

**Minutes of a meeting of the Board of the Agency held on Thursday
8 November 2007 at 2.00 pm, in the Boardroom, NIMDTA, Beechill
House, 42 Beechill Road, BELFAST BT8 7RL**

PRESENT:

Members

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

Officers

Dr T McMurray (Chief Executive/Postgraduate Medical Dean)
Ms M L Roberts (Administrative Director)
Mr T Hutchinson (Finance Manager)
Dr C Kenny (Deputising on behalf of Dr A McKnight)
Dr D Hussey (Postgraduate Dental Dean)

In Attendance

Mrs P Dardis
Miss L Harbinson

1. **APOLOGIES**

Dr RJ Atkinson
Dr A McKnight (Director of Postgraduate GP Education)
Ms R Campbell (Human Resources Manager)

2. **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairman extended a warm welcome to Mrs Anna Eggert after her prolonged absence due to ill health. He also welcomed Dr Colin Kenny, deputising on behalf of Dr McKnight.

Mrs Eggert thanked the Board and Senior Management for their good wishes and for the flowers they had sent.

Review of Public Administration (RPA) Paper B07/16

The Board received and noted correspondence from the Minister for Health to the Chairman of 26 October 2007 and further tabled correspondence of 29 October 2007 from Mr DC Bingham, Director of Workforce & Human Resources Development (designate) indicating that it was very unlikely there would be any further changes

to HSC structures before April 2009 due to the likely requirements of the legislative timetable in the Assembly and the practical considerations around restructuring. Interim arrangements were to be put in place and the Chairman had been asked to confirm in writing that the Board members would be willing to have their appointments extended to 31 March 2009. The Chairman had already consulted the members and all had confirmed that they would be happy to continue to serve on the Board of the Agency.

Chairman

3. **MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 4 July 2007 (Paper B07/17)**

Minutes of the last meeting held on 4 July 2007, copies of which had been circulated prior to the meeting were approved.

4. **MATTERS ARISING FROM MINUTES**

Dealt with in the Agenda

5. **AUDIT SUB COMMITTEE (Paper B07/18)**

The Board received and noted unconfirmed minutes of the Audit Sub Committee held prior to the Board meeting on 4 July 2007. Mr Baird (Chairman of the Audit Sub Committee) had previously given a verbal report to the Board.

Mrs Eggert brought the Board's attention to point 5.1.2 of the minutes (Corporate Governance), which recommended the Board should meet more often. Mr Baird and Ms Roberts informed the Board that External Audit had commented that this was a matter for the Board to decide. There had been four meetings last year, only one less than the normal five. The frequency of the meetings would be discussed further under item 13 at the end of the meeting.

Point 5.1.9 (Credit Card Limits); Mrs Eve enquired whether the Agency had approached the Department about seeking a dispensation to extend the £5,000 credit card limit which was considered inadequate for the needs of the Agency. Ms Roberts and Mr Hutchinson reiterated that it was mainly used for booking flights for doctors in training via the internet. In accordance with value for money principles, the central booking system had resulted in substantial savings for the Agency. Mr Hutchinson agreed to pursue this with the Department.

Finance
Manager

6. **DRAFT ANNUAL REPORT 2006/07 (Paper B07/19)**

Members received and noted the annual report, the draft of which had been ratified at the last meeting.

Ms Roberts informed the Board that the Annual Report had been on the Agenda and discussed at the Accountability Review Officers meeting held on 5 November 2007. The Department had suggested minor revisions including page 13, 'Quality Management of Postgraduate Medical Education', and suggested additional information, including a summary of outcomes, should be added on

the Deanery visits. After discussion the Chairman suggested that future Board reports should supply this information.

Mrs Eggert, who had been unable to attend the last meeting, supplied the Board with her edited copy of the report which included the correction of typographical errors and figures. Ms Roberts agreed to forward this to the Human Resources Manager for correction.

HR Manager

The Board agreed unanimously, in the interest of savings, to post the final version of the Annual Report on the Deanery website and also to produce a limited number of hard copies for circulation to the Department.

7. **FINANCIAL UPDATE**

Budget Report 2007/08 (Paper B07/20)

The Board received and noted a budget report update for 2007/08 from the Finance Manager.

Mr Hutchinson tabled a breakdown for prompt payment compliance for the period 1 April to 30 September 2007, which showed the Agency had achieved approximately 87% in terms of the number of invoices paid within 30 days.

Mr Hutchinson set out the Agency's overall projected income and expenditure for the year ended 31 March 2008 which included:

- Operational Budget (position as at 30.9.07)
- Junior Doctors Salaries
- Study Leave
- GP VT Budget
- Dental GPT Budget
- GP Appraisal

It was anticipated that the Agency will comply with its requirements to break even.

It was noted that to accommodate the new faster closing process for accounts the Board and Audit Sub Committee would need to meet earlier than in 2007.

8. **REPORT FROM THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE/POSTGRADUATE MEDICAL DEAN (Paper B07/21)**

The Board received and noted a report from the Chief Executive which included an update on:

- PMETB Report to Northern Ireland Deanery - Final Decision and Conditions of Approval
- Quality Assurance of the Foundation Programme Visit
- Recruitment 2008
- Tooke Report

Members also received the following for consideration:

- PMETB Deanery-Wide Visit to Northern Ireland – General Surgery – Final Report
- Review of Recruitment into Specialty Training in Northern Ireland – September 2007
- Extract – Executive Summary and: Issues & Recommendations from the findings and Recommendations of the Independent Inquiry into Modernising Medical Careers (Tooke Report)
- Northern Ireland Deanery – Specialty and Foundation Recruitment Timeline 2008 (tabled)

A copy of the final PMETB Deanery-Wide Visit Report for General Surgery had been circulated. Dr McMurray informed the members that PMETB had agreed that training in the specialty of General Surgery should be approved, subject to two conditions and a number of recommendations. Progress was being made on meeting the conditions and recommendations including a review of the Agency's infrastructure. The Deanery had secured funding to support the appointment of two Associate Deans and had obtained an exemption from the RPA vacancy controls to appoint four additional administrative support staff.

The PMETB/GMC quality assurance pilot visit for the Foundation Programme had taken place from the 9th – 12th October 2007. A further wrap-up meeting is scheduled to take place on 30 November 2007 at which the content of the final report, which was mainly positive, would be discussed and the timescales agreed for responding to the recommendations. Dr McMurray wished to record his thanks to Ms Angela Carragher (Associate Dean) who had developed the foundation programme.

Dr McMurray informed the members that following the problems around recruitment into specialty training for 2007 two reports, (the Hayes and Tooke Reports) and central guidance had emerged to facilitate recruitment for 2008/09. Recruitment would be run on a local basis to a national timetable and health authorities would manage the process through their local deaneries and trusts.

Central guidance set out the approach to be taken in relation to: eligibility, recruitment, applications and offers, timetable, quality assurance, support and care for applicants and complaints. A Northern Ireland Deanery Specialty and Foundation timeline for recruitment had been tabled to the Board. A meeting of the MMC Steering Group was scheduled for 19 November at which any issues would be discussed and taken forward.

He further informed the members that Professor John Tooke was due to visit the Department on the 9 November and both he, the Administrative Director and Director for Postgraduate General Practice Education were due to attend. Both the Tooke and Hayes report would be discussed. The Tooke Report had been issued in September with a six week consultation period and the Chief Medical

**CEO/Admin
Director**

CEO

Officer would be responding. He agreed to summarise the recommendations and forward to the Board for the next meeting.

9. **REPORT FROM POSTGRADUATE DENTAL DEAN (Paper B07/22)**

The Board received and noted the report from the Postgraduate Dental Dean.

Dr Hussey informed the Board that:

- Mr Matthew Preston had been appointed to the post of Associate Adviser in General Professional Training and was currently being inducted to assist Mr Adrian Farquharson (Adviser for General Professional Training).
- There may be a shortfall of Senior House Officers for the remainder of the year as some Senior House Officers have resigned to take up other posts. If they were to appoint to all the available posts and achieve compliant rotas, they may have to reconsider the essential criteria for future Senior House Officer posts..
- Dr Hussey and Dr Mullally (Adviser on Hospital Dentistry) had conducted a Deanery visit to Altnagelvin Hospital on 31 October 2007. There were five Senior House Officers based at Altnagelvin and they had found it to be a well rounded unit. They would also be visiting both the Ulster and Royal Hospitals in the future.
- Ms Anne Basten from the Equality Unit at the Central Services Agency had been ask to conduct a quality assurance survey of dental trainee recruitment. This is to assess the impact of the changes that have been introduced in the recruitment process.
- Dr Hussey had recently written to the Directors of Dental Services at the four Boards and to dental representatives at NCAS (National Clinical Assessment Service) in relation to the issue of poorly performing dentists. He hoped a meeting would be convened in the new year to take this issue forward and identify possible solutions.
- There had been a ministerial statement on 17 September 2007 regarding funding for Vocational Training. It was hoped that the more attractive package which had been negotiated with the Department would attract more Dental Trainer applications for 2008/09.
- Dr Hussey updated the Board on recruitment and selection for Dental Vocational Training and Dental General Professional Training 07/08. There are thirty-six funded posts available, twenty-six of which had already been appointed. It was hoped that a more attractive package that would include additional payments for work-based assessments would

encourage a higher number of applications.

- Dr Hussey further informed the members that the term Modernising Dental Careers had been dropped and officially replaced with the new title of Foundation Training in Dentistry.

10. **REPORT FROM DIRECTOR OF POSTGRADUATE GP EDUCATION (Paper B07/23)**

The Board received and noted the report from the Department of General Practice which covered six areas:

- Resignations
- New Appointments
- GP Vocational Training
- Continuing Professional Development
- GP Appraisal
- Returner, Induction and Remedial Training Schemes

The new GP three year training programme had commenced in August and was going well. There were concerns about the involvement of clinical supervisors of GP ST1s and GP ST2 doctors in hospital posts and Dr McKnight (Director for Postgraduate General Practice Education) had written to the Chief Medical Officer in July 2007 expressing these concerns and urging clarification of roles and responsibilities within the Trusts .

Dr Kenny also informed the Board that there were major concerns about the level of accommodation for training in General Practice with the increase in both numbers and the length of time being spent in General Practice. Dr McKnight had written to the Chief Medical Officer in October 2007 at his request with a supporting bid for funding to expand training accommodation in General Practice.

The members had been circulated with a chart showing a breakdown comparison of 2006/07 and 2007/08 quarterly booking arrangements for GP Appraisal. One thousand and thirty one doctors have registered for appraisal since 1 April 2007.

11. **REPORT ON ORGANISATIONAL AND MANAGEMENT ISSUES (Paper B07/24)**

The Board received and noted a report from the Administrative Director which covered twelve topics:

- Accountability Review Meetings
- Development of Specialty Schools
- Quality Assurance of the Foundation Programme (dealt with under the CEO's Report)
- Review of Public Administration
- Shared Services
- Scoping Study
- Agenda for Change
- Complaints

- Industrial Tribunal Case
- Compliance with Controls Assurance Standards
- Equality
- Staff Appointments

Members received copies of:

- DHSSPS Circular HSS (PDD) 8/94 – Codes of Conduct and Accountability (November 1994)
- Code of Practice for Board Members
- Codes of Conduct & Accountability for NIMDTA Employees

The Board agreed to adopt the Code of Practice for Board Members and Codes of Conduct & Accountability for NIMDTA Employees subject to some minor revisions, copies of which would be re-circulated.

**Admin
Director**

Members also received the following for consideration:

- Business Plan 2007/08 Progress Report (tabled)
- Draft Business Plan 2008/09
- Strategic Plan 2008 – 2011
- Transformation of Business Services in Health & Social Care – Shared Services
- DHSSPS Circular HSS (SM) 4/2003 – Code of Conduct for HPSS Managers (November 2003)
- Equality – Annual Review of Progress 2006/07

Ms Roberts tabled the Business Plan 2007/08 Progress Report, an update of which was likely to form part of the agenda for the Accountability Review (main meeting) to be attended by the Chairman and Chief Executive on 26 November 2007. As an earlier draft had been tabled in error, Ms Roberts proceeded to give a verbal breakdown of the progress as of 8 November 2007. The correct version would be re-circulated to the Board.

P Dardis

She informed the members that the current draft policy 'Management of Training Grade Doctors and Dentists in Difficulty' was in the process of being revised. Once re-drafted it would be forwarded to all stakeholders.

**Admin
Director**

The Board discussed the layout and content of the draft Business Plan 2008/09 and the Strategic Plan 2008 – 2011, which were approved subject to modifications.

The Agency's Equality Annual Review of Progress 2006/07 had been approved by Senior Management and signed off by the Chairman and Chief Executive and forwarded to the Equality Commission.

12. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

There was no further business.

13. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Thursday, 7 February 2008 (Boardroom, NIMDTA)

Dates for 2008:

Thursday, 1 May 2008

Thursday, 3 July 2008

Thursday, 2 October 2008

Thursday, 4 December 2008

It was agreed to schedule future meetings at 12.30 pm with lunch being available from 12.00 noon.

P Dardis