

NORTHERN IRELAND AMBULANCE SERVICE

Minutes of a Meeting of Trust Board held on Thursday, 19 January 2012 at 2.00pm in the Armagh City Hotel, 2 Friary Road, Armagh. BT60 4FR

Present:

Mr P Archer	Chairman
Mr L McIvor	Chief Executive
Mrs S McCue	Director of Finance & ICT
Ms R O'Hara	Director of Human Resources & Corporate Services
Mr B McNeill	Director of Operations
Dr D McManus	Medical Director
Ms A Paisley	Non Executive Director
Prof M Hanratty	Non Executive Director
Mr S Shields	Non Executive Director

In Attendance:

Mrs M Crawford	Executive Administrator
Miss K Baxter	Senior Secretary

Welcome and Format of the Meeting

The Chairman opened the meeting by welcoming members of the public and Trust Board and explained the arrangements for receiving questions from the public.

1.0 Apologies

Mr N McKinley, Non-Executive Director.

2.0 Procedure: Declaration of potential Conflict of Interest Quorum

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

3.0 Minutes of the Previous Meeting of the Trust Board held on 17 November 2011

Members accepted the minutes as a true and accurate record of proceedings on the proposal of Prof Hanratty seconded by Ms Paisley.

4.0 Matters Arising

None.

5.0 Chairman's Business

5.1 Visit to Armagh Ambulance Station

The Board were impressed with the way the Station is managed and the attitude of staff. It was noted that there was no covered area outside for washing vehicles and there was water damage to the roof. It was advised that the damage to the roof happened quite recently and will be repaired shortly. The Board asked if any capital investment was available for such works and were advised that the Trust has a 5 year programme for maintenance of existing premises. The Board found the comprehensive profile on the station very informative.

5.2 Chairman's Update

The Chairman gave a brief outline of his diary commitments since the last Board meeting. He also advised that a Non Executive Director vacancy has become available due to Mr McKeever tendering his resignation back in November 2011. The DHSSPS has been contacted and the process of recruitment should commence soon.

6.0 Chief Executive's Business

6.1 Chief Executive's Update

The Chief Executive outlined some of his activities since the last Board meeting, in particular:

- Met with John Simpson, Economist and media commentator in relation to health care. This meeting was organised with NICON and proved useful with Mr Simpson having a better understanding of ambulance matters. The Chief Executive's advised that further meetings are planned with other media commentators.
- Held bilateral meetings with the Chairs of Audit/Assurance Committee.
- Mid Year Assurance meeting with the DHSSPS (to be discussed under Item 11)
- Met with the producer of the Nolan Show who plans to do a feature on NIAS.
- Meeting regularly with John Compton, Chief Executive of the HSC Board and Chief Executives of all HSC Trusts.

7.0 Assurance Framework as at 30 November 2011

Human Resources

Director of Human Resources & Corporate Services updated members on her report and the following comments/issues were noted:

- The Board noted that absence has improved year on year.
- Are the unions now engaging with the Trust.
- The Board were advised that it was Unison only who had withdrawn however they were now back in play for most issues.

Medical

The Medical Director updated members on his report and the following comments/issues were raised.

- Members of the Board commented on the wealth of information provided within the medical report and discussion ensued on what information was required.
- The Executive team welcomed the debate adding that the Assurance Framework is a working document which will continue to be developed to reflect the requirements of the Board
- The table on Page 16 of the report regarding hand hygiene was discussed and noted.
- Medical Director advised that regional healthcare hygiene and cleanliness standards were introduced in July 2011 and they have been reviewed in relation to those elements that are relevant to NIAS.
- Discussion arose in relation to who makes the decision on whether or not to transport a patient to hospital?
- Clarification was provided outlining the various processes in place which shape such decisions.

Operations

The Director of Operations presented his report and the following comments/issues were raised:

- Does NIAS receive and respond to consultations on road improvement proposals?
- NIAS have processes in place to respond to consultations with a summary report to Trust Board.
- Has any decision been made regarding the Station at the Erne hospital site?
- No decision can be made until the Trust has all the relevant information, but we continue to engage with key stakeholders to manage the service transition in Eniskillen.

The Board considered the Operations report to be very heartening, within the context of the pressures highlighted, and congratulated the Director of Operations.

Finance

Director of Finance updated members on her report and the following comments/issues were raised:

- The capital budget has been reduced by £300k. Did the Trust reduce the budget by surrendering this amount?
- Some estate projects had not progressed as planned and it was necessary to surrender the monies.
- Can the Trust capture the amount of clinical work being carried out by staff and produce more outcome based reports which would show the important role NIAS play and how the Trust saves the wider HSC money?
- The Trust system can only record what happens to the patient up to the point of hand over to the hospital. We have no access to information on patient outcomes at this stage and this would be the case for all ambulance services.

This is an area the Trust is aware of and work continues with key partners in regard to collating this type of information. Given the recent development of clinical audit within the Finance Directorate there is a focus on enhancing data quality and extending the use of clinical data to introduce clinical outcome information.

8.0 Briefing on National Day of Action

The day was managed very successfully and all Area Managers were involved in the planning. Patient care was not compromised.

- Are any more days of action planned?
- The Trust has not been made aware of any further action.
- The Board wished to commend all Officers involved in the planning for the day of action and wondered whether on reflection there was any learning from the day?
- The first day of action provided some learning for the Trust which showed where the major issues would be. The Trust had engaged with the other five health Trusts and consistency of service was maintained regionally. Learning has been shared with colleagues in the UK. Congratulations were extended to all staff.

9.0 Financial Pressures 2012/13

The Trust is forecasting a breakeven position at year end. It is anticipated that 2012/13 will be more difficult with potential additional savings of up to 4% to be made by each Trust. The Trust is currently working with the Department and the Board to identify the impact of this and develop proposals to deliver this saving. The savings plan is required to be ready by the end of January 2012 and the Board will be advised of the proposals as they are developed.

10.0 Review of Health & Social Care

The review has been published with a number of references to NIAS. The Trust did lobby hard in this regard with attendance at workshops and also met personally with the Review Panel. It was acknowledged that the role of NIAS is key in managing unscheduled care in the future.

- Will the Trust be undertaking any capital plans in the next three years?
- The Trust is not aware of what the capital allocation will be, however if monies become available the Trust can make a bid for estate development.
- Will the Trust meet the deadline of June 2012 for the development of plans for implementation of the HSC Review recommendations?
- NIAS will engage with local health economy leads to influence the development of their plans and will share the Corporate Plan in the first instance to identify our potential contribution.

The Board commended the work of the Executive team in relation to the Review of Health & Social Care.

11.0 Mid Year Assurance Meeting

No major issues were raised at the meeting and the Trust was commended for its contribution in supporting significant acute changes and financial performance.

The Trust advised that no approval has been received for both the Trust Delivery Plan and Corporate Plan. The Agenda for Change issue was also raised and discussed as requested by NIAS Trust Board.

12.0 Items for Approval

12.1 Learning & Development Strategy

The Trust has engaged with the HSC Leadership Centre and has benchmarked with other Trusts. This strategy draws from both the Corporate Plan and HR Strategy. The Strategy has been screened and no impact has been identified. If approved by Trust Board this document will be presented to trade unions. The following comments were received:

- How do staff manage stress?
- The Trust has a Health & Well Being strategy which complements this document.

The strategy was approved on the proposal of Prof Hanratty and seconded by Mr Shields.

13.0 Items for Noting

13.1 Consultations

Noted.

13.2 Minutes of Assurance Committee Meeting held 4 November 2011

Noted.

14.0 Application of Trust Seal

The Trust Seal has not been used since the last Trust Board meeting.

15.0 FORUM FOR QUESTIONS

A member of the public asked why there was no representative from the Patient Client Council (PCC) at the meeting. The Chairman advised that this had been discussed some months back with the Chair of the PCC who informed that there has been no PCC representative at NIAS Board Meetings due to a problem with their resources.

16.0 Any Other Business

No other business to discuss.

Date, Time and Venue of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Trust Board will be held on Thursday, 15 March 2012 in the Western Division. Venue to be confirmed.

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

Signed: _____

Date: _____
Chairman