



***Minutes of a Trust Board Meeting held on Thursday,
28 November 2013, 2.00pm at NIAS Headquarters,
Knockbracken Healthcare Park, Saintfield Road, Belfast. BT8 8SG***

Present:

Mr P Archer	Chairman
Mr L McIvor	Chief Executive
Ms A Paisley	Non-Executive Director
Prof M Hanratty	Non-Executive Director
Mr R Mullan	Non-Executive Director
Mr N McKinley	Non-Executive Director
Dr J Livingstone	Non-Executive Director
Mrs S McCue	Director of Finance & ICT
Mr B McNeill	Director of Operations

In Attendance:

Miss K Baxter	Executive Administrator (Temp)
Mrs J McSwiggan	Senior Secretary

Welcome and Format of the Meeting

The Chairman opened the meeting by welcoming members of the public and Trust Board.

1.0 Apologies

Apologies were received from Dr D McManus (Medical Director) and Ms R O'Hara (Director of Human Resources & Corporate Services).

**2.0 Procedure: Declaration of potential Conflict of Interest / Pecuniary Interests
Quorum**

No potential conflicts of interest / pecuniary interests were declared and the Board was confirmed as quorate.

3.0 Minutes of the Previous Meeting of the Trust Board held on 25 July 2013

Members accepted the Minutes as a true reflection of discussions held on the proposal of Mr Mullan, seconded by Professor Hanratty.

4.0 Matters Arising

4.1 Review of Management Costs

It was noted that review of management costs would be progressed through Audit Committee in the first instance and reported to Trust Board accordingly.

The Board noted that the Audit Committee are reviewing management costs in line with the business planning priorities paper.

4.2 10,000 Voices Campaign

The Chairman advised that the Chair of the Public Health Agency (PHA) had responded to his letter stating that NIAS had been included in the project throughout but had decided to withdraw from it. The letter also advised that NIAS has been provided with a resource allocation to allow participation, although no direct funding has been made available.

The Chief Executive advised the Board that NIAS will continue to engage with the PHA and has not withdrawn from the project.

The Board expressed its disappointment at the PHA response and the lack of direct resources available to allow NIAS to comply with its statutory duty. It was agreed that the Chairman would write to the PHA again to express the Trust's disappointment.

Action: Chairman to write again to PHA

Two other Matters Arising were highlighted.

Prof Hanratty asked for it to be noted that the Board Workshop referred to in item 10.2 of the Minutes of the previous meeting (Board Workshops) had been postponed from 24 October and in fact took place on 12 November 2013.

Ms Paisley enquired when the Board expected an action plan for the staff survey and in response it was advised that, in line with previous board consideration, this would be advised on the Agenda for the next Assurance Committee meeting in January 2014.

5.0 Chairman's Business

5.1 Chairman's Update

The Chairman gave a brief outline of his diary commitments since the last Board meeting, including a meeting on 26 November with two officers from Internal Audit (BSO) relating to the Board Governance Self Assessment Tool which had been completed at the request of DHSSPS. Following this meeting a report from BSO is expected in the near future.

5.2 Visit to Bridge End Station

The Chairman commended the work of this busy station. However with all crews on calls at the time of the visit, the Board agreed that ambulance station visits prior to Board meetings are becoming more an opportunity to see facilities rather than to interact with staff. The Board briefly discussed other opportunities for meeting staff.

The following issues were raised:

- It was noted that the Lease for Bridge End Station is due to expire in October 2015 and the Board asked if this is covered within the NIAS Estates Strategy.
- The outlying Business Case is currently under review.
- In light of the constant pressure on staff, does NIAS provide additional support to staff to help them cope with day to day stress?
- Despite capacity constraints, the Trust continues to do its utmost to fulfil its duty of care to staff, and is working with staffside representatives to address the key issues including missed and delayed meal breaks and sickness absence.

6.0 Chief Executive's Business

6.1 Chief Executive's Update

The Chief Executive gave a brief outline of some of his activities since the last Board meeting:

- The Chief Executive and Chairman met with the Chief Executive and Chairman of NIFRS.
- The Chief Executive attended the launch of the "Choose Well" campaign.
- The Chief Executive made a presentation to a North South Inter-Parliamentary meeting in Dublin which was also attended by political representatives from both North and South of the border. Important issues were raised. The meeting was positive and highlighted the importance of working with Co-Operation and Working Together (CAWT).
- The Chief Executive attended the funeral of staff member Debbie Mann and had been privileged to read a tribute on this sad occasion.
- NIAS has re-established its link with the Association of Ambulance Chief Executives (AACE) as an associate member.

6.2 Transforming Your Care Update

An update was provided by the Chief Executive who advised that the programme status overall was good, although pace and progress was slower than anticipated. The programme status had moved to amber due to funding constraints. It was noted that Mr McNeill is the lead on the Integrated Care Partnership Project Board. The Chief Executive has expressed his view that Programme Board be provided with HSCB view of progress rather than a self-assessment by lead providers.

The following issues were highlighted:

- Is there any evidence of a resource transfer from the acute sector into the community?
- NIAS has submitted two proposals for transitional funding to enable the transfer from acute to non-acute sector and awaits a response. It was noted that acute and community are not separate entities for NIAS, whose responsibility lies with its total client group.
- Where does NIAS fit into the ongoing debate about system redesign – solutions and alternatives?
- NIAS will articulate this through its Corporate Plan and Trust Delivery Plan.

NIAS has expressed its intention to the Programme Board to be involved at the formative design stage, not merely at the implementation stage. The Ambulance Service Area Managers (ASAMs) are involved in feeding up through ICP boards and other structures. The pressure on the Information Department to provide information on patient flows etc. was noted.

- Have there been any discussions in Northern Ireland about changing the out of hours situation for GPs, as is being discussed in England?
- The only proposal is a further regionalisation of GP Out of Hours led by the Health & Social Care Board (HSCB).

7.0 Performance Report as at 31 October 2013

The Chief Executive presented the Performance Report and advised that the Trust continues to sharpen its focus on areas where it has a key and primary role to play.

A discrepancy between monthly and cumulative figures within absence reporting information was highlighted (HR 12 – Page 113). This was due to retrospective adjustments in the Human Resources Management System (HRMS) not being reflected in Board reports for previous month data. HR managers have advised that the cumulative absence of 6.77% to end of October is correct, however the figures will be re-run and this will be reflected in the next version of the document.

The Corporate Risk Register will be reviewed by the Assurance Committee at the next meeting in January 2014. Risks highlighted at the Board workshop will be put into the context of the Trust Development Plan.

The following issues were highlighted:

- On Page 53 (2.23 HR15) in relation to doctors that are in the workplace being subjected to an annual appraisal, should the RAG rating be green rather than amber?
- 2014 appraisals have not yet taken place so amber is the prudent approach.
- The Board was pleased to see that the Community Resuscitation Strategy has been released for consultation. How will NIAS respond?
- The Chief Executive is due to meet the NIAS Equality Lead to discuss the formulation of the NIAS response. The intention is to provide a response as an organisation. This will be placed on the Agenda of the next Assurance Committee meeting in January 2014.

Operations

The Director of Operations updated members on his report, focussing on improvements in performance and preparations for the winter season.

Prof Hanratty advised that she had received very positive feedback on the contribution of Hospital Ambulance Liaison Officers (HALOs). Their presence at A&Es has made improvements. The Board were encouraged to hear this and the Business Case will demonstrate the added value HALOs bring in managing hospital turn-around times.

The Chair commended the Operations Department for the upward trend in Cat A response.

Finance & ICT

The Director of Finance & ICT presented her report highlighting the following areas: delivering financial breakeven, the prompt payment regime, the delivery of savings plans, improvement to the IT infrastructure and the pressures within the Information Department due to an increase in Freedom of Information (FOI) and data protection requests.

The following issues were raised:

- On Page 59 – Non Recurrent Savings and Bridging Allocation – had not been allocated a RAG rating.
 - The RAG rating for both is green.
- What is the consequence of breaching Freedom of Information (FOI) timeline requirements, and are breaches a capacity issue?
 - NIAS is aware of the serious consequences of such breaches and is monitoring the situation as part of the overall pressures on the Information Department. The Trust continues its commitment to the provision of FOI responses, demonstrated by its prior history of delivery of responses. The Board noted that the number of requests being made has more than doubled within the year, and the specific nature of the requests makes the process difficult to automate.
- What is the profile of capital expenditure for year end?
 - This was identified as fleet expenditure, and the slippage was beyond the Trust's control and due to a challenge to the national contract. The Trust will strive to move this forward on schedule.

Human Resources & Corporate Services

No items were raised in the absence of the Director of Human Resources & Corporate Services.

Medical

No items were raised in the absence of the Medical Director.

8.0 Items for Approval

8.1 Terms of Reference – Audit Committee

Board approval was given on the proposal of Dr Livingstone, seconded by the Chief Executive.

Action: Approved

8.2 Mid Year Assurance Statement/Resolution to Trust Board

This was discussed and previously amended following a recent Audit Committee meeting. The Board noted that this clearly states the Trust's current position and highlights areas that require progress and the ongoing work with the Commissioners. It will form the scope of the Mid Year Accountability meeting scheduled for January 2014.

Board approval was given on the proposal of Prof Hanratty, seconded by the Mr Mullan.

Action: Approved

9.0 Items for Noting

9.1 Minutes from Audit Committee held 5 September 2013

Noted. Prof Hanratty advised that as she had chaired this meeting, her name should replace Mr McKinley's as Chair on the Minutes.

9.2 Minutes from Audit Committee held 14 October 2013

Noted. Mr McKinley advised that a report of the Audit Committee Checklist will be presented to the Trust Board at the end of the financial year.

9.3 Minutes from Assurance Committee held 5 September 2013

Noted.

9.4 Long Service & Retirement Award Ceremony in Armagh – 7 January 2014

Noted. The Chairman reminded the Board of the date of this ceremony and asked that as many Non-Executive Directors attend as possible.

10.0 Application of Trust Seal

The Trust Seal has been used for the renewal of the Lease for the Carrickfergus Ambulance Station. It had also been applied to documentation relating to the commencement of works for the purchase of the Ballymena Ambulance Station.

11.0 Forum for Questions

No questions were received.

12.0 Any Other Business

None.

Date, Time and Venue of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Trust Board will be held on Thursday 30 January 2014 in the Southern Division (venue to be confirmed).

The Chairman thanked those present for attending and called proceedings to a close.

Signed: _____

Date: _____
Chairman