

BUSINESS SERVICES ORGANISATION

Minutes of Proceedings

The one hundred and sixty first meeting of the Board of the Business Services Organisation was held on Thursday 27 April 2023 at 10.00am in the Boardroom, BSO HQ, 2 Franklin Street, Belfast.

Present:

Mrs Julie Erskine (Chair)

Mr Robert Bannon	Mrs Karen Bryson (Director of Finance)
Mr Mark Campbell	Miss Lesley Young (Director of Operations)
Miss Patricia Gordon	Mrs Karen Hunter (Director of Strategic
Mr Sean McKeever	Planning and Customer Engagement –
Professor Dorothy Whittington	SP&CE)

In Attendance:

Mr Ben Doran (Head of ITS)
Mrs Alison Andrews, AD HR
Mr Thomas McCaffrey, Head of Corporate Communications
Miss Amanda Mills (Board Secretary)

1. Welcome/Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Karen Bailey and Paula Smyth.

2. Conflicts of Interest Declarations

There were no conflicts of interest declared.

3. Minutes of BSO Board Meetings held on 23 March 2023

The minutes of the Board meeting held on 23 March 2023 were agreed as a true and accurate record of proceedings.

4. Board Action Template – Paper BSO 113/2023 refers

Members noted the contents of the Board Action Template.

5. Chair's Business

The Chair briefed members on key meetings she attended during the month of April 2023. In particular she briefed members on her attendance at the Nikon Strategic Planning Workshop 2023-24 and beyond which was chaired by the Permanent Secretary.

The Chair advised that she plans to extend the timing of the June Board meeting by 30 minutes due to the potential number of agenda items which includes the presentation of the Annual Report and Accounts for 2022-23.

6. Chief Executive's Report

Due to the Chief Executives absence this matter was deferred. Members were assured however that all meetings requiring attendance by the Chief Executive were covered by Senior Executive colleagues.

7. Draft BSO Annual Business Plan for 2023-24 – Paper BSO 115-2023 refers

Members considered and approved the draft BSO Annual Business Plan for 2023-24. Members were advised that the DOH extended the life of the BSO's Corporate Plan for an additional year, 31 March 2024, due to the Covid Pandemic.

8. Draft Finance Report – March 2023 – Paper BSO 116/2023 refers

The Director of Finance presented paper BSO 116/2023 which was her provisional financial report for the year ended 31 March 2023.

The summary financial position for the period reported a provisional surplus for the financial year which is within the break even tolerances. She advised that 2022/23 has proved to be a very challenging year due to the efficiency savings required in the last quarter of the financial year and to that end praised the management team in BSO.

The DoF and her team are currently finalising the draft annual accounts for 2022/23 which are due for submission to the NIAO and DoH in May for audit scrutiny.

The budget build process for 2023/24 has commenced and the draft financial strategy for 2023/24 will be presented to the May Board meeting.

The DoF wished to put on record the commitment of BSO Directors on the positive outturn on the financial management for each of their service areas.

Members noted the Finance report and congratulated the DoF and her team on this excellent outcome.

9. Corporate Balanced Scorecard – March 2023 – Paper BSO 117/2023 refers

The Director of SP&CE presented paper BSO 117/2023 which set out the performance of key service areas in the BSO for March 2023 and highlighted the measures with a red RAG rating and explained the circumstances which led to the evaluations.

Members noted the BSO Corporate Scorecard.

10. Annual Business Plan Performance Report – Period Ending 31 March 2023 – Quarter 4 – Paper BSO 118//2023 refers

The Director of SP&CE presented paper BSO 118/2023 which set out a summary exception report on the performance against the revised draft Annual Business Plan for 2022/23 as at 31

March 2023. It was noted at the end of Quarter 4, 97.2% of the actions within the Annual Business Plan were reported as complete and within the agreed tolerance level.

11. Corporate Performance and Assurance Framework – Schedule of Assurances by Service Area – Paper BSO 119-2023 refers

The Director of SP&CE advised that an updated Schedule of Assurances and Reports was last considered by the Board at a Workshop in March 2021. This included assurances required by Service areas and the mechanism and frequency for reporting.

Internal Audit conducted a Governance Framework Audit in September 2021, with the purpose of reviewing the governance structure in the organisation. The Audit focused on the governance structure in place to manage the assurance process and the management and reporting of External Assurances to the Board.

One of the Priority 2 weaknesses identified a lack of clarity over what assurances/reports/action plans are required to be reported to Board or a nominated Committee. Internal Audit recommended that assurances required by the Board should be mapped out for each service area, to include the frequency of the assurance and the mechanism for reporting them. BSO accepted this recommendation and agreed that a comprehensive Schedule of Assurances would be prepared for each service area and presented to BSO Board. This schedule has now been updated for 2023/24 and presented to members for review and approval.

A number of suggestions were debated and recommended for approval which included the production of annual reports for Counter Fraud and Probity Services (CFPS), CEC and Leadership Centre, Annual Report on Direct Award Contracts (DACs) and the submission of a quarterly Equality Screening Report to BDC.

Members approved the Schedule of Assurances subject to a number of amendments; an updated schedule of assurances will be presented to the May Board meeting for final approval.

12. Corporate Risk and Assurance Report 2023-24 – Paper BSO 120/2023 refers

Members noted the Corporate Risk and Assurance Report for 2023/24.

13. GAC

Report from GAC Meeting held on 20 April 2023

The Chair of GAC briefed members on the key issues arising from the GAC meeting held on 20 April 2023. In particular he referred to an internal audit report on the management of the BSO's Equality function which received a limited assessment. GAC decided that the report should be presented to SMT for discussion before it is accepted by GAC.

Members noted the GAC minutes of meeting held on 25 October 2022.

14. Remuneration and Terms of Service Committee

Report of Meeting held on 23 March 2023

The Chair of Remuneration and Terms of Service Committee (RTOSC) briefed members on the key issues arising from the RTOSC held on 23 March 2023.

Members noted the minutes of RTOSC held on 25 October 2022.

15. **AOB**

There was no Any other Business matters raised.

16. **Date of Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the BSO Board will take place on **Thursday 25 May 2023 at 10.00 am**, at BSO HQ.

The Chairman thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting.

Chair

Chief Executive

Date _____