

**Minutes of a meeting of the Board of the Agency held on Thursday
24 November 2005 in the Boardroom, NIMDTA, Beechill House,
42 Beechill Road, Belfast BT8 7RL**

PRESENT:

Members

Dr H McGuigan (Chairman)
Dr J Marley
Dr R Atkinson
Mr A Baird

Officers

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

1. **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairman reported that the official opening of the Agency's new premises on 11 November 2005 by Dr A McCormick Permanent Secretary DHSSPS had been a very successful occasion.

2. **APOLOGIES**

Mrs A Eggert
Dr A McKnight
Mrs J Eve

3. **MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 1 SEPTEMBER 2005**

The minutes of the last meeting held on 1 September 2005, copies of which had been circulated prior to the meeting were approved.

4. **MATTERS ARISING FROM MINUTES**

4.1 **Postgraduate Medical and Dental Forum**

The Chief Executive reported that he had taken soundings in relation to the formation of a Postgraduate Medical and Dental Forum and had received a number of positive responses. He commented that he was keen to have a Director of Public Health involved for service issues and had spoken to Dr David Stewart EHSSB. He would invite a small group to discuss the remit and constitution of the Forum and report back to the Board.

4.2 Educators payscale

The Chairman reported that as the DHSSPS had now agreed to implement the revised educator payscales the Remuneration Committee would be convened to agree the appropriate points on the scale based on the recommendations of the GP Director and Postgraduate Dental Dean.

It was noted that the GP and Dental Educators were entitled to back-pay to April 2004 and this liability had been provided for.

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

Members received and noted the minutes of the last meeting of the audit committee held on 1 September 2005, copies of which had been circulated prior to the meeting. It was noted that a verbal agreement had been reached with South and East Belfast Trust to provide Fire Training for the Agency and to carry out a fire risk assessment. The Fire Certificate was also being obtained from the Fire Service.

In relation to the Fire Training the Chief Executive stated that all members of staff based at Beechill House were required to attend a 45 minute fire safety lecture twice per year.

6. **ANNUAL REPORT 2004/2005**

It was noted that the Annual Report was in the process of being published and would be circulated as soon as possible.

The Chairman suggested that if at all possible it should be produced for the September meeting each year. This was agreed.

7. **BUSINESS PLAN 2006/2007**

The Chief Executive reported that the draft Business plan 2006/2007 had been submitted in advance of the accountability review. He informed the meeting that this would be an internal document which would not be published on the website.

It was suggested that the targets set out in the business plan could be audited by the audit committee, but that the Board receive a mid year report on its implementation

8. **FINANCIAL UPDATE**

Mr Hutchinson provided a financial update to the Board.

Junior Doctors salaries budget

There was a projected surplus of £191k in the Junior doctors salaries budget due to a delay in posts being filled. There was also a projected surplus in the flexible trainees budget of £102k due to a lower uptake of flexible training posts.

Study leave budget

The study leave budget was on target the reserve funds of £58k could be reallocated as necessary.

GP VT Training

Mr Hutchinson reported that 54% of the GP VT budget had been spent to date.

He also pointed out that the Agency paid £1,400 medical indemnity cover for each GpR. This appeared to be an excessive amount and it was agreed that it should be investigated.

Operational budget

Mr Hutchinson reported that there was a 10k surplus in the salaries budget due to the delay in filling medical and dental posts. He stated that there had been an increase in overheads due to increased course activity and the production of a new website. However with a more dynamic website the costs associated with advertising courses should be reduced.

Specialties budget and other training budgets

The specialties budget and other training budgets were on target.

He also stated that he had made a provision of 32k in this financial year for the outcome of Agenda for Change but that this could rise to £83k by 2010/2011, it was hoped that this would be funded by the DHSSPS.

Mr Hutchinson further reported that although the prompt payments rate was 71%, with the new staff in the finance department we expected that after a period of training this figure should be much higher.

In conclusion Mr Hutchinson suggested that the Agency should be in a position of break even by 31 March 2006.

9. **REPORT FROM ASSOCIATE DEAN**

The Chairman welcomed Miss Angela Carragher, Associate Dean for the Foundation Programme.

Miss Carragher reported that the foundation programme had been successfully launched in August 2005 and that visits had been organised to Trusts to meet with medical staff to identify the 229 posts for the F2 rotations.

The Northern Ireland deanery was a net importer of graduates, 195 of the 229 posts being filled by local trainees.

In relation to the 2006 recruitment process the deanery was involved in the multi-deanery application system. The closing date was

December 2005 and in mid January 2006 a clearing system would operate. It was anticipated that there would be twenty five one year F2 posts available. Twenty placements were also available within General Practice.

Work had also commenced on a generic skills curriculum for the foundation programme. A 10 day programme would be run 6 times per year to enable all foundation trainees to obtain this training; some of this training would be delivered in peripheral units.

Dr Atkinson expressed concern that some Queen's graduates had not been able to secure Foundation Training posts. Miss Carragher explained that some of these graduates had not applied to all of the vacancies within Northern Ireland and some had opted to take time out to work abroad.

10. **REPORT FROM THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

The Chief Executive explained that the study leave system is currently under review by COPMeD. The allocation in Northern Ireland based on £1,000 for an SpR and £750 for SHO was more generous than in other regions of the UK. He stated that in February 2006, an Individual Learning Account for trainees would be introduced with an educational passport to track training activity.

He commented that one problem was that courses identified by Royal Colleges as mandatory have to be fully funded.

11. **REPORT FROM THE POSTGRADUATE DENTAL DEAN**

Members received and noted a paper from the Postgraduate Dental Dean on the provision of CPD for General Dental Practitioners. He explained that all dentists in Northern Ireland provided an element of private dental treatment, so that to limit NIMDTA courses to those dentists who provided solely NHS treatment would significantly reduce the number of dentists able to attend. He also suggested that NIMDTA was increasing the knowledge base of dentists throughout Northern Ireland through the provision of the CPD programme.

He recommended that NIMDTA continue the provision of the CPD programme on the current basis. This was agreed.

He suggested that NIMDTA could be more pro-active in obtaining sponsorship for education and he agreed to produce a policy on sponsorship.

Dr Hussey also stated that the DHSSPS were keen to increase the number of Vocational Training places from 24 to 30 for August 2006; he hoped to advertise for a new Adviser to facilitate this increase.

12. **REPORT FROM THE DIRECTOR OF GP EDUCATION**

The Chairman welcomed Dr Claire Loughrey GP Appraisal Regional Co-Ordinator to the meeting to discuss GP Appraisal for Principals and sessional doctors.

Dr Loughrey reported that the DHSSPS were unhappy with the current system of GP Appraisal in which a fee per appraisal was paid to the appraiser and a fee for appraisal was also paid to the appraisee. She explained that there was no limit on the number of appraisals which could be undertaken by an appraiser nor any regional check on the quality of the appraisals undertaken. She added that appraisers were a self-selected group of individuals who had been trained by the Beeches Management Centre in conjunction with NIMDTA.

Dr Loughrey stated that NIMDTA had been asked to produce a business case for the management of the appraisal system to include the recruitment of the appraisers. This had been submitted and was based on the costings of similar systems in other regions of the UK. A further meeting was to be held with the DHSSPS and representatives with the 4 Boards to take this forward.

13. **REPORT ON ORGANISATIONAL AND MANAGEMENT ISSUES**

13.1 Whistle Blowing Policy

The whistle blowing policy was ratified by the Board.

13.2 Communications Strategy

The Communications Strategy was ratified by the Board.

13.3 Business Continuity

The Business Continuity plan was ratified by the Board.

13.4 Fire Safety

The revised Fire Safety policy was ratified by the Board.

13.5 **Agenda for Change**

Miss Campbell provided an update on Agenda for Change. She had held a meeting with all staff on 20 October 2005 to outline the progress in relation to harmonisation of terms and conditions of service and to clarify that staff employed under terms and conditions of employment similar to QUB would be able to opt out of Agenda for Change during the assimilation process. However it had since transpired that QUB was undertaking a review process and that staff on terms and conditions similar to QUB would therefore be required to undergo a review by QUB so that they could be placed on the new QUB salary scales. The arrangements for the QUB review were being discussed with the Personnel Manager QUB at a meeting in December 2005.

Miss Campbell further informed the meeting that letters informing staff of the matching process had been issued on 21 November 2005.

14. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

14.1 **Member visits**

The Chairman reported that Mr Baird, Dr Atkinson and himself had attended recent GP Practice visits and had been very impressed with the level of education being provided and the enthusiasm of the trainers. He encouraged other members of the Board to participate in these visits.

The Postgraduate Dental Dean suggested that members of the Board might be interested in also attending scheduled dental training practice visits.

15. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting will take place on 26 January 2006 at 2.00 pm in Beechill House

16. **DATES FOR 2006**

The Board agreed to a schedule of Board meetings for the remainder of 2006.