



PRIVATE & CONFIDENTIAL

***Minutes of Meeting of Trust Board held
Thursday 1 December 2016 at 2.00pm in Marine Court Hotel, Bangor***

Present:

Mr P Archer	Chairman
Dr D McManus	Interim Chief Executive
Ms R O'Hara	Director of HR & Corporate Services
Mrs S McCue	Director of Finance & ICT
Mr B McNeill	Director of Operations
Mr A Cardwell	Non-Executive Director
Mr W Abraham	Non-Executive Director
Mr N McKinley	Non-Executive Director
Dr J Livingstone	Non-Executive Director
Mr T Haslett	Non-Executive Director

In Attendance:

Mr S Devlin	Observer
Mrs J McSwiggan	Senior Secretary
Mr D Mahaffy	Senior Secretary

The Chairman thanked members for their attendance and welcomed Mr Shane Devlin as an observer. Mr Devlin will join the Trust as Chief Executive on 5 December 2016.

1.0 Apologies

There were no apologies.

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

No potential conflicts of interest/pecuniary interest were declared. The Board was confirmed as quorate.

3.0 Minutes of the previous meeting of Trust Board held on 6 October 2016

The Minutes were agreed on the proposal of Mr Haslett, seconded by Dr Livingstone.

4.0 Matters Arising

The Director of Operations clarified the terms of the maintenance agreement for Ballymena station, confirming that the station had been commissioned in August 2016 with a 12 month maintenance contract in place.

Mr McNeill noted that NIAS is working to have a Facilities Contract in place for all its premises.

Further matters arising will be covered within the Agenda.

5.0 Chairman's Business

5.1 Chairman's Update

The Chairman welcomed the Board's regular visits to ambulance stations and thanked the staff at Bangor station for hosting the visit prior to this Board meeting. It was noted that that this was the Trust's largest joint station with NIFRS.

Mr Cardwell noted that there was no signage indicating the location of the ambulance station. To be reviewed by Director of Operations.

Action: The Director of Operations to Review Signage at Bangor Ambulance Station.

- The Chairman gave an outline of his activities and meetings attended since the last meeting of Trust Board.

The Chair thanked the Director of HR & CS and the Medical Director for acting up into the position of Interim Chief Executive since 25 April 2016 following the resignation of the previous Chief Executive.

6.0 Interim Chief Executive's Business

6.1 Interim Chief Executive's Update

The Interim Chief Executive gave an outline of activities and meetings attended since the last meeting of Trust Board, including:

- Chief Executives' Forum
- Meeting of Partnership Forum with the Health Minister, HSC Chief Executive and Trade Unions
- Health and Wellbeing 2026: Delivering Together – meetings with the Minister, Department of Health and Trust Chief Executives
- Meeting with an MP & MLA in South West regarding ambulance-related issues
- Meeting with a Community First Responder Group
- Meeting with Department of Health regarding health and social care preparedness and resilience planning for winter.
- Ongoing meetings regarding HEMS and the Trauma Network including attendance at the National Conference of the Association of Air Ambulances
- Meetings with the Chair and incoming Chief Executive.

7.0 Performance Report as at 30 October 2016

7.1 Highlight Reports by each Director:

Operations

The Director of Operations updated Trust Board as follows:

- An important upgrade to the software associated with the Ambulance Medical Priority Dispatch System (AMPDS) had taken place successfully.
- Clarification was provided on the distinction between Emergency and Routine calls.
- Response time performance was noted. The response time taken to answer 999 calls and routine calls was discussed and it was noted that AMPDS-licensed call takers can take routine calls when not responding to 999 calls, resulting in quicker response times.
- The Director of Operations reported that due to the significant and sustained increase in calls NIAS does not have the necessary staff complement employed in Control to meet this demand, it was noted that this is an important part of the capacity review.
- With regards to Fleet and Estate the success of the vehicle replacement was acknowledged.
- Work has commenced on the site of the new Enniskillen station, which is expected to complete in a year and a half.
- The Board discussed the Welsh Ambulance Service clinical response model which is currently meeting targets.
- The Board discussed reasons for the increasing number of emergency calls being received, contributory factors include increasing demand from GPs, a change to the call-taking system with the introduction of Card 35, and a general national trend for the public to select 999 as their route to treatment. Of note was the increase in turn-round times for Ambulances at A&E units.
- In addition to the report £1,000 has been secured from the Northern Health & Social Care Trust to support an enhanced Care at Home pilot in the East Antrim area. Although this funding is non-recurrent there is the potential, under integrated care projects, for it to be extended.

Mr Haslett commended the Director of Operations on a comprehensive report, and highlighted the national BBC coverage of the Ambulance Service on 30 November 2016. The Board thanked the Director of Operations and Mr John McPoland, Communications & Media Manager, for their contribution to the NIAS coverage. It was noted that Mr McPoland is the sole member of the NIAS Communications & Media team.

Finance & ICT

The Director of Finance & ICT updated Trust Board as follows:

Financial Performance

- The Trust is projecting a small surplus of £2k at end October 2016, with a projected breakeven position at year end, subject to key risks and assumptions. The Trust continues with the assumption that the HSC Board will fund the full costs of Agenda for Change for NIAS.
- Mrs McCue advised that the allocation from HSCB of Demography funding totalling £1M is anticipated to be non-recurrent and to be spent this year on operational pressures and the capacity review.
- The Trust has received a revised Capital Resource Limit allocation of £8.8m, previously £5.6m, the increase reflects the costs of the new ambulance station at Enniskillen. To date expenditure totals £334k, however Mrs McCue has been advised, through regular capital update meetings with representatives from the operations Directorate that £8.8m will be expended

by year-end, as there will be significant expenditure on fleet, cardiac defibrillators and the Enniskillen Ambulance Station.

- It was noted that NIAS is the only Trust meeting the target of paying 95% of invoices within 30 calendar days. The Board commended the team for meeting this target.
- There are no particular issues to raise at this stage in relation to Business Services Organisation, with Key Performance Indicators and contract management arrangements being followed through a detailed governance structure on an ongoing basis.

Mr Abraham left the meeting.

Information Technology

- In September and October there were three system failures which had been managed appropriately, with contingency plans activated.
- The project to replace the NIAS telephony platform at HQ, Altnagelvin and the short-term contingency site is nearing completion. Work is also ongoing to refresh core Microsoft platforms which will provide enhanced functionality & capability.
- Dr Livingstone had noted a radio blackspot at Bangor station and asked about the extent of this issue. The Director of Operations confirmed that although this is an irritant, it will not affect contact with patients as the current system Digital Trunk Radio works on a different network and difficulties are managed as part of arrangements with PSNI. It was noted that a specification is being developed for procurement of a new MDT system which will have a dual SIM card to improve resilience further.
- There were no planned maintenance of critical systems during this reporting period.

Information Governance

- Current developments include delivering information governance training to new starts, and reviewing the monitoring of TYC.
- There has been a significant increase in Freedom of Information requests, with 310 recorded April – October 2016, compared to 195 in the same period in 2015/16. It was noted that media interest can contribute to an increase in requests.
- There has also been an increase in PSNI requests and Data Protection Subject Access requests compared to the same period last year.
- 72.63% of FOI requests are completed within 20 working days. It was noted the significant amount of work required to complete FOI, and a review is being carried out to increase staff resources.
- The Information Commissioner is currently monitoring returns and performance of HSC Trusts including NIAS against legislative requirements. NIAS are currently reporting monthly to the ICO.
- The Director of ICT & Finance advised that developments in ePRF would substantially improve the Trust's ability to process Patient Record Forms, noting that 15,000 to 17,000 record forms are manually screened monthly. The current system is time-intensive and inflexible.
- It was confirmed that all records, including 999 call recordings, are maintained in accordance with the Trust's Record Disposal Scheme.

Human Resources

The Director of HR & CS updated Trust Board as follows:

- Increased detail has been provided around recruitment activity.
- The Director of HR & CS advised on progress with Trade Unions in relation to the Job Evaluation process.
- A new cohort of EMTs commenced their training in November, with a second group to follow in the New Year.
- Skill mix between EMTs and Paramedics was good and it was noted that NIAS is in a better position in this regard compared to other years. It had been noted that NIAS had lost a small number of paramedics to another company however this does not seem to appear to be an ongoing issue, there is very little staff turnover of paramedics.
- The Board recognised the work of the relatively small HR team in their management of large complex recruitment exercises.
- NIAS is currently meeting the Departmental sickness absence target, however, efforts continue to reduce this further. This includes the pilot of additional intervention by Carecall within Emergency Ambulance Control, and following successful review, this would be considered for rolling out throughout the Trust.
- The Director of HR & CS was pleased to advise that NIAS has now received Future Qualifications accreditation for EMT training which the Trust is now delivering. The Board acknowledged the work of the Training Team.

Medical

The Interim Chief Executive, in his role as Trust Medical Director, updated Trust Board as follows:

- NIAS Emergency Planning Team are rolling out a programme of Major Incident Management Training to the wider HSC on behalf of the Health & Care Social Board and Department of Health. It was noted that the Department of Finance were no longer able to provide expert support to complete the Business Impact Analysis and the review of the Business Continuity Plans. Other options to obtain expert support were currently being explored.
- Trust Board welcomed the recruitment of administrative support to the Risk Manager, and it was noted that a review of incident reporting procedures remained on track for completion within the current year.
- The Interim Chief Executive advised the Board of the requirement for all Trusts to include "never events" in the Regional SAI reporting system and had circulated a list of such events to the Trusts. However these were relevant to hospitals and not to an ambulance service. NIAS was therefore developing a list of relevant Never Events collaboration with the Health & Social Care Board and other UK Ambulance Services
- It was noted that the first meeting of the Trust's Learning Outcomes Review Panel had taken place in September.
- The Interim Chief Executive was pleased to report that in the course of Restart a Heart Day on 18 October, 4,193 people mainly school students were trained in CPR. Tribute was paid to Mr McPoland, Communications & Media Manager, for his work in collaboration with other agencies and schools, and for arranging extensive media coverage for the event. Appreciation of the work of all the staff who took part in the training across Northern Ireland was also recorded and would be shared with all involved. The Trust plans to increase numbers trained at next year's event.

- The Interim Chief Executive has been asked to Chair the Regional Trauma Network Board in his role as NIAS Medical Director, with the first meeting on 15 December. Further updates will be provided to Trust Board.
- The Interim Chief Executive apologised that due to DoH deadlines, it had not, on this occasion, been possible to bring the Annual Quality Report to the Trust Board before publication. The Department of Health had published the Trusts' Quality Reports in conjunction with World Quality Day, and NIAS has placed the report on its website. The Board considered the report to be an excellent document as it is open & transparent, and felt that it is important for it to be part of a wider communications strategy and for dissemination to staff, key stakeholders including MLA's and Media. The Board gave the document its endorsement and thanked the team who had prepared the report.

Action: The Interim Chief Executive to discuss further dissemination with the NIAS Communications & Media Manager.

8.0 Items for Approval

8.1 Appropriate Referral and Transport Policy

The Interim Chief Executive confirmed that this Policy was being brought back to the Trust Board for approval due to a number of amendments.

Mr McKinley asked about the extent of the Trust's consultation with patients in relation to the policy. The Interim Chief Executive confirmed the Policy had been subject to consultation including service users who were very supportive. He advised that NIAS engages with service users on an ongoing basis as part of PPI by a number of means such as 10,000 Voices, Patient Stories, focus groups, patient support groups etc. This was welcomed by the Board.

It was noted the issue of patient consent to referral by ambulance services was currently being reviewed nationally.

The Appropriate Referral and Transport Policy was approved on the approval of Mr McKinley, seconded by Dr Livingstone.

8.2 Whistleblowing Policy

The Director of HR & CS presented the Whistleblowing Policy, the only change is to the designated person, it was noted that the Whistleblowing email address is confidential and secure.

It was noted that RQIA are currently reviewing whistleblowing and the policy may change further. Also as a Trust, NIAS works closely with HSC and any legislative changes will be reflected in further policies, which will then be brought to the Board for approval.

It was noted that work is also ongoing to bring Whistleblowing legislation in NI into line with GB in relation as there are differences around the significance of public and personal interest.

The Whistleblowing Policy was approved on the proposal of Mr McKinley, seconded by Dr Livingstone.

8.3 Driving Policy

The Director of HR & CS presented the Driving Policy to the Trust Board.

There had been significant consultation around this policy, and the SEMT were cognisant that the policy should ensure safeguarding of staff and patients.

In England there is a legislative requirement for assessments every five years, however, this is not required in Northern Ireland. NIAS, however consider this to be best practice and have included this in the policy, subject to review.

A discussion took place around the phrasing of Risk Management and Assessment 9.2 and it was agreed that "A dynamic risk assessment should be completed for each journey..." should be changed to "A dynamic risk assessment should be undertaken for each journey..."

Action: Wording in the Policy to be amended

The Director of Operations clarified the following:

- Parameters for driving under blue lights and the related training.
- The Service Level Agreement for the Voluntary Car Scheme.
- Points on Driving Licence and annual driving licence checks.
- The standards for professional driving.

NIAS have adopted the higher DVLA Medical standard required to drive an ambulance.

Subject to one amendment the Driving policy was approved on the proposal of Dr Livingstone, seconded by Mr Cardwell.

8.4 Patient Report Form

It was noted that this item should read "Policy for Completion of Patient Records".

The Policy for Completion of Patient Records, was approved on the proposal of Mr McKinley, seconded by Mr Haslett

9.0 Items for Information / Noting

9.1 Annual Quality Report

This had been covered earlier in the meeting, under the Medical Director's Performance Report (Agenda Item 7.1).

9.2 Minutes of Assurance Committee 20 September 2016

Dr Livingstone confirmed that the Audit and Assurance Committees would not be able to meet on the same days this year due to changes in the Audit Cycle. The Assurance Committee will however meet prior to Trust Board meetings.

9.3 Minutes of Audit Committee 20 September 2016

The Director of Finance & ICT confirmed the main item was the mid-year assurance statement which is part of the cycle of assurances.

9.4 Proposed Dates for Board Meetings, Audit & Assurance Committees 2017

Noted.

10.0 Application of Trust Seal

Mrs McCue confirmed that within the Health Service there are new requirements from the DFP for major capital projects, which include opening a separate bank account to ensure payments are passed on from the main contractor to sub-contractors on a timely basis when work is completed. Therefore NIAS are required to open a separate Bank Account for the building of the Enniskillen Ambulance Station, and requested Board approval for the Application of the Trust Seal for this purpose. Mrs McCue confirmed that NIAS, DFP and other significant stakeholders will have ongoing management responsibility for the Bank Account, will be used for this sole purpose and once the project is complete the Bank Account will be closed. The Trust Board were content for the Bank Account to be opened for this purpose and for the required documentation to be signed and sealed.

The Board agreed that the seal be fixed following the meeting.

11.0 Forum for Questions

No questions.

12.0 Any Other Business


No items.

13.0 Summary and Forward Agenda

No items.

Date, Time and Venue of Next Meeting

The next scheduled In Committee of the Trust Board will be held on **Thursday 2 February 2017** at 2.00pm in the Southern Division (venue to be confirmed).

Signed: 
(Chairman)

Dated: 02.02.17