

## NORTHERN IRELAND AMBULANCE SERVICE

### ***Minutes of a Meeting of Trust Board held on Thursday, 21 July 2011 at 1.30pm, The Rural College & Derrynoid Centre, Derrynoid, Draperstown. BT45 7DW***

#### **Present:**

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

#### **In Attendance:**

Mrs M Crawford	Executive Administrator
Ms K Baxter	Senior Secretary

#### **1.0 Apologies**

Mr S McKeever, Non-Executive Director  
Mr S Shields, Non-Executive Director

#### **2.0 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 attending.

#### **3.0 Minutes of the Previous Meeting of the Trust Board held on 24 March 2011**

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

#### **4.0 Matters Arising**

##### **4.1 Draft Corporate Plan 2011 - 2014**

The Chief Executive advised that the Trust is required by the DHSSPS to develop strategic direction which should then be reflected in a Corporate Plan. The document outlines the background to the delivery of ambulance services and the purpose, mission, vision and values. It looks to the future identifying the challenges to be faced and outlines the Trust's assessment of the necessary response and identifying opportunities to delivery of safe high quality care.

During further discussion the Board raised the following issues:

- Will the document be available in other formats?
- The document will be available on request in various forms eg Braille or larger fonts.
- The Board acknowledged that the Executive Team have worked hard to refine the document and found the list of strategic objectives very useful and asked whether there had been any reaction to the proposals.
- The Trust is expected to develop proposals within the context of change within the wider HSC. The document was conceived and developed during the previous Assembly administration and there will be an opportunity in the covering letter to the Commissioners to reference the Minister's priorities.
- The Chairman added that the document shows that the Trust is taking a proactive role in the delivery of unscheduled care which is a positive message.

Trust Board approved issue of the draft Corporate Plan to DHSSPS.

#### 4.2 **Sharing of Minutes with DHSSPS**

In response to a request from DHSSPS for minutes of NIAS Trust Board and Committees to be shared in draft form, the Chief Executive advised that he had advised them of NIAS's process for sharing and agreeing minutes. The DHSSPS were content with this process.

### 5.0 **Chairman's Business**

#### 5.1 **Visit to Magherafelt Ambulance Station**

The Board commented that the station visit this morning was very impressive and clearly indicated a well run station. The new premises that had become available have resolved the previous cramped situation. Staff welcomed and communicated openly with Board members who wished to pass on their thanks to the staff.

#### 5.2 **Chairman's Update**

The Chairman gave a brief outline of his diary commitments since the last Board meeting.

#### 5.3 **Re-appointment of Prof Hanratty to the Board**

The Chairman congratulated Prof Hanratty on behalf of the Board on her re-appointment to the Board for a further 4 years.

### 6.0 **Chief Executive's Business**

#### 6.1 **Chief Executive's Update**

Chief Executive briefed members as follows:

Met with the Minister on the 1 June 2011 where he outlined his priorities. The issues of unscheduled care and the introduction of Thrombolysis in relation to cardiac care were also discussed. The Minister also visited the Emergency Ambulance Control on 15 June 2011 and travelled with an RRV paramedic on an emergency call.

Met with the Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service. This is an ongoing engagement and bi-monthly meetings have been arranged. The Chairs of each organisation will be invited to attend two meetings per year.

Attended a HART Conference and met with colleagues who were in attendance at the New York and London bombings and the earthquake in New Zealand. Three HART Paramedics from NIAS also attended the event which was an opportunity for them to engage with colleagues.

## **6.2 Health & Social Care Board/Public Health Agency Commissioning Plan (Draft)**

The Chief Executive advised that there are four specific references to NIAS within the draft Commissioning Plan. The theme of the document is to deliver, safe, high quality care within resources available. There is to be further investment in ambulance services given the probability of acute reconfiguration and the impact this will have on NIAS.

The Chief Executive further advised that the review of Healthcare which the previous Minister had indicated was to be undertaken by William McKee will now be undertaken by John Compton, Chief Executive of the Regional HSC Board. NIAS Corporate Plan will be presented to HSC Board for consideration in the context of the Review.

## **7.0 Assurance Framework as at 31 May 2011**

The Chief Executive advised that the document has been revised for 2011/12 and gives a holistic view which includes 'priorities for action'. He welcomed any comments or suggested amendments.

### **Medical Report**

The Medical Director advised that there were no exceptions to report and was happy to take any questions from the Board.

- The Board asked if the Electronic Care Record allowed staff to be more prompt in clinical interventions.
- It was explained that the Electronic Care Record is different from the Patient Report Form used by NIAS staff as it allows electronic access to elements of a patient's medical history by GP out of hours and Emergency Departments.
- The Board were pleased to see a review of GP urgent calls being undertaken.
- Changes are required to the current system of managing these calls and the plan would be to dovetail these calls into the current prioritisation system within Control
- The re-introduction of a 'call triage pilot' being explored with a GP out of hours organisation.

- The pilot of Cat C call triage by GPs in Control has been successful and a call triage pilot with one of the regional GP out of hours is being explored with a view to extending it regionally.

### **Operations Report**

Members were given a summary of the report and advised that Cat A cumulative performance at the end of May was 72.7%. There are still pressures within the Northern area and work is ongoing to improve the flow of patients. The delay in turnaround times at acute hospitals is another pressure and the Trust is working hard to find a solution with key stakeholders.

- It was noted by the Board that there has been a slight decrease in Cat A activity.
- Director of Operations advised that overall activity has increased by 3%.

### **Finance & ICT Report**

Director of Finance provided a summary of the report advising that there are 3 key areas within the Finance report, Resource Utilisation, Information Governance and Provision of Trust wide IT. The following questions were raised.

- Capital budget and capital spend was raised and the concern regarding back loading at the end of the financial year.
- It was advised that the Trust is working to reduce this risk and late spend last year was largely due to resources becoming available late in year. As funds are in place this year it is anticipated that expenditure should take place earlier in the year.
- It was commented that the operational area of the Trust is dependent on robust IT systems and whether any 'down time' impacts on performance. The question of whether the emergency control would switch to the non emergency control in Derry was also raised.
- The Director of Finance advised that the telephony system had recently been unavailable in the Emergency Control. This represented a "live" test of the Trust's backup systems and contingency arrangements which operated as planned. It was added that all other contingencies would be exhausted before emergency control would be switched to non-emergency control in Derry. The Director of Finance agreed to provide information on any such incidents in future within her report to Trust Board.
- The Board is aware of the 'Business Services Transformation Programme' and requested an update.
- Director of Finance advised that she is a member of the Project Board for HR, Payroll and Travel Expenses systems along with representatives across all Trusts. She added that a significant amount of work is being carried out and engagement is ongoing with suppliers. It is hoped to have contracts signed by 2012.
- The capital expenditure profile was raised and the Director of Finance was asked to include a projected capital expenditure in year on a monthly or quarterly basis.
- Director of Finance agreed to review and include projected spend.
- The business case for Ballymena was raised.
- It was advised that the capital environment was more constrained and discussions are still ongoing. Regular meetings are being held and priorities will be realigned as appropriate.

**Action:** Director of Finance to indicate in her report any downtime of the IT system and to illustrate projected capital spend for the year ahead.

## **Human Resources & Corporate Services Report**

Director of HR gave a summary of her report highlighting that attendance management and the current lack of a specific target, alongside current performance at 6.21%. A detailed analysis was provided of measures to support attendance management highlighting integration with operational performance management.

- The Board noted the 'Care & Responsibility' training and queried whether this should be re-clarified as 'Therapeutic Management of Violence'
- The Clinical Training Manager has looked at all related training and is satisfied that the current training is fit for purpose. Director of HR agreed to check the title of the training. It was suggested that a briefing paper be presented to Assurance Committee addressing the issues raised.
- The high percentage of absence for control staff was noted and the Board queried whether this has been investigated.
- It was advised that a Duty Performance Manager has been tasked with addressing this issue and the focus has been on intervention; the absence figure for May is down by 2.87%. It was noted that long term illness and changes to shift patterns have had an effect on the figures.

**Action:** Director of HR to check on the title of 'Care & Responsibility' training and to present a briefing paper to the Assurance Committee.

## **8.0 Approval to Policies/Procedures**

### **8.1 Amendment to Contact Details – Whistle Blowing Policy**

It was advised that the contact details have been amended to reflect Ms Paisley as the contact for this matter.

## **9.0 HR Annual Report**

Director of HR presented the report and the followings issues were raised.

- The Board considered the report to be very useful as it shows the workload of the HR department which appears to be very substantial.
- Carers leave was noted with 141 applications received, however it was considered that this shows the Trust in a positive light where consideration of the work, life balance is acknowledged.
- It was noted that 9 staff were referred to the Health Professions Council (HPC) and the Board wished to know at what point this is done.
- The Director of HR advised that the HPC are advised at an early stage.
- The staff survey was noted and the Board questioned whether this reflected low staff morale.
- The Director of HR advised that the questions were set differently in this survey and that a number of conclusions could be made with low morale being one.

The Director of HR and her team were congratulated for a very comprehensive report.

**10.0 For Noting**

**10.1 Minutes of Audit Committee held on the 26 May & 17 June 2011**

Noted.

**10.2 Minutes of Assurance Committee held 17 June 2011**

Noted.

**10.3 2010/11 Year End Performance**

Noted.

**11.0 Application of Trust Seal**

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

**12.0 Forum for Questions**

No questions received.

**13.0 Any Other Business**

**13.1 Board Workshop**

The Chairman advised that dates are presently being canvassed for a workshop to be held in the autumn and some of the topics to be considered are:

- progressing the Corporate Plan
- Review of the new governance arrangements which were implemented in 2010.

The Chairman requested that Board members inform him on a suitable topic or topics for the workshop.

**Date, Time and Venue of Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the Trust Board & AGM will be held on Thursday, 15 September 2011, at NIAS Headquarters.

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

**Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_  
(Chairman)

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_