

**Minutes of a meeting of the Board of the Agency held on Wednesday 25 February 2009 at 12.30 pm, in the Committee Room 2, NIMDTA, Beechill House, 42 Beechill Road, BELFAST BT8 7RL**

**PRESENT:**

**Members**

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

**Officers**

Dr T McMurray (Chief Executive/Postgraduate Medical Dean)  
Ms M Roberts (Administrative Director)  
Mr T Hutchinson (Finance Manager)  
Dr C Loughrey (Director for Postgraduate GP Education)  
Dr D Hussey (Postgraduate Dental Dean)

**In Attendance**

Mrs P Dardis

1. **APOLOGIES**

Dr J Marley  
Mrs A Eggert  
Ms R Campbell

2. **REVISED MEMBERSHIP (Paper B09/01)**

It was noted that Dr RJA Atkinson, Dr J Marley and Mrs A Eggert had been reappointed to the Board for a further term of office.

3. **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

3.1 **Membership of the Audit Sub-Committee**

The Chairman announced that after discussion with the Board

Members it had been decided that Mrs J Eve and Dr J Marley would join the Committee. It had been agreed that Mrs J Eve would succeed Mr A Baird as Chairman with effect from 1 April 2009.

3.2 Good Governance Refresher Seminar

The Chairman announced it was hoped that a Good Governance Refresher Seminar could be organised for the Board and Senior Management and possibly expanded to include senior members of the Agency. Possible dates were discussed and it was agreed to arrange the half-day seminar for 21 May 2009

Chair/CEO

3.3 Risk Register Workshop

Ms Roberts informed the meeting that it was also hoped to arrange a one day Risk Register Workshop. As well as participation by the Board and Senior Management other senior members of the Agency would be invited to attend.

Admin Dir

4. **MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 4 DECEMBER 2008 (Paper B09/02)**

Minutes of the last meeting held on 4 December 2008, copies of which had been circulated prior to the meeting were approved.

5. **MATTERS ARISING FROM MINUTES**

Dealt with in the Agenda

6. **REPORT FROM THE AUDIT SUB COMMITTEE**

6.1 Paper B09/03 - 2008/09 Audit Meetings

Received and noted

6.2 Paper B09/04 & Paper B09/05 – Note of meeting of 8 July 2008/Self Assessment Checklist

A meeting of the Audit Sub Committee (Board Members only) had been held on 8 July 2008 to discuss the self assessment checklist. Mr A Baird reported that after reviewing the terms of reference and agreeing they were appropriate it was agreed they remain unchanged.

6.3 The Administrative Director informed members that the Departmental IT Security Policy and NIMDTA IT Security Operating Procedures had been forwarded electronically to all

employees and those working on behalf of the Agency.

- 6.4 The next meeting of the Audit Sub Committee was scheduled to take place on Thursday 26 March 2009 @ 2.00 pm.

7. **FINANCIAL UPDATE**

The Board received and noted the Financial Update 2008/09 and Draft Budget 2009/10 presented by the Finance Manager.

7.1 **Financial Update 2008/09**

Mr Hutchinson informed the Board that it was anticipated that the Agency should breakeven for the 2008/09 financial year.

Identified areas of surplus funding would be netted off against outstanding allocations.

7.2 **Prompt Payments**

Mr Hutchinson provided a breakdown on prompt payments from April 2008 to January 2009. He informed the Board that payments by BACS had been phased in. Prompt payment figures in the last few months showed it was hoped to achieve 90% compliance by the end of the year.

7.3 **Draft Budget 2009/2010**

Mr Hutchinson informed the Board that the budget will meet the requirement to breakeven which had been based on a series of assumptions as outlined in the report and based on an allocation of £52,654,000.

The Board agreed to approve the Draft Budget for 2009/10.

7.4 **Efficiency Savings Delivery Plan**

An efficiency savings plan as required by the Department, was being phased in over three years and had been incorporated into the Budget.

8. **REPORT FROM THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE/POSTGRADUATE MEDICAL DEAN (Paper BO9/06)**

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

- PMETB and the Foundation Programme
- Specialty, General Practice and Foundation Recruitment 2009

- Proposals to Maintain Maximum Population of Training and Non-Training Posts
- Annual Deanery Report (PMETB)

#### 8.1 PMETB QAFP Report

The Chief Executive informed the Board that the Agency had submitted an action plan/update to PMETB and they had responded asking for some further clarification. A further response would be sent.

#### 8.2 Recruitment

Dr McMurray summarised that the Agency had been working assiduously to recruit doctors for training at a time of relentless change. The number of trainee doctors had increased from approximately 1,100 in 2000 to 1,746 in 2008.

##### Foundation Recruitment

Dr McMurray informed the Board that the Foundation Programme had achieved a fill rate of 98% in 2008/09.

##### General Practice Recruitment

Dr McMurray further informed the Board that GP recruitment continues to be managed through a national process with Northern Ireland remaining very popular and filling all posts.

##### Specialty Recruitment

He further informed the Board that there had been a fill rate of 95% achieved in June 2008. This had subsequently fallen to 90-93% mainly due to maternity leave, the utilisation of period of grace (POG) and out of programme requests.

He informed the Board that Deaneries throughout the United Kingdom were experiencing gaps in a number of specialties. Following discussion with Medical Directors a small Recruitment Working Group had met at the beginning of February to look at options for addressing the shortfall in training grade numbers across Northern Ireland with a view to ensuring that all posts are filled from August 2009. Ms Roberts informed the Board that a letter outlining the proposals of the Working Group and seeking Trust support, would be forwarded to the Trusts in the near future. An update would go to the next meeting of the Board in June.

8.3 PMETB Annual Deanery Report (August 07/July08)

Dr McMurray informed the Board that the Annual Deanery Report had been submitted to PMETB by the required deadline in December 2008. A PMETB panel would now look at the submission and respond.

9. **REPORT FROM POSTGRADUATE DENTAL DEAN (Paper B09/07)**

The Board received and noted the report from the Postgraduate Dental Dean which included an update on:

- Vocational Training/General Professional Training Issues
- Continuing Education Issues
- Celtic COPDEND

9.1 Vocational Training/General Professional Training

Members noted and discussed the accompanying report on 'Quality Assurance in VT/GPT' from Dr Hussey and Mr Armstrong.

The Postgraduate Dental Dean informed the members that a study had been commissioned via the Equality Unit at the CSA into the disparity between the number of male and female trainers. A presentation had taken place on 10 February and the Dental Department would now consider the recommendations. The final report would be submitted to the Board.

Recruitment had proceeded for GPT and four training places had been filled.

Recruitment was proceeding for the thirty-six places on the VT scheme. Interviews were scheduled to take place over three days the following week. A large number of applications had been received from undergraduates from eight different Dental Schools.

9.2 Continuing Education

Dr Hussey informed the members that the Continuing Education Programme was running well. Interviews had been held for the post of Associate Adviser in Continuing Education and Ms Brid Hendron had been appointed and taken up post at the beginning of February.

### 9.3 Celtic COPDEND

He further informed the members that the bi-annual joint meeting of the Celtic Deaneries due to take place from 30 April to 1 May 2009 was being hosted by the Agency. The venue was the Hilton Hotel, Templepatrick and the theme will be 'Underperformance'.

## 10. **REPORT FROM DIRECTOR OF POSTGRADUATE GP EDUCATION (Paper B09/08)**

The Board received and noted a report from the Director for Postgraduate General Practice Education which covered an update on the following:

- Update on Recruitment
- General Practice Committees
- Specialty Training
- GP Appraisal
- Continuing Professional Development (CPD)

### 10.1 Recruitment

Dr Loughrey updated the Board on recruitment and restructuring within the General Practice Department. Dr Grainne Bonnar had been appointed as Deputy Director and recruitment to the Associate Director posts for Appraisal and Continuing Professional Development still proceeded.

### 10.2 General Practice Committees

Dr Loughrey informed the Board that due to changes to the regulatory framework for Specialty Training the General Practice Committee's Terms of Reference were being reviewed. Three areas of work within the Department would report to the General Practice School Committee, Central Board of Management of GP Appraisal and the Educational Consortium. It was proposed that an Executive Committee would function internally to review and implement recommendations from the three Committees and report to Senior Management and the Board.

### 10.3 Specialty Training

Dr Loughrey further informed the members that the working party commissioned by the DoH (England) to look at the extension and expansion of General Practice Training had reported back. The report supported in principle the extension and expansion which had financial implications for the Deanery. A bid for additional funding would be submitted to

the Department. She would be meeting with Dr Kenny Allen, the project lead for the working party, in the near future to discuss implications for Northern Ireland.

#### 10.4 GP Appraisal

Dr Loughrey further informed members that the annual appraisal conference which had been arranged for the 6/7 May 2009 would be a corporate event with input from all departments within NIMDTA.

She explained to the members that in keeping with the Agency's plan to implement a KSF appraisal scheme, the appraiser pilot had now been reported on and has been enthusiastically accepted.

### 11. **REPORT ON ORGANISATIONAL AND MANAGEMENT ISSUES (Paper B09/09)**

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

- Accountability Reviews
- Strategic Plan
- Policies for Review
- Induction Pack for Trainees

#### 11.1 Accountability Reviews

The annual Accountability Review Officers and Main meetings with the Department, to discuss the Agency's Annual Report for 2007/08, Business Plan 2009/10 and review of progress against the objectives set for 2008/09 had been held in December 08 and January 09. The Annual Report and Business Plan were approved by the Department subject to minor modifications. Both had been amended accordingly and would be available to download via the Agency website.

#### 11.2 Strategic Plan 2009/12

The Strategic Plan had been brought to the Board previously, but had since been significantly revised to include a number of new areas due to PMETB requirements. The Business Plan 2009/10 objectives were reflected in the revised Strategic Plan.

The Chairman commended the Strategic Plan and felt that it reflected fully the Board's ambitions for the Agency.

***Members endorsed and ratified the Strategic Plan 2009/12***

### 11.3 Policies for Review

The Board received and noted a central register which listed policies and procedures requiring ratification by the Board, Senior Management and Quality Management Working Group with identified review dates.

#### Environmental Management Policy

The Environmental Management Policy was discussed.

#### ***Members ratified the Policy***

#### Reimbursement of Expenses for Staff and those acting on behalf of NIMDTA

The policy had been endorsed by Senior Management at their meeting on 23 February 2009. Members discussed the issue of travel by air and agreed that those travelling on NIMDTA's behalf should be entitled to flexible business class on the Belfast to Heathrow route only. The policy would be amended accordingly.

***Members ratified the Policy subject to the amendment. The Policy would be kept under review.***

Admin Dir

#### Whistle Blowing Policy

Ms Roberts, Dr McGuigan and Mrs Eggert had attended a Whistle Blowing Seminar organised by the Department of Finance and Personnel, through the NICS Forum on 30 January 2009 at the Stormont Hotel. Ms Roberts informed the Board that minor amendments had been made to the policy to reflect discussion at the workshop.

#### ***Members ratified the Policy***

Ms Roberts further informed the members that guidance in relation to whistle blowing had also been produced for doctors and dentists in training. The guidance had been circulated to all stakeholders and was available to download via the website.

#### Trainee Induction Pack

At the request of the Chairman members received and noted the documentation contained within the trainee information pack which was circulated to all specialty trainees as part of their induction.

12. **REPORT FROM HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGER (Paper B09/10)**

The Board received and noted the report from the Human Resources Manager which covered the following:

- Recruitment
- Article 55 Review
- New Staff Handbooks

Members received and noted the following documents:

- Article 50 Review - NIMDTA submission to Equality Commission
- Draft Educator's Staff Handbook
- Draft Handbook for Staff under QUB Terms & Conditions

12.1 **Article 55 Review**

The Agency had completed an Article 55 Review for the Equality Commission for the period 1 January 2005 – 1 January 2007. Ms Roberts informed the meeting that this was a compulsory requirement.

12.2 **New Staff Handbooks**

The Board had already been circulated with a copy of the Agenda for Change Staff Handbook at the December 2008 meeting. Ms Roberts informed the meeting that minor revisions would be made to the Handbook for Staff under QUB Terms & Conditions.

**HR Manager**

13. **CORRESPONDENCE/REPORTS/PAPERS FOR INFORMATION**

The members received and noted Papers B09/11, B09/12, B09/13, B09/14, B09/15, B09/16, B09/17, B09/18, B09/19 and B09/20

13.1 **DHSSPS Circular HSS(F) 50/2008 (Paper B09/17)**

The Board noted Annex 2 - Summary of PAC Recommendations (Good Governance – Effective Relationships between Departments and their Arm's Length Bodies). The Board discussed the recommendations but felt that the Agency's existing governance arrangements were adequate.

Mrs Judith Eve enquired if this circular could be forwarded electronically to the Board. This was agreed. **P Dardis**

- 13.2 The Chairman informed the Board that in future correspondence/reports/papers etc for information would be circulated prior to the Board meeting electronically and listed on the agenda for information. Any of such papers requiring discussion would be brought forward by the Chairman and Chief Executive.

14. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

There was no further business.

15. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Thursday 18 June 2009 @ 12.30 pm in the Boardroom

Future Dates:

Thursday 1 October 2009 @ 12.30 pm

Thursday 3 December 2009 @ 12.30 pm