
	<p>The Chair welcomed members to the meeting and asked members if they had any interests to declare before the meeting commenced. None were declared.</p> <p>The Chair apologised for not being able to attend a number of staff Christmas functions due to the adverse weather conditions. She then gave a verbal update on appointments she had attended since the last PHA board meeting (16/12/10) which are listed below:</p> <p>05.01.11 Smoking Campaign Launch - Ormeau Avenue</p> <p>11.01.11 NICON Meeting: (a) Pre Election briefing (b) Conference 23 February - Chair requested that members respond to their invites to the conference.</p> <p>12.01.11 PCC Membership Scheme Launch in Long Gallery</p> <p>The Chair informed members that the timetable and agendas for the board workshops from April to June are currently being finalised and will be circulated within the next few weeks.</p>	Chair
02/11	Chief Executive's Business	
	<p>The Chief Executive expressed his thanks to all PHA staff for their efforts to attend work despite weather conditions in December.</p> <p>The Chief Executive then updated members on a number of appointments he had attended since the last PHA board Meeting (16.12.10). These were as follows:</p> <p>17.12.10 Meeting with Diane Keys, Conservation Volunteers: Dr Rooney informed that dialogue will continue between PHA and Conservation Volunteers.</p> <p>17.12.10 Visit to BCH Nephrology Dept: Dr Rooney found the visit very informative.</p>	

19.01.11 Meeting with Sir Michael Marmot President of the BMA. Dr Rooney informed members that this had been a very positive meeting; Sir Michael voiced his support for regional action and will send his team over for a meeting with local representatives in the near future.

Media Update

Dr Rooney circulated a paper to board members detailing the number of media mentions and interviews carried out by PHA for November, December and January. He thanked staff for their efforts in producing such a high volume of output and for their impressive level of commitment.

Mrs Erskine asked if similar information could be produced for Freedom of Information requests and Assembly Questions as it would be useful to show the amount of time spent on the provision of information. Mr McClean agreed to take the matter forward.

Mr McClean

03/11 Minutes of the PHA board Meeting held on 16 December 2010.

Members agreed the minutes of the meeting of 16 December 2010 as an accurate record and the minutes were duly signed by the Chair.

04/11 Matters Arising

110/10 Staff Attitude Survey 2009

The item has been deferred to the February 2011 board meeting.

114/10 PHA Corporate Risk Register

This item was deferred from the December meeting and is on today's agenda (Item No 9).

Mr McClean

117/10 Care of the Elderly

It was agreed that this item should be discussed separately after the board meeting in order to agree a way forward.

Dr Harbison

127/10 Audit of Inequalities & Equality Scheme (PHA 02/12/10)

The issue is noted as an agenda item for the April PHA board Meeting. This will follow the 12 week consultation period which ends 31March 2011.

Mr McClean
Miss Taylor

128/10 Register of Members' Declared Interests (PHA 03/12/10)

The Register has been updated and placed on the Internet.

Members were asked to notify any changes as they occur.

05/11 Finance Report (PHA 01/01/11)

Mr Christie highlighted a number of issues in the report for board members:

- (i) As of end November 2010, PHA had an overall underspend of £649k; the majority of this relates to salaries and wages and is due to PHA restructuring. Some vacancies have only recently been filled while some are still outstanding.
- (ii) Mr Christie reported that PHA is still on course for achieving breakeven on programme expenditure.
- (iii) Mr Christie informed members that there is significant pressure on some expenditure areas, especially on Pharmaceutical budgets in Family Practitioner Services. In view of this, DHSSPSNI are seeking surrender of any unspent funds to ease pressures, and it is likely that PHA may be asked to consider returning some of their unspent budget.

HSCB Finance will keep PHA informed of developments.

Mr P Cummings

(iv) Consultation on Departmental Draft Budget

Mr Christie provided details on the proposed HSC budget for the next 4 years. While a cash increase of 7% is suggested, in real terms this would represent a reduction in expenditure of 2.4% over the same period. These figures will mean an expected 15.5% shortfall against delivery of departmental priorities.

Mr Christie advised that budget proposals are very front loaded to year 1 of the cycle; this may result in almost half of the 15.5% shortfall being incurred in year 1.

Dr Rooney confirmed that PHA has received no indicative allocations to date, however they are expected shortly. Based on these a response to the consultation will be sent to the Department. Mr Christie suggested that a joint HSCB/PHA response may be sent in view of the joint commissioning plan between the 2 organisations.

Following discussion, it was agreed that while PHA should consult with BSO and HSCB, a separate PHA response should be submitted as any reduction in budgets may affect some specific initiatives supported to date by PHA.

Ms McMahon
Dr Rooney

06/11 Governance and Audit Committee Meeting

(i) Minutes of Meeting 12 October 2010 (PHA 02/01/11) were shared with members for noting.

(ii) Update on January Meeting:

Mrs Erskine, Chair of the Governance and Audit Committee, briefed board members on the business discussed at the meeting of 10 January 2011. Issues included the following:

(a) Regional Governance & Audit Meeting

Mrs Erskine attended this meeting at the end of November 2010, along with other members of HSC governance/audit committees. While these were initially annual meetings, they are now quarterly with the next meeting due to take place 22 February 2011.

(b) Joint HSCB/PHA Lay Adviser Post

The successful candidate has been notified and is considering whether to accept the appointment. The delay is due to some terms & conditions of the post being amended on the advice of DHSSPS.

(c) Finance Update

Mr Cummings notified the GAC Meeting that the

timetable set down by the Department for final accounts 2010-2011 is extremely challenging; the situation is exacerbated by the fact that there are 4 public holidays between closing and submission. Members of the board were supportive of some leeway being given. Mr Cummings will keep the board informed on this matter.

(d) Information Governance

Mrs Erskine advised that the Information & Governance Manager post is re-advertised; the PHA continue to rely on HSCB information governance managers and subsequently progress on the Information Governance plan is delayed.

(e) Internal Audit

Mrs Erskine informed that members of the GAC had agreed a revised 3 year audit plan.

Ms McMahon thanked Mrs Erskine for her update and advised board members that an extraordinary board meeting will be required for to sign off PHA final accounts. Subject to the agreement of board members, it is planned to hold a confidential session prior to the PHA board workshop on 8 June 2011 from 12:00 - 13:00.

Members agreed the time and date of the extraordinary board Meeting.

07/11 Standing Orders (PHA 03/01/11)

Mr McClean notified members that several amendments had been made to the draft Standing Orders; these included ensuring adherence to Departmental guidelines on the use of management consultants, revision of some schedules and changes to arrangements for advertising board meetings from monthly notices to an annual press notice, with any changes to times or dates being placed on the PHA website.

Mr Mahaffey queried how PHA can ensure that groups know how they can make deputations at board meetings. Mr McClean advised that anticipated changes to the website in September will result in the site being more public facing and

informative, and that these changes should ensure that this type of information is in the public domain.

Ms McMahon asked members to approve the current draft Standing Orders. All members agreed the amendments.

08/11 PHA Corporate Risk Register (PHA 04/01/11)

Mr McClean advised that the Governance and Audit Committee approved the PHA Risk Register at their meeting of the 10 January 2011. The Register was brought to the January 2011 board at the request of members in order that they gain a wider understanding of all PHA risks.

Members were informed that the Corporate and Directorate Risk Registers are reviewed each quarter and following the last review, 2 key areas on the report (Risks 8 & 10) had both been reduced from high to medium risk.

Mrs Erskine advised that corporate risk 12 had been discussed at the Governance and Audit committee and as a result of those discussions; the risk will be extended to cover all contracts.

09/11 Performance Monitoring Report (PHA 05/01/11)

Mr McClean explained that the PHA is required to submit a quarterly benefits realisation report which sets out progress and forthcoming activities on the strategic benefits from the establishment of the Agency.

Members agreed the content of the report without further amendment.

10/11 Human Resources Report

(i) Employment Policies (PHA 06/01/11)

Mr McClean explained that HR (BSO) has developed a suite of HR policies harmonising and updating legacy policies and incorporating new regionally agreed policies where appropriate. He advised that these policies are standard throughout the HSC and have been agreed by staff side.

Mr Mahaffey asked if the screening exercise could be shared with members. Mr McClean agreed to follow up and come back to board members.

(ii) HR Strategy Update

Mr McClean advised that work on the HR strategy is ongoing. Cllr Mullaghan asked for an update on recruitment; Mr McClean informed that RPA is almost complete for the PHA and it is hoped to formally notify the Minister of the conclusion in the near future.

11/11 HCAI Monthly Report (PHA 07/01/11)

Dr Harper reported to members on HCA1 report - December 2010.

The report included the following:

- CDI & MRSA Progress Charts
- Performance Exception Reports x 1
- HCAI SAls lists
- HCAI Incidents/Outbreaks x 1
- Items to Note/Forward look - HALT Survey & SSI Surveillance
- Changing the Culture 2010 - Action Plan and RAG Rating

Dr Harper drew members attention to the Trust Performance Exception Report. She informed that *Clostridium difficile* (CDI) cases in the Northern Trust continue to be out of line with other Trusts and a high level meeting was held on 23rd November 2010 between PHA and the Trust to review progress and agree a set of actions to address the issue.

Cllr Nicholl enquired whether the PHA and Trusts are working with residential homes to ensure staff are aware of their role in the prevention and reduction of such cases. Dr Harper assured that PHA are working closely with this sector to ensure training is being provided.

PHA will continue to monitor the situation very closely.

12/11 Commissioning of Services (PHA 08/01/11)

Dr Janet Little, Assistant Director Service Development & Screening, gave a presentation to members on the commissioning of services. Dr Little included details on the 11 commissioning teams, their team structures and how they configure their areas of responsibility.

Dr Little explained that while the commissioning frameworks are due to be finalised by 24th January 2011, final decisions are difficult without an approved budget. In view of this it is unlikely that a final paper will be agreed before March 2011.

The Chair asked Dr Little how health inequalities are being addressed in the commissioning plan. Dr Little advised that it is the responsibility of all commissioning teams to take account of inequality issues in their commissioning agenda. She added that Local Commissioning Groups also offer a means for addressing inequality through their input to commissioning plans.

Mrs Hully advised that the Patient Client Council are due to run a series of roadshows over the next 6 weeks which aim to engage the public and seek feedback on what they expect from health services. Mrs Hully will provide feedback to PHA on the roadshows.

Mrs Hully

Ms McMahon thanked Dr Little for the presentation which members agreed was very informative.

13/11 Winter Flu Update

Dr Harper referred to packs which had been shared with members of the press at the Press briefing held in the Conference Room, PHA, earlier that day.

The pack included a copy of a joint PHA/HSCB/DHSSPS press release, a Swine Flu briefing, an Influenza Weekly Surveillance Bulletin and statistics detailing numbers of patients in Intensive Care and a regional Swine Flu occupancy.

Dr Harper reported an improvement on the previous week's

figures as new cases and GP consultation rates had all decreased significantly. While a number of patients remain in hospital due to swine flu, officials believe that the peak of this year's flu season has passed.

Ms McMahon thanked all those staff who had been involved with provision of information and dealing with the media for their tremendous effort in very difficult circumstances.

14/11 Any Other Business

Dr Harper circulated a draft copy of the Director of Public Health's annual copy for members comments and feedback. The report is due to be launched on 11February 2011.

14/11 Date, Time and Venue of Next Meeting

17 February 2011
1:30pm
The Bann Room
Farset International
466 Springfield Road
Belfast
BT12 7DW

Signed by Chair: _____

Date: _____