

## **BUSINESS SERVICES ORGANISATION**

### **Minutes of Proceedings**

The one hundred and seventy eighth meeting of the Board of the Business Services Organisation was held on Thursday 23 January 2025 at 10.00am in the Boardroom, BSO HQ, 2 Franklin Street, Belfast, BT2 8DQ and via MS Teams.

#### **Present:**

	Mrs Julie Erskine (Chair)
Mr Robert Bannon	Mrs Karen Bailey (CX)
Mr Mark Lowry	Mr Ben Doran (Acting Director of Digital Ops)
Mr Linus McLaughlin	Mrs Karen Hunter (Director of SP&CE)
Mr Maynard Mawhinney	Mr Simon McGrattan (Acting DoF)
Mr Frederick Smyth	Mrs Paula Smyth (Director of People & Place)
Professor Dorothy Whittington	Ms Lesley Young (Director of Operations)

#### **In Attendance:**

Mr Thomas McCaffrey (Head of Communications)  
Mrs Maire Alexander (Head of Chair & Chief Executive's Office)  
Miss Amanda Mills (Board Secretary)

#### **1. Apologies**

An apology for absence was received from Sean McKeever. At the outset of the meeting the Chair introduced Marie Alexander, Head of Chair and Chief Executives Office who was attending in an observer capacity.

#### **2. Conflicts of Interest Declarations**

There were no conflicts of interest declared. The Director of SP&CE informed members that work is underway to produce a BSO Conflicts of Interest Policy which will eventually be presented to the Board for formal approval.

#### **3. Minutes of BSO Board Meeting held on 28 November 2024**

The minutes of the meeting held on 28 November 2024 were agreed as a true and accurate record of proceedings.

#### **4. Action Template – Paper BSO 01/2025 refers**

Members noted the contents of the Board Action Template. The Chair advised that she has asked the Director of Operations to make a presentation on the role of BSO's Family Practitioner Services (FPS) Directorate to a future Board meeting.

## 5. Chairs Business

The Chair briefed members on the key meetings she attended during the months of December and January. In particular the Chair referred to the Nikon event for Chairs and NEDS which she attended regarding the 3 year strategy for Health and Social Care NI.

## 6. Chief Executive's Report - Paper BSO 02/2025 refers

The Chief Executive presented her monthly report to the Board which included details of key meetings attended during December 2024 and January 2025.

The Equip Programme continues to take up a considerable amount of her time with the main focus on the decision making in respect of the design and implementation phase of the project.

The Chief Executive and the Acting Director of Digital Ops met with the newly appointed Deputy Chief Digital Information Officer (CDIO), Tom Simpson and it has been agreed that update meetings will take place on a regular basis.

PA Consulting have been commissioned to undertake a Stocktake Review of the BSO; the Report and its recommendations will be presented to the Strategic Review Programme Board in the Spring.

It has been confirmed that the Chief Executive will be called to speak to the Covid Inquiry Team in March 2025 and arrangements are now taking place to meet with a Barrister to assist with the preparation in advance of the Public Inquiry.

A further meeting of the All Ireland CEO Forum has taken place and the cadence is gaining momentum. The Chief Executive has been paired with the CX of National Services, Ireland where they will focus on productivity, innovation and efficiency.

Members were briefed on the key issues discussed at the last meeting of PTEB (Performance Transformation Executive Board) where the main focus was around the health budget and in particular the AFC Pay Award. It is hoped that following the February monitoring round that funding will be available to pay staff for the full years pay award (2024-25). Payroll Shared Services are well underway to deliver the AFC and Medical and Dental pay awards.

The Chief Executive and the Acting Director of Operations briefed members on an issue which has recently arose following a patching exercise on the Finance, Procurement and Logistics (FPL) system where it was taking an excessive amount of time for users to log into the efinancials application. BSO ITS immediately contacted the supplier to establish a Root Cause Analysis (RCA) and investigation. A contingency workaround has been implemented and the supplier has been urged to provide a permanent solution as a matter of urgency which will be fully tested by PaLs to ensure it does not impact or introduce any risk on BAU. ELT and PaLs are receiving regular updates and have informed DOH. Members were assured that BSO is actively working to resolve this matter.

## 7. Draft BSO Annual Business Plan (ABP) 2025-26 – Paper BSO 03/2025 refers

The Director of SP&CE presented the Draft Business Plan for 2025-26 for members consideration and approval. She took members through the draft ABP and informed members that the development of the Plan had been produced in conjunction with BSO senior staff, ELT and was supporting year 2 of the Corporate Business Plan, which was developed with the BSO Board. The

Chair suggested that the Plan should be added to the agenda for the proposed Board Risk Workshop scheduled to take place in the Spring.

A lengthy discussion ensued regarding the objectives and clarification on what objectives were going to be achieved during the 2025-26 financial year. The Director of SP&CE stated that this is an annual plan so all objectives will be completed by 31<sup>st</sup> March 2026.

Members approved the draft Annual Business Plan for 2025-26 and will discuss the content in detail at the forthcoming Board Workshop.

#### **8. Finance Report – Month 9 – Paper BSO 04/2025 refers**

The Acting Director of Finance presented paper BSO 04/2025; a finance report for the nine month period ending 31 December 2024.

The summary financial position shows the reported income and expenditure position for the period, with an overall surplus reported for this period and still projecting breakeven at year end.

The Acting DoF referenced the stock balance for PPE and DOHs intention to reinstate it's PIPP (Planning for Influenza and Pandemic Preparedness) stock. The purchase of PPE stock could have an impact of the carrying value of the obsolete stock provision being carried by BSO. When questioned on the effect of re-lifing of product, the Acting DoF confirmed that re-lifing did not in itself impact the provision, but rather the forecast sales for the particular products.

The Acting DoF confirmed that BSO has received an additional capital allocation from DoH in December 2024 for the Encompass Programme (£11m) to fund emerging programme pressures which will enable the remaining two Encompass go lives (Southern and Western Trusts) scheduled for May 2025 and to maintain adequate support for the current three Trusts operating the new system.

Members noted the finance report for Month 9.

#### **9. Corporate Risk and Assurance Report (CRAR) – December 2024 - BSO 05/2025 refers**

The Director of SP&CE presented the CRAR for 2024/25 and updated members on the progress made to date on risks. Members were advised there were no new risks and all risks have been modified via the new Risk Software platform.

It was noted that the Director of SP&CE was meeting with the Chairs of BaDC and GAC and take them through the reporting mechanism for Risk.

Members note the CRAR for December 2024.

#### **10. Quarterly Board Performance Dashboard (Quarter 3 – December 2024) – Paper BSO 06/2025 refers**

The Director of SP&CE presented the new Quarterly Performance Dashboard for Quarter 3. The report details performance against 7 Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) across a broad range of functional areas within BSO. It was noted that all of the KPIs are rag rated Green with the exception of Legal Services due to in the main staff absences and increased volume and complexity of work across the service area. The Director of SP&CE briefed members on the

key issues which arose at a KPI workshop as part of the BSO Realignment Project where it was recognised that a significant number of KPIs require review. To that end KPI Clinics have been scheduled to support the refining and updating of KPIs and SLAs and once this work is completed the out workings will be shared with the Board at the workshop scheduled for Spring.

Members noted the quarterly Board Performance Dashboard for Quarter 3.

**11. Performance Against Business Planning (PABP) – Quarter 3 Report – Paper BSO 07/2025 refers**

The Director of SP&CE presented paper BSO 07/2025 which set out a summary exception report on the performance against the Annual Business Plan for 2024/25 as at 31 December 2024. It was noted at the end of Quarter 3, 96% of the actions within the Annual Business Plan were reported as complete and within the agreed tolerance level. The Chair wished to place on record her thanks for the quality of the work the Strategy, Engagement and Improvement (SEI) Team are producing especially in light of the absence of the AD SP&CE.

**12. Update on the Management of PPE and Audit Qualification – Paper BSO 91/2024 refers**

The Director of Operations and Acting DoF updated members on the mitigating actions being taken to manage the levels of surplus PPE. BSO PALs has received approval from suppliers to extend the shelf life of two products (Gloves and Facemasks) for a further two years which has the potential to avoid c£6m obsolescence in 2024/25. These shelf life extensions have the potential to provide further opportunity to move stock from BSO to the DoH PIPP Stockpile as well as provide mutual aid to the other three nations and delay costly replenishments of the national PIPP stockpile until the stock expires.

Members noted the position.

**13. Report of BDC Workshop held on 15 January 2025**

The Chair of BDC briefed members on the key issues discussed at the BDC Workshop held on 15 January 2025. The main agenda item was to review the draft Terms of Reference (TOR) of the BDC to ensure it was fit for purpose. The revised ToR will be presented to the next meeting of BDC scheduled for 19 February 2025 and subsequently to the February Board for formal ratification.

**14. AOB**

***Silver IIP Accreditation***

The Director of People & Place informed members that BSO were successful in achieving the Silver reaccreditation for both IIP and Health and Well-Being. An Implementation Plan is being developed and will be presented to the March Board meeting. Robert Bannon who was a member of the IIP Steering Group congratulated members on this tremendous achievement.

***Storm Eowyn***

Members were advised that Storm Eowyn has now been categorised as a Red weather warning and to that end it is planned to instruct staff to work from home on Friday 24 January 2025 for the health and safety of staff.

*Covid Public Inquiry – March 2025*

It was agreed to circulate the link to the Covid Public Inquiry to Board members once the date has been officially confirmed.

**15. Date of Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the BSO Board will take place on Thursday 27 February 2025 at 10.00 am, venue will be Boardroom, BSO HQ, 2 Franklin Street, Belfast, BT2 8DQ.

The Chair thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting.

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Chair

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Chief Executive

Date \_\_\_\_\_