

BUSINESS SERVICES ORGANISATION

Minutes of Proceedings

The one hundred and thirty sixth meeting of the Board of the Business Services Organisation was held on Thursday 29 October 2020 at 10.00am via Video Conference.

Present:

Mrs Julie Erskine (Chair)

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

Mrs Karen Bailey (Acting Chief Executive)
Mrs Karen Bryson (Director of Finance)
Mrs Paula Smyth (Director of HR&CS)
Mr Peter Wilson (Interim Director of Operations)

In Attendance:

Mr Alphy Maginness (Chief Legal Adviser)
Mr Mark Bradley (Interim Director CCP)
Miss Amanda Mills (Board Secretary)

1. Chairs Welcome and Apologies

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and especially Mr Mark Bradley as Interim Director of Customer Care and Performance (CCP).

2. Conflicts of Interest Declarations

There were no conflicts of interest declared.

3. Minutes of BSO Board Meeting held on 24 September 2020

The minutes of the meeting held on 24 September 2020 were approved as a true and accurate record of proceedings.

4. Chairs Business

The CX Office, at the request of the Chair, has contacted the DoH Public Appointments Unit regarding the Terms of Office of a number of Non Executive Directors (NEDs) expiring at the end of November 2020. As yet the DoH has not confirmed if NEDs will be reappointed for a further 4 years. The Chair has advised that following informal discussions with the affected NEDS, Mr Jeremy Stewart has informed her that he is unable to continue in his role as NED once his current appointment expires at the end of November. To that end the Chair has asked Mr Sean McKeever to take over the role as Chair of the GAC, Patricia Gordon to become a member of GAC and Mr Mark Campbell become the BSO Whistleblowing Champion. She is pleased to announce all three members have agreed to her requests.

Members were informed that Mrs Caroline Lee, Head of the Clinical Education Centre (CEC) has been awarded an MBE from the Queens Honours List for her outstanding contribution to the health and social care system response to the COVID19 pandemic. The Chair has congratulated Caroline on this marvellous accolade on behalf of the Board.

4.1 *Review of Arms Length Bodies (ALBs) – Correspondence to Chair/Chief Executives – BSO 50/2020 refers*

The Chair presented correspondence from the Director of Corporate Management Directorate, DOH providing an update on the Review of ALBs. BSO is reviewing the factual information which it submitted earlier in the year however plan to make some further amendments by the closing date for returns; 29 October 2020. It is envisaged that the recommendations from the Review will be presented to the Executive for comment in the New Year.

5. *Acting Chief Executive's Report*

The Acting Chief Executive briefed members on the meetings recently attended.

The BSO EU Exit sub group has been re-established and Peter Wilson is the lead Director for this area of work.

Further to last month's Board meeting BSO has now completed the exercise to produce the data and information to be included in the NIFRS business case to support the replacement of its Business Systems.

A proposal has been developed for a BSO high level review to SMT. The review will look at existing and future challenges for the organisation and determine whether BSO is fit to deal with them or if/where changes need to be made. SMT unanimously approved to take forward a task and finish piece of work and it is proposed this group will report through BDC.

Covid SMT has been re-established and meets on a weekly basis. Most service areas are reporting that delivery of services continues with some impact on delivery with a small number of services reporting an increasing need to support Covid initiatives. The Business Continuity Plan (BCP) is currently under review and it is planned to hold a desktop business continuity exercise prior to Christmas.

6. *Items for Approval*

6.1 *Revisions to Standing Orders and Standing Financial Instructions – Paper BSO 51/2020*

The Interim Director of CCP presented paper BSO 51/2020 which set out proposed revisions to the BSO Standing Orders and Standing Financial Instructions.

Members approved the proposed amendments.

7. Items for Noting

7.1. *Finance Report – Month 6 – Paper BSO 52/2020 refers*

The Director of Finance presented paper BSO 52/2020; a finance report for the six month period ending 30 September 2020.

The summary financial position shows the reported income and expenditure position for the period, with an overall deficit reported for this period. She explained that the deficit has been generated once again by core services, which is the result of the significant impact of Covid 19 expenditure. The Director of Finance is currently undertaking a detailed mid year forecasting exercise on the BSI Financial Plan in partnership with budget holders; the results of which will be presented to SMT and the November Board meeting.

In answer to a question from Professor Whittington regarding the possible increase in costs due to Brexit the Interim Director of Operations stated that it is very difficult to gauge at present however would not be surprised if supplier costs rise in 2021.

Members noted the finance report.

7.2 Corporate Balanced Scorecard – Paper BSO 53/2020 refers

The Interim Director of CCP presented paper BSO 53/2020 which set out the performance of key service areas in the BSO for the period September 2020. He highlighted those measures with a red rag rating and explained the circumstances which led to the evaluations.

Members noted the BSO Corporate Scorecard.

7.3 Annual Business Plan Performance Report, period ending 30 September 2020 – Paper BSO 54/2020 refers

The Interim Director of CCP presented paper BSO 54/2020 which set out a summary exception report on the performance against the Annual Business Plan for 2020/21 as at 30 September 2020. Members were advised that the DOH has stood down the assurance process due to Covid and as stated at the September Board Meeting, the impact of the Covid 19 pandemic has had a significant impact on the ability of service areas to meet their original objectives for the year. To that end the Interim Director of CCP suggested that it would be prudent to undertake a more fundamental review on how Covid is affecting BSO's services. It was noted at the end of quarter two 87% of the actions within the revised draft Business Plan were reported as complete within the agreed tolerance level.

Members noted the Annual Business Plan Performance Report.

7.4 Updates to the HM Treasury Orange Book - Paper BSO 55/2020 refers

The Interim Director of CCP presented paper BSO 55/2020 which highlighted recent updates made to the HM Treasury's Orange Book on the Management of Risk – Principles and Concepts. This replaced the previous version which was issued under DAO in October 2004. The Chair stated that she plans to hold a workshop in the New Year to discuss the updates in more detail.

7.5 BSO Corporate Risk and Assurance Report – Paper 56/2020 refers

The Interim Director of CCP presented paper BSO 56/2020 outlining progress made to date on risk actions as at 30 September 2020. Members were reminded the Corporate Risk Register is presented to the GAC on a quarterly basis and the Board on a bi-annual basis.

Members noted the Corporate Risk and Assurance Report for 2020/21.

8. Presentation

8.1 *Digital Shared Services (DSS) Programme – New Business Case Option –*

Mr Alasdair Kilpatrick, Consultant, Deloitte made a presentation to the Board on the preferred option on the HSCD Business Case which involves the creation of a new Directorate of Digital Shared Services within BSO, supported by a phased transfer for services, staff and funding, driven by regional programmes and business need. The Business case and Blueprint are near completion and are scheduled to be presented to the HSC Digital Programme Board for approval on 24 November 2020. A lengthy discussion ensued especially around the governance aspects for this programme. The Chair thanked Mr Kilpatrick for his detailed and informative presentation and it was agreed that a further update presentation be made to the Board in January 2021 to allow the Board a further chance to deliberate.

9. GAC

9.1 *Report from GAC Meeting held on 20 October 2020*

The Chair of GAC briefed members on the key issues discussed at the GAC meeting held on 20 October 2020. In particular GAC received a presentation from the DOF on the Improvement Action Plan to address the outstanding audit recommendations and this was welcomed by GAC as it demonstrated clear ownership by SMT.

The Chair thanked Mr Stewart for his dedication and hard work as Chair of GAC over the past four years on behalf of members.

10. *Covid 19 – Updates from Directors*

The Chair invited executive colleagues to update members, on an exception basis, the additional work taking place due to Covid 19. Each Director provided members with a comprehensive update on their services areas.

11. *AOB*

(i) *Letter to Staff re HSCB Closure Update*

Members noted correspondence from the Perm Secretary to all HSCB, BSO, PHA and DoH staff which was released at 10.30 am this morning relating to the HSCB Closure.

(ii) *Letter re Senior Executive Pay*

The Chair advised she had received correspondence from the Permanent Secretary relating to Senior Executive Pay. To that end the Chair has decided to convene a meeting of the Remuneration and Terms of Service Committee in November to consider this correspondence.

(iii) *December Board Meeting*

The Chair proposed to postpone the December Board meeting and suggested holding a lengthier meeting in January 2021. Members concurred with this proposal.

12. *Date of Next Meeting*

The next meeting of the BSO Board will take place on Thursday 26 November 2020 at 10.00 am.

The Chairman thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting.

Chair

Chief Executive

Date _____