

BUSINESS SERVICES ORGANISATION

Minutes of Proceedings

The one hundred and seventieth meeting of the Board of the Business Services Organisation was held on Thursday 28 March 2024 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

Mr Mark Lowry

Mr Sean McKeever

Mr Linus McLoughlin

Mr Maynard Mawhinney

Mr Frederick Smyth

Professor Dorothy Whittington

Mrs Karen Bailey (CX)

Mr Ben Doran (Interim Director of Digital Ops)

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)

Mrs Dani McEaney (AD SP&CE deputising for Director of SP&CE)

Miss Amanda Mills (Board Secretary)

1. Apologies

An apology for absence was received from Karen Hunter.

2. Conflicts of Interest Declarations

There were no conflicts of interest declared.

3. Minutes of BSO Board Meeting held on 22 February 2024

The minutes of the meeting held on 22 February 2024 were agreed as a true and accurate record of proceedings.

4. Matters Arising from Minutes

There were no Matters Arising from the February Board meeting.

5. Action Template – Paper BSO 22/2024 refers

Members noted the contents of the Board Action Template.

6. Chairs Business

At the outset of the meeting the Chair welcomed Mr Linus McLaughlin to his inaugural Board meeting and at the request of the Chair members introduced themselves. The Chair thanked Board colleagues for their messages of condolence following the death of her mother.

The Chair briefed members on the key meetings she attended during the months of March 2024. In particular she referred to the visit by the Permanent Secretary to PALs Boucher Site on 25 March 2024 which seemed to be very well received. Unfortunately, due to her bereavement the Chair was unable to join the NED induction event on 19 March 2024 and thanked the Director of SP&CE for facilitating the event. She also thanked members for attending the Boardroom Leadership Development Programme on 27 March 2024 which is mandatory for incoming NEDS. The NED/Executive Director pairings have been confirmed as follows:-

Director of People and Place – Fred Smith
Director of Operations – Mark Lowry
Interim DoF – Linus McLaughlin
Director of SP&CE – Maynard Mawhinney
Interim Director of Digital Operations – Julie Erskine.

The CX Office will now organise the pairing meetings for May/June 2024.

7. Chief Executive's Report - Paper BSO 23/2024 refers

The Chief Executive presented her monthly report to the Board which included details of key meetings attended during March 2024. Payroll Shared Services (PSC) have experienced a number of challenges and issues over the past two months. As a result of implementing 3 Change Control Requests (CRs) to the January and February payroll runs a number of issues arose which impacted a number of HSCNI staff receiving incorrect pay. BSO immediately implemented Bronze Command and have been meeting on a bi-weekly basis with a “return to green” plan aimed for the March Payroll. In parallel the BSO also initiated an investigation team to undertake a Root Cause Analysis of the incident; the findings of which will be presented to the Interim DoF in advance of the next payroll cycle and subsequently the formal report being presented to ELT in April/May 2024. Members were advised that BSO had briefed the Business Services Forum (BSF), HSC Chief Executives, DoH Sponsor Branch and the Permanent Secretary of this matter and the mitigating actions being taken to resolve the payroll issues.

The contract for Equip has been confirmed along with the Systems Integrated Partner. For the benefit of the new NEDS the Chief Executive briefed members of the background to the Equip Programme and the amount of work envisaged to design and implement the system over the next two years.

BSO has submitted the Witness Statement for Module 3 of the Covid Inquiry within the required timeframe and work is now underway preparing the witness statement for Module 5 which is scheduled for submission on or before 31 July 2024. It is certain that the BSO will be called as a witness to the Module 5 Inquiry as it relates to PPE.

8. Approval Items

8.1 Structure Change Update to Bank – Paper BSO 24/2024 refers

Following recent changes to the BSO's Board structure, BSO are required to update the Bank of changes to BSO's Governance structure in order to comply with banking regulations. Members considered and approved the new Bank Mandate form along with submission letter to the Bank of Ireland (BOI) detailing the BSO Board membership.

8.2 BSO Ophthalmic Committee – Ratification of New Member – Paper BSO 25/2024 refers

Members considered and approved the appointment of Mr Eavan Kennedy to the BSO's Ophthalmic Committee for an initial four year term.

9. Finance Report – Month 11 – Paper BSO 26/2024 refers

The Acting Director of Finance presented paper BSO26/2024; a finance report for the eleven month period ending 29 February 2024. The summary financial position shows the reported income and expenditure position for the period with BSO continuing to forecast a break even at year end. He was pleased to inform members that DOH had recently allocated BSO the RRL to cover the deficit for PPE before year end. In answer to a question from Mr McKeever the Interim DoF confirmed that BSO's accounts will be qualified for 2023-24 on the basis of opening balances however it is hoped that the accounts will be unqualified thereafter. The Chair congratulated the Interim DoF, Director of Operations and their teams to reaching a balanced financial position at year end and the mitigating actions to resolve the stock issue.

Members noted the finance report for Month 11.

10. Corporate Balanced Scorecard – February 2024 – Paper BSO 27/2024 refers

The Assistant Director of SP&CE presented paper BSO 27/2024 which set out the performance of key service areas in the BSO for the period up to 29 February 2024. She highlighted those measures with a red rag rating and explained the circumstances which led to the evaluations.

Members noted the BSO Corporate Scorecard for February 2024.

11. Board Governance Self Assessment – Paper BSO 28/2024 refers

The Chair presented the updates from the Board Self Assessment Action Plan arising from the 2022/2023 Board Governance Self Assessment Tool. The Chair briefed members on the reason for the Action Item rag rated Red "Effective Board Level Evaluation" which she explained is outwith the BSO's control. The Chair confirmed that she plans, in conjunction with the SP&CE team, to commence the 2024/25 self assessment in June 2024.

12. Executive Summary NI HSC Research Ethics Committees (OREC NI) A and B Annual Report for 2022-23 – Paper BSO 29/2024 refers

Members noted with interest the Executive Summary of the NI HSC Research Ethics Committees A and B for 2022-23. The Interim Director of Digital Operations reminded

members that the report was meant to be presented to the Board at its meeting in June 2023 however to the issues around the 2022/23 accounts the item had to be deferred.

It was agreed that the Head of OREC NI should be invited to the August Board meeting to give her the opportunity to present the 2023-24 report and present a high level overview of the work of this service area.

13. Update on the Evolve Programme – Paper BSO 30/2024 refers

The Interim Director of Digital Operations advised members that the Key Evolve programme risks which were previously highlighted to the Board have now been resolved. He also informed members that due to the resolution of the risk the roll-out model has been refined. To that end a consultation process has been initiated. The Board will receive a further update in May.

14. Overview of Directorate People and Place and Directorate of Finance

As part of the induction process for the new NEDs the Directors of People and Place and Interim DoF presented high level overviews of their Directorates and service areas.

15. Report of Remuneration and Terms of Service Committee (RTSC) Meeting held on 22 February 2024

Members were briefed on the key issues considered at the Remuneration and Terms of Service Committee meeting held on 22 February 2024. The Terms of Reference of the Committee was considered and approved. The Senior Executive Pay Circular for 2022/23 was considered alongside correspondence from BSO Senior Executives to the Chair of BSO setting out their disappointment of the outcome of the Senior Executive pay award for 2022-23. The correspondence set out in detail the Directors concerns and the Chair advised that the Chief Executive is fully supportive of the Directors action. To that end the Chair agreed to forward the correspondence to the Permanent Secretary for his attention. The Committee endorsed the recommendation to extend the duration of the Interim Director of Digital Ops and DoF posts until 31 December 2024. The Chair advised members that she was in receipt of correspondence from the Chief Executive asking for consideration be given to the awarding of a management allowance for the additional duties undertaken in her role as Senior Responsible Owner (SRO) of Equip and the Technical Enablement Programme (TEP). A set of criteria to determine the management allowance will be produced and presented to the next RTSC meeting.

15. AOB

There was no AOB.

16. Date of Next Meeting

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

The Chairman thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting.

Chair

Chief Executive

Date _____