

## **BUSINESS SERVICES ORGANISATION**

### **Minutes of Proceedings**

The one hundred and sixty seventh meeting of the Board of the Business Services Organisation was held on Thursday 23 November 2023 at 10.00am in the Boardroom, BSO HQ, 2 Franklin Street, Belfast, BT2 8DQ.

#### **Present:**

Mrs Julie Erskine (Chair)

Mr Robert Bannon  
Mr Mark Campbell  
Miss Patricia Gordon  
Mr Sean McKeever  
Professor Dorothy Whittington

Mr Ben Doran (Interim Director of Digital Ops)  
Mrs Karen Hunter (Director of SP&CE)  
Mr Simon McGrattan (Acting DoF)  
Mrs Paula Smyth (Director of People & Place)  
Ms Lesley Young (Director of Operations)

#### **In Attendance:**

Mr Thomas McCaffrey (Head of Communications)  
Miss Amanda Mills (Board Secretary)

#### **1. Apologies**

An apology for absence was received from Mrs Karen Bailey.

#### **2. Conflicts of Interest Declarations**

There were no conflicts of interest declared.

#### **3. Minutes of BSO Board Meeting held on 26 October 2023**

The minutes of the meeting held on 26 October 2023 were agreed as a true and accurate record of proceedings.

#### **4. Matters Arising from Minutes**

There were no matters arising from the minutes.

#### **5. Action Template – Paper BSO 173/2023 refers**

Members noted the contents of the Board Action Template. Professor Whittington enquired if BSO planned to issue an organisational chart now that the BSO Review is near completion. The Director of SP&CE advised that a revised Organisation Chart is scheduled to be presented to the BSO Review Oversight Board in December for approval and following that a communique will be issued to all staff, NEDS and clients.

## **6. Chairs Business**

The Chair briefed members on the key meetings she attended during the month of November, of which the bulk of her time had been spent on the recruitment process for the appointment of NEDs to BSO. The final interviews are scheduled to take place on 28 November 2023, 5 December and 7 December 2023 and it is envisaged that the appointments will be confirmed in early January 2024. Once the appointments are confirmed the Chair will commence work on the compilation of Induction packs for the successful applicants. Members noted that the revised date for the Board Risk Workshop has been re-scheduled for Thursday 8 February 2024 and it is hoped that the incoming NEDs will be able to join this session. The Chair briefed members on a recent meeting with the Independent Consultant commissioned to undertake a review of the financial controls of the organisation. His report contained a number of audit issues which included a recommendation that the Board should undertake Risk Management and Awareness training.

## **7. Chief Executive's Report - Paper BSO 174/2023 refers**

In the absence of the Chief Executive the Director of People & Place presented the monthly CX report to the Board which included details of key meetings attended during the month of November.

The Executive Leadership Team (ELT) and the Chair undertook a Media Training Programme on 1 November 2023 which proved to be a very worthwhile event. The Chief Executive along with the Director of HR, Western Trust provided a joint update on Recruitment to the Performance and Transformation Executive Board (PTEB) which is chaired by the Permanent Secretary where the collaborative working approach to resolve recruitment issues was welcomed.

Members were asked to note that a number of large-scale digital programmes in the main successfully went live in early November and which were dependent to support the implementation of Encompass Go Live with South Eastern Trust (SET) on 9 November; these included NI Digital Identity Service, NIPACS and the Core Lab Programme (LIMs) in Belfast Trust. A Lessons Learned exercise will be undertaken down the line once the systems are fully embedded. Significant discussion ensued around the go live of Encompass and members acknowledged the amount of work undertaken by all involved to reach this milestone with floorwalkers already being stood down after 2 weeks in (SET).

## **8. Approval Items**

### **8.1 BSO Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2023-26 - Paper BSO 175/2023 refers**

Members considered and approved the revised Health and Wellbeing Strategy which has been adapted from the regional HSC Health and Wellbeing Strategy. Professor Whittington suggested that reference should be made to Sustainability initiatives in the document however it was noted that BSO has recently established a Sustainability Working Group (Chaired by the Director of Operations) and an update will be presented to the Board in the New Year on this matter.

### **8.2 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Regional Policy – Paper BSO 176/2023 refers**

Members considered and approved the EDI Regional Policy which outlines the commitment of the BSO to promote equality of opportunity, good and harmonious working relations and the prevention of unlawful discrimination. Miss Gordon suggested the policy should make reference

to targets and timescales to make the policy more meaningful however does recognise that this is a regional policy.

**9. Report of BDC Meeting held on 6 November 2023 – Paper BSO 177/2023 refers**

Members were briefed on the key issues considered at the BDC meeting held on 6 November 2023. Staff absence (both long term and short term) continues to increase with mental health attributing to the top absence category for Long Term absence. BSO People and Place staff remain focussed on this matter and work tirelessly to support staff and line managers. BDC received an update on the Hybrid Working Pilot Scheme with a further presentation on the evaluation report scheduled to be made at its next meeting in February 2024. A revised SLA process and template was presented to BDC for adoption in some service areas wef 1 April 2024 for full roll-out in 2025/26 financial year. The key changes of the new process were highlighted to members which included the appointment of an assigned Contract Manager to further enhance the smooth transition of the SLA process.

Members noted the minutes of the BDC meeting held on 11 June 2023.

**10. Finance Report – Month 7 – Paper BSO 178/2023 refers**

The Acting Director of Finance presented paper BSO 178/2023; a finance report for the seven month period ending 31 October 2023. The summary financial position shows the reported income and expenditure position for the period, with an overall surplus reported for this period and at this stage in the year a break even position is forecast for year end.

The mid year assessment exercise has been completed and a spending plan is being finalised through ELT to utilise any corporate slippage to support the break even plan with a further detailed forecast exercise will be undertaken in January 2024.

Members were briefed on an issue surrounding a projected shortfall in the capital CRL for Encompass. Negotiations are ongoing with DOH Investment Branch who have assured BSO they will try and secure the additional funding for this unescapable pressure. The Board were also advised that the Chief Executive has written to the SRO Encompass setting out the organisation's concerns around this very serious matter. The Interim Director of Digital Operations also alerted members to an issue which has recently arisen regarding a shortfall with the funding in the Equip FBC. A lengthy discussion ensued around both these programmes and it was agreed that both issues should be considered for inclusion to the Corporate Risk Register as this could have an adverse impact on the organisation's Annual Accounts. Members were assured that if the funding for the Equip programme is not forthcoming then the Programme will not go forward.

The Acting DoF agreed to keep members apprised of any developments in these matters.

Members noted the finance report for Month 7.

**11. HSC Banking Services Contract Award – BSO 179/2023 refers**

Members noted that in accordance with BSO Standing Financial Instructions (SFIs) BSO undertakes regarding competitive tendering for its banking services. Following a full competitive tendering exercise and tender evaluation the HSC Banking Services Contract has been awarded and accepted by the Bank of Ireland (BOI). The new banking contract will run for an initial contract term of five years with potential for a maximum of three 12 month contract extensions, commencing 1 February 2024.

**12. Corporate Balanced Scorecard – October 2023 – Paper BSO 180/2023 refers**

The Director of SP&CE presented paper BSO 180/2023 which set out the performance of key service areas in the BSO for the period up to 31 October 2023. She highlighted those measures with a red rag rating and explained the circumstances which led to the evaluations. It was agreed that future reports should contain a breakdown of the levels of long term and short term absence.

Members noted the BSO Corporate Scorecard for October 2023.

**13. Presentations**

**13.1 HSC Leadership Centre – Overview and Current Activity**

Ms Diane Taylor, Head of BSO Leadership Centre (LC) made a presentation to the Board on the overview and current activity of the LC. Members noted with interest the service improvements undertaken in 2023/24 and the new activity which included the implementation of the Interim Learning Management System (LMS) which went live on 4 May 2023. Also of particular interest is the roll out of the Board Development Programme for both NEDS and Executive Directors. It was highlighted that due to the current restrictions in BSO's legislation LC is constrained in taking on any contacts outside HSC.

**13.2 HSC Clinical Education Centre (CEC) – Overview and Innovations**

Miss Heather Finlay, Head of CEC made a presentation to the Board providing an overview of the CEC and on the innovative work CEC are taking the lead on by maximising the use of Digital technologies to deliver high level clinical programmes.

**14. AOB**

There was no any other business.

**15. Date of Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the BSO Board will take place on Thursday 25 January 2024 at 10.00 am

The Chairman thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting.

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Chair

\_\_\_\_\_  
Chief Executive

Date \_\_\_\_\_