

BUSINESS SERVICES ORGANISATION

Minutes of Proceedings

The one hundred and seventy fourth meeting of the Board of the Business Services Organisation was held on Thursday 22 August 2024 at 10.00am in the Conference Room, BSO Procurement and Logistics Service (PALS), 77 Boucher Crescent, Belfast.

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)

Ms Lesley Young (Director of Operations)

In Attendance:

Mr Robin Arbuthnot – AD People & Place (deputising for Paula Smyth)

Mr Thomas McCaffrey (Head of Communications)

Miss Amanda Mills (Board Secretary)

1. Apologies

An apology for absence was received from Mrs Paula Smyth.

At the outset the Chair advised members that she had conveyed the Board's condolences to Paula Smyth following the recent death of her mother.

2. Conflicts of Interest Declarations

There were no conflicts of interest declared.

3. Minutes of BSO Board Meeting held on 27 June 2024

The minutes of the meeting held on 27 June 2024 were agreed as a true and accurate record of proceedings. Professor Whittington asked for a clarification on a number of acronyms which were included in the minutes and asked in going forward if the minutes would reflect the full detail when acronyms were being used.

4. Action Template – Paper BSO 62/2024 refers

Members noted the contents of the Board Action Template.

5. Chairs Business

The Chair briefed members on the key meetings she attended during the month of August 2024; this included attendance at a visit by the Permanent Secretary to meet staff involved in the implementation and roll-out of the NIPACs + programme to date. A demonstration was also made to the Permanent Secretary on how this programme will support future digital developments across HSCNI and further enhance patient care.

The Chair thanked Mark Lowry for attending the blood drive which took place in James House.

The Chair is currently working on the Board Self Assessment report for 2023-24 with a view to providing an overview of the document at the Board workshop scheduled for 20 September 2024; the final version of the Self Assessment will be presented to the September Board meeting.

The BSO People Awards event is scheduled to take place on Thursday 10 October where it has been agreed that each NED will chair a short listing panel for one of the categories; the Chair asked her NED colleagues if they are unable to commit to this request please advise her as soon as possible.

Members were advised that following discussion with Robert Bannon it had been agreed that Mark Lowry would take on the role as Chair of BDC in the New Year. Mr Lowry will shadow Mr Bannon for the next two meetings (September and November 2024).

Mr Campbell took the opportunity to thank the Chair and members for the sympathy card following the death of his mother.

6. Chief Executive's Report - Paper BSO 63/2024 refers

The Chief Executive presented her monthly report to the Board which included details of key meetings attended during August 2024 these included attendance by the Permanent Secretary on 7 August 2024 to meet with NIPIMs Programme teams and service users. The aim of the NIPIMs programme is to combine 7 existing lab systems within HSC Pathology into one single Laboratory Information Management System. Over the summer months the Chief Executive took the opportunity to join senior team meetings and brief them on the BSO Review.

The key focus for the Chief Executive and senior staff involved with the Equip Programme continues to be on staff resourcing and working on the resubmission of the Full Business Case (FBC) for final approval by DoH. Work has commenced on the design and implementation phase with the Systems Integrator (SI) which will have a significant impact on both the BSO and the HSC region in general. A meeting has been arranged with the Permanent Secretary in early October to ask him to raise the profile of the Equip Programme. A number of BSO staff have been seconded to the Equip Programme and the organisation is now trying to backfill the vacancies to maintain the BAU functions of the BSO. The Board will be kept appraised on this key programme and the Chief Executive assured members that work is still ongoing to resolve the actions following the red status from the Gateway Review.

The Covid Witness Statement for Module 5 was submitted in line with the deadline date of 31 July 2024.

Meetings have taken place over the Summer with Directors to complete the end of year objectives for 2023-24 and the setting of objectives for 2024-25. A meeting of the Remuneration and Terms

of Services Committee will be arranged in the Autumn for formal consideration and approval of senior executive's objectives.

The Chief Executive, Director of SP&CE and Acting DOF met with GIRFT (Getting it Right First Time) Team. The GIRFT team also facilitated a briefing to Chief Executives and key senior staff on the findings and recommendations detailed in the GIRFT report. DoH are now considering next steps. BSO Directors are reviewing the proposals on some of the recommendations to assess if they could make a start, eg potential savings on Procurement however the Director of Operations advised that Trust colleagues would need work with PALs as BSO can only action to a certain point.

The Chief Executive briefed members on the key issues discussed at her monthly catch up meeting with Chris Matthews, DoH Sponsor Branch.

7. Annual Progress Report 2023-24 to the Equality Commission – BSIO 64/2024 refers

The AD People & Place presented the Annual Progress Report on the implementation of Section 75 and the duties under the Disability Discrimination Order to the Equality Commission for 2023/24 for members' approval. Members were briefed on the innovative actions undertaken by the BSO's Equality Unit and members welcomed this very comprehensive document. In particular members welcomed the increase in staff attendance at mandatory training sessions and the number of equality screening impact assessments. The Director of SP&CE, Chair of the BSO's Tapestry Network, took the opportunity brief members on the significant progress which has taken place over the last year and what is planned in this financial year for staff with disabilities.

Members approved the annual progress report to the Equality Commission for 2023/24.

8. Finance Report – Month 4 – Paper BSO 65/2024 refers

The Acting Director of Finance presented paper BSO 65/2024; a finance report for the four month period ending 31 July 2024.

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. He referred to the additional £1m retraction from the BSO's Opening Allocation from DOH and briefed members on how the organisation proposes to facilitate this retraction. The Acting DoF and Director of SP&CE are conducting meetings with Trusts and ALBs as part of the Service Level Agreement (SLA) for this financial year and are briefing customers on the introduction of the income realignment exercise setting out the services BSO provides along with the costs of these services. The outcome of the Income realignment exercise will be presented to DoFs via the Business Services Forum (BSF) in September.

9. Corporate Balanced Scorecard – June and July 2024 – Paper BSO 66/2024/ 66/2024 (A)refers

The Director of SP&CE presented papers BSO 66/2024 and 66/2024 (A) which set out the performance of key service areas in the BSO for the period up to 30 June 2024 and 31 July 2024. She highlighted those measures with a red rag rating and explained the circumstances which led to the evaluations.

With regard to the KPI regarding recruitment where the focus centres on the end to end recruitment process and referred to the SLA documentation which states that when a requisition arrives with RSSC it must be correct however this is not always the case whereby in a number of cases incorrect requisitions have to be returned to customers which incurs additional time in the recruitment process. Following discussion at the Regional Recruitment Programme Board it has been agreed that the timing of the recruitment process does not start until the requisition is correct and verified by RSSC. The Board welcomed this initiative and in answer to a question from Mr McKeever the Director of SP&CE advised that the Head of RSSC has been working extensively with Trusts to help them understand the recruitment process and their role.

The SP&CE team have been working vigorously over the summer months drafting a set of strategic KPIs and these will be presented to the Board workshop in September. Members noted the BSO Corporate Scorecard for June and July 2024.

10. Performance against Business Planning – Quarter 1 Report – Paper BSO 67/2024 refers

The Director of SP&CE presented paper BSO 67/2024 which set out a summary exception report on the performance against the revised draft Annual Business Plan for 2024/25 as at 30 June 2024. It was noted at the end of Quarter 1, 100% of the actions within the Annual Business Plan were reported as complete and within the agreed tolerance level.

11. Update on the Management of PPE and Audit Qualification – Paper BSO 68/2024 refers

The Director of Operations updated members on the mitigating actions being taken to manage the levels of surplus PPE. The key issue is the management of PIPP Stockpile whereby DoH are intending to bid for capital funding in the October 2024 monitoring round to cover the replenishment of the PIPP stockpile.

Members noted the position.

12. OREC NI

12.1 Executive Summary for Financial Year 2023-24 for OREC NI and HSC Research Ethics Committees (RECs) A&B Annual Report – paper BSO 69/2024

Members noted with interest the Executive Summary for Financial year 2023-24 for OREC NI and Research Ethics Committees A&B Annual Report.

12.2 Overview of the Office of Research Ethics Committees for NI (OREC NI)

Ms Karen Beattie, Head of OREC NI presented a high level overview of the Office of RECS for NI.

13. AOB

There was no AOB

14. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the BSO Board will take place on Thursday 26 September at 10.00 am, venue will be Conference Room, HSC Pensions Service, Waterside House, 75 Duke Street, Londonderry, BT47 6AU.

The Chair thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting.

Chair

Chief Executive

Date
