

BUSINESS SERVICES ORGANISATION

Minutes of Proceedings

The one hundred and seventy second meeting of the Board of the Business Services Organisation was held on Thursday 23 May 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 Maynard Mawhinney

Mr Sean McKeever

Mr Linus McLaughlin

Mr Frederick Smyth

Professor Dorothy Whittington

Mrs Karen Bailey (CX)

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)

In Attendance:

Mr Jonathan Semple (AD Supply Chain)

Mr Thomas McCaffrey (Head of Communications)

Miss Amanda Mills (Board Secretary)

Miss Danielle Laherne (shadowing Mrs Karen Bailey as part of her leadership module for MSc in Transformation)

1. Apologies

An apology for absence was received from Ms Lesley Young.

2. Conflicts of Interest Declarations

There were no conflicts of interest declared.

3. Minutes of BSO Board Meeting held on 25 April 2024

The minutes of the meeting held on 25 April 2024 were agreed as a true and accurate record of proceedings.

4. Matters Arising from Minutes

There were no Matters Arising from the April Board meeting.

5. Action Template – Paper BSO 39/2024 refers

Members noted the contents of the Board Action Template.

6. Chairs Business

The Chair briefed members on the key meetings she attended during the month of May 2024.

The Chair thanked non executive colleagues for completing their annual appraisal documentation for 2023-24 in a timely manner, and confirmed the final signed templates are scheduled for return to DOH Public Appointments Unit by 28 June 2024. The Chair attended a session of the Covid Inquiry – Module 2 which was held in Belfast and advised members she found the session very enlightening. The Health Minister attended the most recent meeting of HSC Chairs Forum and briefed members on the challenging financial situation facing the Health Service.

7. Chief Executive's Report - Paper BSO 40/2024 refers

The Chief Executive presented her monthly report to the Board which included details of key meetings attended during May 2024.

She informed members that the key agenda item at the last meeting of the CX Forum focussed on financial planning and the need for HSC organisations to break even. In light of the financial challenges facing Trusts, ELT will undertake a thorough review of BSO's Financial Strategy and budget for 2024-25 (Agenda item 8.1 in today's Board meeting). The Acting DoF and Director of SP&CE are scheduled to meet with Trusts over the summer months and early Autumn as part of the Service Level Agreement (SLA) process. It was agreed that a presentation should be made to the Board on the SLA pilot in September.

A Gateway Review on the Equip programme took place this week with a red flag result primarily due to the issue of resourcing. The Chief Executive who is SRO of the Equip Programme is meeting key staff to consider options/mitigations to resolve this matter.

The Chief Executive was pleased to announce that BSO PALs team was successful in winning the UK National GO Award for Collaborative Procurement in Health. Their winning entry was for the successful collaborative delivery with many stakeholders in HSC and DOH of a framework for the elimination of Off-Contract Expenditure in Agency Nursing.

8. Approval Items

8.1 BSO Financial Strategy 2024-25

The Acting Director of Finance presented the financial strategy and opening budgets for 2024/25 financial year and reported a forecasted breakeven budget for 2024-25. Members were briefed on the process to formulate the budget which is linked closely with the production of the BSO SLA and Service Offering which will be sent out to customers.

Members approved the Financial Strategy for 2024/25 and acknowledged the work done to date and the challenges which lie ahead in these uncertain times.

9. Directorate of SP&CE Agenda Items

9.1 Review of Committee Terms of Reference (TOR) - Paper BSO 41/2024 refers

The Director of SP&CE presented paper BSO 41/2024 setting out the amendments to the TOR for the BSO's GAC and Remuneration and Terms of Service Committee. The BSO's Standing Orders will be amended to reflect the changes.

9.2 Corporate Balanced Scorecard – April 2024 – Paper BSO 42/2024 refers

The Director of SP&CE presented paper BSO 42/2024 which set out the performance of key service areas in the BSO for the period up to 30 April 2024. She highlighted those measures with a red rag rating and explained the circumstances which led to the evaluations.

As highlighted on previous occasions the KPI relating to the utilisation of solicitor time used constantly remains red. The Director of Operations commissioned the Chief Legal Adviser (CLA) to produce a paper for ELT on this measure where it was demonstrated that within this reporting mechanism there is a fluctuation regarding annual leave. As part of the new SLA pilot measures will be taken to reduce the performance and make the KPI more realistic.

Members noted the BSO Corporate Scorecard for April 2024.

9.3 Corporate Performance & Assurance Framework – Schedule of Assurances by Service Area – Paper BSO 43/2024 refers

Members noted with interest the paper BSO 43/2024; Corporate Performance and Assurance Framework – Schedule of Assurances by Service Area. It was recognised that the majority of the papers detailed on the schedule of assurances are presented to Board, BDC or GAC.

9.4 Corporate Risk and Assurance Report (CRAR) 2024-25 – Paper BSO 44/2024 refers

The Director of SP&CE presented the Corporate Risk and Assurance Report for 2024-25. For the benefit of the new Board members she explained the risk process and advised that following a recent training programme the SP&CE team are undertaking an exercise to review the terminology of the risks and differentiate what are risks and what are issues. Mr Mawhinney complemented the quality and detail of the Risk Register and enquired on the review process. The Director of SP&CE advised that ELT are scheduled to conduct a “deep dive” review of the CRAR during the Summer which will include the duration of a risk on the Register. The Chair advised that CRAR is a substantive agenda item on the DOH /BSO bi-yearly ground clearing and annual assurance meetings.

Members noted the Corporate Risk and Assurance Report for 2024/25.

10. Update on the Management of PPE and Audit Qualification – Paper BSO 45/2024 refers

The AD Supply Chain updated members on the mitigating actions being taken to manage the levels of surplus PPE. Members noted the position.

11. Covid 19 – Rule 9 Inquiry Modules – Paper BSO 46/2024 refers

The Director of SP&CE presented paper 46/2024 detailing the involvement by BSO in responding to three statutory requests in accordance with Rule 9 of the UK Covid Inquiry.

BSO submitted responses to the additional queries relating to Module 3 on 17 May 2024. The Inquiry is now reviewing and will advise if they intend to retract anything from BSO's Chief Executive's statement or evidence before circulating to core participants.

BSO is on target to submit the response on the Rule 9 request for Module 5 of the Inquiry relating to procurement scheduled for 31 July 2024. This is a significant exercise with over 100 questions and sub-questions. It anticipated that there will be additional queries to this module following the submission date which will require further support and consideration, as well as lengthening the duration until the Module 5 submission is complete.

Members will also recall that BSO received a Rule 9 request relating to Counter Fraud which was not anticipated; the date for submission of the response is scheduled for 31 July 2024.

Members note the position.

12. BSO Claims Management Report for 2023-24 – Paper BSO 47-2024 refers

Members noted the BSO Claims Management Report for 2023-24.

13. Cyber Security – Update

The Interim Director of Digital Operations informed members that the inaugural meeting of the Cyber Security Project Board is scheduled to take place in June and it is intended to present a bi-annual report to BDC. The training course on Cyber Security for BSO staff has been updated and it was agreed that a session will be organised for the Board in late summer/early Autumn. It was agreed to invite Caroline McLaughlin, BSO Cyber Programme Manager to make a presentation to the Board later in the year.

14. Report of GAC Meeting held on 17 May 2024

The Chair of GAC briefed members on the key agenda items considered at the GAC meeting held on 17 May 2024. The Head of Internal Audit presented eight Internal Audit Reports to GAC; 5 were assessed as Satisfactory and 3 were assessed as Limited. With regard the Management of Revenue Business Cases Audit Report which was assessed as Limited the Acting DoF will discuss this matter with DOH as the BSO's Annual Business Plan is de facto the Business Case for year. Mr Smyth stated that consideration of the 8 audit reports took up the majority of the GAC meeting as there contained approx. 300 recommendations in total and in his opinion did not see the value other than to provide assurance to GAC. To that end the Chair of BSO suggested that the Acting DOF should agree a way forward with GAC.

15. Report of BDC Meeting held on 13 May 2024 – Paper BSO 48/2024 refers

It was agreed to defer this item to the June Board meeting.

16. Report of Remuneration and Terms of Service Meeting held on 13 May 2024

Members were briefed on the key issues considered at the Remuneration and Terms of Service Committee meeting held on 13 May 2024.

17. AOB

There was no AOB.

18. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the BSO Board will take place on Thursday 27 June at 10.00 am, venue will be Boardroom, BSO HQ, 2 Franklin Street, Belfast.

The Chairman thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting.

Chair

Chief Executive

Date _____