DoF Departmental Board Meeting
The Board Room, Clare House

27 March 2017, 10.30am – 11.50am

Minutes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Departmental Board Members</th>
<th>In Attendance</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Colin Sullivan</td>
<td>Martin Monaghan (minutes)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mike Brennan</td>
<td>Anne Armstrong</td>
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<td>Brigitte Worth</td>
<td>Sharon Smyth</td>
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<td>Anne Breen</td>
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<td>Claire Archbold</td>
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<td>Colin Lewis</td>
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<td>Colum Boyle</td>
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<td>Paul Wickens</td>
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<td>Siobhan Carey</td>
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<td>Stephen Hodkinson</td>
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<td>Dolores O’Reilly</td>
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1. **Welcome/Apologies**

Colin Sullivan advised that David Sterling had been called to another meeting and that he would chair the Board in his absence. He welcomed Members and noted that Des Armstrong had sent his apologies, with Sharon Smyth deputising for him. He also formally welcomed Claire Archbold to her first meeting as a full Member of the Board.

Colin advised that this would be the last DoF Board meeting for Anne Breen and Colin Lewis, as they would be taking up new posts next month. On behalf of the Board, Colin thanked them both for the valuable contribution they had made and wished them well in their new roles.

No conflicts of interest were registered.

2. **Minutes from Previous Meeting/Matters Arising**

The minutes of the meeting on 27 February 2017 were agreed.

Board Members noted progress against the action points from the previous meeting.

3. **Finance Update – Feb 2017**

Brigitte Worth provided an update on the financial position at the end of February 2017 within the Department. She asked directors to keep a close eye on their financial position and to ensure that relevant expenditure was accrued appropriately at year-end.
Mike Brennan provided an overview of the current position at NI Block level. He also outlined some of the implications of not having an agreed budget for 2017/18 and the likelihood that David Sterling would now have to trigger powers under Section 59 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 to ensure key services continue to be funded.


Paul Wickens advised that until the Reform of Property Management project was fully implemented, it was a requirement under the Executive’s Asset Management Strategy that all departments had an annual Asset Management Plan, which was approved at Board level. He referred Members to the report and noted that the estate performance information related to the most recent audited figures available (i.e. y/e 31 March 2015).

Board Members discussed and agreed the Asset Management Plan. They also noted the potential that exists for greater use of ‘hot-desking’, given the increased use of flexible and mobile working arrangements. Board Members also recorded their appreciation for the quality of accommodation provided in new DoF buildings such as Bruce Street, Colby House and Lanyon Plaza.

5. **Procurement of External Professional Services for Major Projects in the Department**

Sharon Smyth advised that CPD was working with Business Consultancy Service to develop a Collaborative Framework Agreement for external professional services. She noted that the Framework will complement the current in-house resources and will cover a wide range of consultancy type services. Sharon added that there were common requirements across business areas in relation to professional services, but that there was no common shared definition of consultancy services.

Sharon therefore proposed that CPD would lead a working group to identify and agree a working definition for consultancy services and a specification for common services. The group would also be tasked with establishing common approaches to the procurement and contract management of external professional service providers.

Board Members discussed and agreed this proposal.

6. **Departmental Communications Team – Update**

Anne Breen advised that Phase 2 of the Communications Review, which centres around the transfer of internal communications work to a central team in Lanyon Plaza, was nearing completion. She added that the process of filling posts in the
new team was underway and that internal communications work will transfer from existing business areas to the central team in the near future.

Anne reminded Members that the aim of Phase 2 of the review was to consider the wider external communication needs of the Department and look at the rationalisation and funding of a centralised function. She asked Members to consider the most appropriate arrangements for progressing this stage of the review, given that she will no longer be available to lead the project following her move to NICS HR.

Board Members discussed the process for Phase 2 and the specific skills that would be needed in an external communications team.

Colum Boyle agreed to lead a project team consisting of communication representatives from each business area to take forward this work.

**Action: DB Members**

7. **Communications Update – Media Analysis**

Board Members noted the Communications Update and Media Analysis.

8. **Staff Brief Articles**

Board Members noted the proposed articles and suggested some further topics for the next Staff Brief.

9. **Strategic Issues – Engaging the Public**

Paul Wickens advised that, as part of the Grade 3 development programme, he was participating in a working group that was focusing on ‘Engaging the Public’. He provided some background to the work of the group and asked Members for their views on what they considered to be good public engagement.

Board Members discussed the various issues and suggested some areas for the working group to consider. Paul thanked Members for their contribution and advised that the working group would welcome additional participants if anyone else wished to volunteer.

10. **AOB**

Sharon Smyth and Brigitte Worth advised that HRMC will be implementing new rules from April 2017 that will change the way off-payroll work in the public sector is treated. They asked to Directors to engage with their finance business partners to ensure that contracts that may be affected by the new rules are identified and tested using the HMRC on-line tool.
Action: DB Members

Brigitte Worth reminded Members that Supply approval is required to take forward any agreements involving Guarantees and Indemnities. She asked Directors to ensure that Finance Division was informed of their plans in relation to these at an early stage.

Action: DB Members

Sharon Smyth referred to the recent Procurement Guidance Note on ‘Art in Government Construction Projects’ and asked Directors to ensure that a log is kept of any art purchased on this basis.

Action: DB Members

Colum Boyle provided an update in relation to the R3P project. He added that in order to facilitate the smooth transfer of functions, R3P staff members should be co-located with other LPS staff. He suggested that this issue should be added to the Corporate Risk Register to give the Board appropriate oversight.

Action: C Sullivan

Colin Sullivan reminded Members of previous correspondence in relation to the NICS Staff Engagement Week. He asked Members to forward outstanding nominations for representatives on the group.

Action: DB Members

MARTIN MONAGHAN
29 March 2017