

**Minutes of a meeting of the Board held on Thursday 1 September 2005  
at 2.00 pm in the Boardroom, NIMDTA `Beechill House`, 40 Beechill  
Road, Belfast**

**PRESENT:**

**Board Members**

Dr H McGuigan (Chairman)  
Mrs J Eve  
Dr R Atkinson  
Mrs A Eggert  
Mr A Baird

**Officers of the Agency**

Dr T McMurray  
Miss M L Roberts  
Mr T Hutchinson  
Dr D Hussey  
Miss R Campbell  
Dr A McKnight

1. **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

It was noted that Dr A McCormack, Permanent Secretary DHSSPS had agreed to officially open the Agency's premises at `Beechill House' on 10 November 2005.

2. **APOLOGIES**

Dr J Marley

3. **MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 30 JUNE 2005 (Paper B05/19)**

The minutes of the meeting held on 30 June 2005 copies of which had been circulated prior to the meeting, were approved.

4. **MATTERS ARISING**

Dealt with in the Agenda.

5. **REPORT FROM AUDIT SUB-COMMITTEE**

Mr Baird stated that the committee had examined the reports from internal and external audit and accepted the unqualified annual

accounts. He pointed out that there had been no priority 1 findings but a number of priority 2 findings and was happy that there had been satisfactory management of the Agency's accounts.

It was further noted that a service level agreement was in the process of being set up with South and East Belfast Trust for Fire Safety.

6. **NIMDTA ANNUAL REPORT (Draft 2004/2005) (Paper B05/20)**

Members received and ratified the draft annual report, subject to further editorial work. This was to ensure that the document would be clear to any member of the public.

It was noted that the Agency was required to submit the annual report to the Audit Office by 9 September 2005.

7. **FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2005 (Paper B05/21)**

The Finance Manager gave a presentation on the Agency's financial statements at 31 March 2005.

Members ratified the financial statements.

**Income and expenditure account**

The income received by the Agency was £37.6m an increase of 17.6% from last year. The expenditure for this period was £37.667m, an increase of 17.7% from last year.

There was an operating deficit of £63k and a retained surplus of £106k.

The level of prompt payments was 89%, a reduction from last year of 95% but the volume of prompt payments was 82%.

**Balance Sheet**

Fixed assets were £474k a reduction from last year's figure of £725k. There was also an impairment of £323k, which goes through the reserves and does not impact on the Agency's budget.

The level of debtors was £499k, an increase from £239k last year. There was also an increase in creditors from £1.167m last year to £1.945m.

The Agency was also holding a liability for the back pay element of the educators award.

**Audit findings**

It was noted that an inaccuracy on the study leave database resulted

in a creditor adjustment of £73k which had been identified by the auditors.

Mr Hutchinson stated that the system for the collection of course fees needed to be tightened to ensure that monies owed to the Agency were being received. He stated that a policy would be written by Senior Management in relation to this.

### **Expenses Claims**

It was noted that there was a requirement for the Chairman of the audit committee to sign off the Chairman's expenses and for the Chairman to sign off the Chief Executive's expenses.

## 8. **FINANCIAL UPDATE**

Mr Hutchinson gave a presentation on the Agency's current financial position.

### **He reported that the following items had been funded:**

Associate Postgraduate Dean's salary

MMC £132k for 27PAs and £34k for administrative support

Postgraduate Dental Dean - 1 additional session

GP Appraisal Co-ordinator post and administrative support

SpR posts - £512k

2 Dental SpR posts - £85k

### **Outstanding items:**

Recurrent element of GP and Dental Educator's pay

GP additional trainer grant

### **GP VT Training Budget**

It was noted that 50 GpRs had been appointed from 1 August 2005 and no additional funding had been made available. The car allowance had been withheld from GpRs, which was a saving of £173K. At 31 July 2005 31% of this budget had been spent. It was unclear at this stage what the impact on the costs of maternity leave and sick leave would be on this budget.

### **Study leave budget**

In relation to the study leave budget 31% of this budget had been allocated to date. The current allocation for study leave was based on £1k for an SpR and £750 for an SHO. A reserve in this budget was of £35k.

## **Operational budget**

There was currently a surplus in the salaries budget of £18k due to the delay in the filling of posts.

Print and stationery expenditure was currently £11k, and there was a deficit in the telephone and postage budget of £3k and the advertising budget of £7k.

The costs associated with implementing Agenda for Change had not been budgeted for.

The costs of the new website would be approximately £30k which had also to be funded.

## **Junior doctors salaries**

Mr Hutchinson reported that £512k had been received for 3 SHO and 15 SpR posts, £131k for flexible training banding payments and £85k for 2 dental SpR posts.

He pointed out that delays in filling these posts had resolved some short term funding issues. Other funding issues had been resolved by deferring the payment of the GpR car allowance.

Mr Hutchinson suggested that the Agency should have courses identified to be run at short notice if funding became available.

The Board thanked Mr Hutchinson for the excellent report.

## 9. **REPORT FROM THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

Members received from the Chief Executive and welcomed a glossary of some of the educational bodies which the Agency was associated with .

## 10. **REPORT FROM THE POSTGRADUATE DENTAL DEAN**

### 10.1 **Committee structure**

The Postgraduate Dental Dean provided an outline of the Committee structure of the Dental Department. It was noted that there were 4 Committees of the Agency: CVT, Community Dentistry, Hospital Dentistry, and General Dental Practice.

### 10.2 **Courses for NI dentists without NHS Patients**

The Postgraduate Dental Dean reported that he had been asked at the last meeting of the Board to consider charging dentists who did

not provide NHS treatment a fee to attend Agency courses. He informed the meeting that a CPD allowance was payable to dentists which was abated on their percentage of NHS treatment. He pointed out that there would be a huge administrative task to identify those dentists who did not provide NHS treatment. He suggested that there could however be a fee charged for limited courses and a 'bench fee' could be charged to cover room hire and refreshments. He agreed to discuss this at the next meeting of the GDP Committee and report back at the next meeting of the Board.

## 11. **REPORT FROM DIRECTOR FOR GP EDUCATION**

### 11.1 **Committee structure**

The Director of General Practice Education reported that there was one main committee within General Practice, the GP Committee with a sub-committee for trainer selection, which worked closely with the Hospital Post Recognition Committee and the Northern Ireland branch of the Royal College of GPs. She added that a new committee had been formed, the Educational Consortium, which was an overarching body for course provision.

The Chief Executive emphasised that these committees needed to be accountable to the Agency and their membership needed to be revised to reflect the accountability arrangement to the Agency.

The Chief Executive stated that he would be examining the composition of all Committees in light of the equality impact assessment.

It was also felt to be useful for members of the Board to obtain copies of minutes of committees of the Agency and was agreed that these should be available at Board meetings.

## 12. **REPORT ON ORGANISATIONAL AND MANAGEMENT ISSUES**

### 12.1 **Agenda for change**

Miss Campbell provided a presentation on the progress in relation to harmonisation of terms and conditions of service, which had been undertaken by the Agenda for Change Project Group of the Agency.

She indicated that the project group had examined the variances in terms and conditions of employment between Agenda for Change and QUB to identify if there was any adverse impact for members of staff to transfer to Agenda for Change. The group had examined maternity benefits, travel allowances, annual leave, and pensions and had established that the benefits were better under Agenda for Change in relation to maternity benefits, travel allowances, annual leave but that there would be a detriment in relation to transferring from a QUB pension to a HPSS pension. She therefore recommended that staff harmonisation would be possible if staff were

able to retain their current pension. It was not possible at this stage to determine the outcome in terms of pay as this would have to be established by the matching process.

It was pointed out that it was clearly identified in the Agenda for Change policy that staff on 'local contracts' ie, not on Whitley paycales or terms and conditions had the option to transfer at any stage to Agenda for Change terms and conditions of employment.

The Chairman stated that the organisation was a NHS employer so should be operating with HPSS terms and conditions of service.

The Board agreed that the Agency should attempt to harmonise terms and conditions of employment for all administrative staff but should not 'railroad' any member of staff into this, as those staff on 'local contracts' had an option to transfer to agenda for change terms and conditions of service.

Mr Hutchinson further asked Mr Baird to clarify under the USS pension rules whether staff of a certain grade should be entitled to enter this pension scheme.

#### 12.2 **Equality - Annual Review of Progress (Paper B05/22)**

Members received and ratified the annual review of progress on the Agency's Equality Scheme. It was noted that this was an excellent document, and that the Agency had undertaken a considerable number of EQIA's.

#### 12.3 **Major Incident Policy (Paper B05/23)**

Members received and discussed the major incident policy. This was ratified by the Board.

#### 12.4 **Complaints Procedure**

Member received and noted the Agency complaints procedure. It was noted that the Agency had received a number of complaints all but one had been dealt with satisfactorily to date.

### 13. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

#### 13.1 **GP Appraisal**

The Department of Health had suggested that the Agency would be best placed to undertake the recruitment and management of appraisal for GP Principals. The Agency would have to produce a business case for this activity as a matter of urgency as the DHSSPS required appraisers to be in post from 1 April 2006.

13.2 **GP Educator Pay**

The GP Director indicated that she had now received post dated resignations from all of the Associate Directors, Course Organisers and GP Tutors as the educator pay award had not been resolved. Miss Campbell pointed out that the Agency was at risk if it was not able to provide training for GP Registrars. She was also concerned about the future employment of administrative staff within the GP department of the Agency.

14. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting will be held on the 24 November 2005 at 10.00 am.