

**Minutes of the Fourth Meeting of the Public Health Agency
held at 2.00 pm on Thursday, 18 June 2009 in the Public
Health Agency, Ormeau Avenue Unit, 18 Ormeau Avenue,
Belfast, BT2 8HS**

PRESENT:

Ms M McMahon	-	Chair
Mrs J Erskine	-	Non-Executive Director
Dr J Harbison	-	Non-Executive Director
Dr C Harper	-	Director of Public Health/Medical Director
Ms M Karp	-	Non-Executive Director
Mr T Mahaffy	-	Non-Executive Director
Mr E McClean	-	Director of Operations
Mr C Mullaghan	-	Non-Executive Director
Mr S Nicholl	-	Non-Executive Director
Mr R Orr	-	Non-Executive Director
Dr E Rooney	-	Chief Executive

IN ATTENDANCE:

Mr P Cummings	-	Director of Finance, HSCB (left the meeting at 3.35pm)
Ms M Hully	-	Chief Executive, Patient and Client Council
Miss D Beer	-	Support Services Administrator
Mrs C Mohan	-	Secretariat

APOLOGIES:

Apologies for absence were received from Mrs M Hinds, Director of Nursing and Allied Health Professionals and Ms F McAndrew, Director of Social Care and Children.

24/09 Chairs Business

(i) **Welcome**

The Chair welcomed Mr Paul Cummings, Director of Finance, HSCB to his first meeting of the Public Health Agency (PHA).

(ii) **Update on Meetings**

a) **Physical Activity Strategy**

The Chair referred to her recent attendance at an enjoyable event organised to support the Physical Activity Strategy in the Clarendon complex.

Members noted that a DVD of the advertisement produced relating to physical activity and alcohol/substance abuse would be played at the end of the meeting.

b) **Non-Executive Director Training 22 May 2009**

The Chair stated and other Non-Executive Directors agreed that the training held on 22 May had been of value.

During discussion it was agreed that it would be of benefit to have further training, concentrating on the particular roles and responsibilities of Non-Executive Directors in the PHA.

Ed McClean

(iii) **Commissioning Event, 22 June 2009**

The Chair expressed her disappointment at the cancellation of the first Commissioner Development Programme event to have been held on 22 June 2009.

Mr McClean, Director of Operations, informed members that the HSCB Chief Executive felt that the event should be deferred until local government representatives are in place in Local Commissioning Groups.

Members noted that it is likely that the event will be rescheduled to September 2009 at the earliest.

25/09 Chief Executive's Business

(i) Update on Meetings

Dr Rooney, Chief Executive, informed members that, together with Mr McClean and Mr Cummings, Director of Finance, HSCB, he had met informally with representatives from the Northern Ireland Audit Office (NIAO) on Friday, 22 May.

Members noted that NIAO were considering contracting out the PHA audit to an outside body. Mr Cummings indicated that it would be preferable to have a single set of audit arrangements in place as the audit of HSCB finance systems would automatically cover PHA.

(ii) Appointments to PHA

Dr Rooney referred to recent appointments of Assistant Directors as follows:

Dr Lorraine Doherty	- Health Protection
Ms Mary Black	- Health & Social Wellbeing Improvement
Dr Janet Little	- Service Development * Screening
Dr Michael Neely	- Research & Development
Ms Michelle Tennyson	- Allied Health Professions & Public Involvement
Mrs Pat Cullen	- Patient Safety, Quality & Patient/Client Experience
Miss Rosemary Taylor	- Planning & Corporate Services
Mr Stephen Wilson	- Communication & Knowledge

Management

Dr Rooney confirmed that there is now a full complement of staff at Tier 3.

During discussion members welcomed the appointments and noted that further information, including contact details for key personnel would be provided.

26/09 **Minutes of the Previous Meeting held on 23 April 2009**

After consideration Members agreed the minutes of the previous meeting held on 21 May 2009 as an accurate record and the minutes were duly signed by the Chair.

27/09 **Matters Arising from the Minutes**

There were no matters arising.

28/08 **Corporate Business Plan**

Dr Rooney thanked members for their attendance at the PHA planning day held at Farset International on 12 June 2009, which focused on taking forward the development of the Corporate Business Plan.

Dr Rooney appreciated that it is an ambitious and wide ranging work programme which will need to be refined. He referred to the importance of having input from Non-Executive Directors.

During ensuing discussion members noted the value of the event and welcomed the opportunities available to a new organisation to set its own direction in working with a wide range of stakeholders.

Dr Rooney appreciated that while it will take time to establish the Agency, he felt it was important to establish a positive outcome oriented culture at an early stage.

Members noted that a draft of the Corporate Plan should be available for the August Board Meeting.

Dr Rooney

29/09 **Register of Members Interests**
(Paper No: PHA/01/06/09)

Members received and noted the contents of Paper No: PHA/01/06/09 being the Register of Members/declared interests as at May 2009.

The Chair advised that any changes should be notified to Mr McClean.

Mr McClean stated that interests for Mr Cummings will be added and reminded members that the Register will be brought to the Board at least annually.

Mr McClean

30/09 **Finance Update**

Dr Rooney informed members that a letter detailing the indicative allocation and planning assumptions for the PHA 2009/10 had been received from Julie Thompson, Director of Finance, DHSSPS NI on 17 June 2009. Copies of which were tabled for information (Paper No: PHA/04/06/09).

Members noted that the Agency's indicative expenditure allocation for 2009/10 of £71.4m is referred to in detail in the paper.

Dr Rooney stated that there was a strong emphasis on having to live within budget.

Dr Rooney stated that details of efficiency savings required in light of the Review of Public Administration have also been provided, the implications of which are being worked on and will be reported in detail at a future meeting. Members noted that a number of factors, including the current situation in relation to staff vacancies and applications for Voluntary Early Retirement and Voluntary Redundancy, will need to be examined when determining means of meeting savings targets.

Mr Cummings reinforced the views expressed by

Dr Rooney and while appreciating that challenging targets have been set, had no doubt that they would be achievable.

During discussion members highlighted the need to ensure that essential skills are not lost in the process.

In discussion in relation to staffing, members endorsed Mr McClean's comment that as the PHA is involved in the delivery of frontline services, as such it should be entitled to a share of the £53m reinvestment fund identified for this purpose.

Dr Harper, in agreement, referred to additional and exceptional expenditure in relation to the outbreak of swine flu and work in relation to screening.

The Chair expressed concern that the efficiencies required to staff budgets would have a detrimental impact on the Agency's ability to meet the expectations set by the Minister.

Mr Cummings stated that details are awaited from the DHSSPS in relation to figures for staffing in all three new organisations and confirmed that a further financial update will be available at the August 2009 Board meeting.

Mr Cummings

31/09 **Joint Commissioning Plan 2009/10**
(Paper No: PHA/02/06/09)

Members received for information Paper No: PHA/02/06/09 being a letter from Dr Michael McBride relating to the Joint Commissioning Plan 2009/10, the contents of which were noted.

In presenting the paper Mr McClean informed members that the letter details arrangements for the preparation by the HSC Board and PHA of a Joint Commissioning Plan for the period April 2009 to March 2010.

Mr McClean advised that the Department, having reviewed the HWIPs received from the four legacy Boards earlier this year, is content that they provide a reasonable response to

the objectives set out in Priorities for Action (PfA) 2009/10 and that they reflect the totality of funding then known to be available.

Mr McClean stated that the Joint Commissioning Plan provides an overview of commissioning intentions and investment plans of the HSCB and the PHA, across each of the priority areas identified by the Minister.

Members noted that there will not be an opportunity as a board to formally consider the Joint Commissioning Plan, as it is to be completed and returned to the Department by Friday, 26 June 2009. However members agreed that Executive PHA Directors should meet with the Senior Management Team of the HSCB next week to discuss the matter; in the interim the draft Joint Commissioning Plan would be emailed to Non-Executive Directors and comments would be welcome by next Monday so that they could be reflected in discussion with the board.

Mr McClean advised that the Joint Commissioning Plan would be brought for approval to the Special Board Meeting to be held on Wednesday, 8 July 2009.

All

The Chair acknowledged the tight timeframe and asked members to bring any issues of concern to Mr McClean in advance of the joint Senior Management Team meeting to be held next week.

All

32/09 **Swine Flu Update**

Dr Harper informed members that there have been a significant number of developments in relation to swine flu since the last board meeting.

Members noted that the World Health Organisation (WHO) had declared a Pandemic at level 6 at the end of last week, with the outbreak determined as mild in severity.

Dr Harper advised that the first death in the UK has been reported in Scotland, although it should be noted that the person involved had other health issues.

Dr Harper stated that 13 cases have now been identified in Northern Ireland, 11 travel related and 2 person to person. Members noted that all cases are mild in severity.

Dr Harper informed members that the first tripartite meeting, involving Chief Executives and Directors of the HSCB, PHA and Business Services Organisation (BSO) had been held on Monday, 15 June 2009.

Members noted that this forum will assist in sharing information and recommendations and will ensure that a joined up view is brought to the Department.

Dr Harper also referred to the development of a HR framework to provide a firmer basis for dealing with staffing issues relating to the operation of the swine flu centre.

Members noted that while the operational hours of the centre and the helpline have been reduced, the situation is being monitored in order to reassess requirements.

Dr Harper stated that further communications have been made with Voluntary Agencies and work is ongoing in relation to the vaccination programme. During discussion it was noted that Scotland and the Midlands have reported the highest number of confirmed cases.

Members thanked Dr Harper for the provision of regular updates on the outbreak, which are of great value.

Dr Harper in response to a question raised in relation to the availability of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), advised that stockpiles are and will be made available.

The Chair thanked Dr Harper for a helpful update on the situation.

33/09 **Role and Functions of the Public Health Agency – briefing**

Members received and noted the contents of tabled Paper No: PHA/03/06/09 being a briefing Paper on the Role and Functions of the Public Health Agency.

In presenting the paper Mr McClean referred to measurement and achievement of expectations over the next 20 months and in particular the business realisation objectives as detailed in the paper.

During discussion Mr McClean explained how some services, e.g. financial services support and human resources, are provided by the HSCB, while the PHA, in turn, provides public health, nursing and allied health profession input to commissioning.

Members felt that it will be important to see how such relationships are working and looked forward to receiving reports in the future when systems become established.

Mr McClean agreed the importance of benchmarking and noted that a number of targets have been under review for some time.

The Chair stated that a meeting of the Remuneration and Terms of Service Committee will be held when the Corporate Business Plan has been finalised.

Miss Taylor

34/09 **Any Other Business**

(i) **DVD produced on behalf of the Physical Activity Strategy**

Members watched a DVD produced on behalf of the Physical Activity Strategy, being an advertisement, aimed at children, on how to achieve 60 minutes activity each day. A second DVD aimed at teenagers highlighted the dangers of alcohol and substance abuse.

Members agreed the value of the advertisements and hoped that the medias accessed by young people were being utilised to get the message across.

It was felt that in future it would be of value to have children with disabilities featured in such advertisements.

During discussion members referred to partnership potential with the PSNI and Youth Justice Agency in relation to issues around alcohol and substance abuse.

(ii) **Special PHA Board Meeting, 8 July 2009**

Ms Hully, Ms Karp and Mr Mahaffey asked that their apologies are noted for the meeting of the PHA Board to be held on 8 July 2009

Mr McClean
Miss Taylor

Date and Time of Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, 8 July 2009 at 10.15 am.

Signed: _____ (Chair) Date: _____