

BUSINESS SERVICES ORGANISATION

Minutes of Proceedings

The one hundred and forty fifth meeting of the Board of the Business Services Organisation was held on Thursday 23 September 2021 at 10.00am via Video Conference.

Present:

Mrs Julie Erskine (Chair)

Mr Robert Bannon

Mr Mark Campbell

Miss P Gordon

Mr Sean McKeever

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)

Mrs Siobhan Fisher (AD CCP)

Miss Amanda Mills (Board Secretary)

1. Apologies

An apology for absence was received from Mr Mark Bradley.

2. Conflicts of Interest Declarations

There were no conflicts of interest declared.

3. Minutes of BSO Board Meeting held on 26 August 2021

The minutes of the meeting held on 26 August 2021 were agreed as a true and accurate record of proceedings.

4. Board Action Template – Paper BSO 57/2021 refers

Members noted the contents of the Board Action Template.

5. Chairs Business

The Chair briefed members on key meetings she attended during the months of August and September which included the NHS Chairs meeting on 22 September 2021 which the Minister attended and outlined to HSC Chairs his outlook for the Health Service for NI over the coming months. The Chair sat on the shortlisting panel for the BSO Recognition Awards applications and encouraged colleagues to join the remote BSO Awards ceremony scheduled for Friday 22 October 2021. The DoH Public Appointments Unit (PAU) have issued the annual appraisal templates for NEDs for 2020/21 for completion by 29 October 2021. Appraisal meetings have now been arranged where the Chair will take the opportunity to undertake a Skills Audit with each NED colleague. The Review of the BSO is near completion and it is hoped that the final

report will be presented to the October Board meeting for formal ratification. In advance of the Board a meeting of the BSO Review Oversight Board will be arranged.

The Chair informed members that permission was received from the DoH for the interim Chief Executive position to continue until 31 December 2021. She also advised members that Mr Alphy Maginness has announced his decision to retire on 31 March 2022 as Chief Legal Adviser.

The Chair informed members that she has been reviewing the BSO's Management Statement and Financial Memorandum (MSFM) following the publication of the Independent Review into the circumstances of the RQIA Board member resignations in June 2020 to ensure there are no issues around the roles and responsibilities of the BSO Board.

6. Acting Chief Executive's Report

Karen Bailey briefed members on key meetings she had attended over the month of September.

The EQUIP OBC has been through Programme governance approval and is with the CDIO's office for final approval before submission to DOH. BSO has re-established the BSO Encompass Programme Board that had previously been stood down. The meetings will be held on a monthly basis prior to the Encompass Programme Board meeting which is chaired by the Encompass SRO, Dr Dermot Hughes. The BSO Encompass meeting will triangulate the work being undertaken by BSO internally and provide members with the opportunity to input into the next Encompass Programme Board papers and brief the Acting Chief Executive on any issues which may need to be raised as a regional Encompass Programme Board member.

The Acting Chief Executive recently attended the National Go Awards ceremony in Birmingham where PALS were successful in winning the award for Brexit Preparedness. Members commended the Interim Director of Operations and asked him to pass on the Board's congratulations to the PALS team.

The HSC Digital Programme is gaining pace and close to submitting their business case; arrangements will be made for a presentation to the Board in the Autumn by the Programme Director.

As already advised to the Board by the Chair the Acting Chief Executive paid tribute to Alphy Maginness. In answer to a question from Miss Gordon to the Chair regarding the timeline for the recruitment of the Chief Legal Adviser Post, the Chair assured members that once the final report on the Review of BSO is approved she will meet with the Acting Chief Executive to commence the recruitment process for the temporary senior executive posts as she is very conscious of the need to stabilise the organisation.

At the invitation of the Acting Chief Executive, the Interim Director of Operations alerted members to an incident which has emerged relating to the Bowel screening service whereby through an extensive series of failsafe reports for the Bowel Screening Programme developed and worked through over the last 6 months, approximately 45 individuals have been identified who did not get invited for bowel screening when they should have. There are a number of different scenarios which have been identified and these are being worked through in detail to get definitive numbers of those impacted. The failsafe reports identified disparities between the screening IT system and the demographic source (the GP registration system) due to the functionality of the interface between these systems. BSO will be notifying a Serious Adverse Incident to facilitate full, open and transparent investigation.

7. *Items for Approval*

7.1 Board Governance Self Assessment – Paper 58/2021 refers

The Chair presented the annual Board self assessment and action plan for members' consideration and approval. She advised that once the BSO Board membership is stabilised (ie NED and recruitment of permanent Executive Director posts) she would hold a Board workshop to allow full Board engagement and collaboration in completing the Self Assessment and action plan. The Chair assured members that she worked through the Self Assessment questionnaire rigorously with the AD CCP and her staff and to that end requested members:-

- Approve the summary results of the Board Governance Self Assessment questionnaire,
- Note the content of the draft case study included in the document
- Approve the action plan.

Members welcomed this document from a governance perspective and endorsed the Chairs recommendations.

Concern was raised of the current number of NED vacancies and the Chair stated that she had contacted DoH Sponsor Branch reminding them of the vacancies and also to the fact that the term of office for Mr McKeever is due to expire at the end of October 2021, and if she gets no satisfaction she will contact the Head of Sponsor Branch in October. Members appreciated that the appointment of NEDs is out with the Board's control but anticipate problems could emerge during the winter months trying to ensure all Board and committee meetings remain quorate.

7.2 Draft BSO Annual Quality Report 2020-21 – Paper BSO 59/2021 refers

The AD CCP presented Paper 59/2021, Draft BSO Annual Quality Report for 2020/21 for member's approval. She advised that the Strategy was considered and recommended for approval by the BDC at its meeting on 6 September 2021. She highlighted to members that the report also includes a section documenting how the BSO has learnt from the Covid 19 Pandemic in terms of the challenges and how it has moved forward. Members approved the Draft BSO Annual Quality Report for 2020-21 subject to a few minor amendments and commended the AD CCP on the production of an excellent document. The revised report will be published on the BSO's website to coincide with World Quality Week which commences on Monday 8 November 2021.

7.3 BSO Communications and Engagement Strategy 2022-2026 – Paper BSO 60-2021 refers

The AD CCP presented the BSO Communications and Engagement Strategy for 2022-2026 for member's approval. She advised that the Strategy was recommended for approval by the BDC at its meeting on 6 September 2021 and that SMT had approved the Business Case to resource the Strategy. Job Descriptions are currently being evaluated for Communications and Engagement Team and it is envisaged that the posts will be advertised in the near future.

Members approved the BSO Communications and Engagement Strategy for 2022-2026.

8. Finance Report – Month 5 – Paper BSO 61/2021 refers

The Director of Finance presented paper BSO 5612021; a finance report for the five month period ending 31 August 2021.

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. She highlighted to members a number of significant budget changes since the financial plan for 2021/22 was presented to the Board in May 2021 which included additional funding to Bursaries, costs associated to EU Exit pressures and wholesaling relating to the NI Protocol as well as a budget reduction for Encompass. She stated that a mid-year forecast of the financial plan for 2021/22 is scheduled to be presented to SMT at the end of September where a spending plan to address any underspends will be presented.

The DoF drew members' attention to the issue around the capital position for the Encompass Programme which she highlighted to members at the August Board meeting. A validation exercise of the Encompass Capital Plan took place which resulted in the handing back of funds to the DOH. A further easement of Capital for Infrastructure (Hardware costs- storage and resilience) has also been declared and it has been agreed that this will be returned to the DHCNI budget pending project plans validation and Encompass Programme Board approval. DoF has now produced a very detailed financial report for Encompass which will be presented to the Encompass Programme Board scheduled for 1 October 2021. A further risk was identified to members relating to the lead time required to procure services from external providers in line with procurement rules provided by the Department of Finance and the additional costs this will incur.

The Chair thanked the DoF for her thorough and diligent report and reiterated to the Board the importance of having appropriate and regular assurance, not only on the financial position of the Encompass Programme but on all aspects.

Members noted the finance report.

9. Corporate Balanced Scorecard – Paper BSO 62/2021 refers

The AD of CCP presented paper BSO 62/2021 which set out the performance of key service areas in the BSO for the period up to 31 August 2021. She highlighted those measures with a red rag rating and explained the circumstances which led to the evaluations.

Members noted the BSO Corporate Scorecard.

10. Business Development Committee (BDC)

10.1 Report of BDC Meeting held on 6 September 2021 - Paper BSO 63/2021 refers

The Chair of BDC briefed members of the key issues discussed at the BDC meeting held on 6 September 2021. BDC received an update on the BSO's approach to the Corporate Review of Service Level Agreements (SLAs) between BSO and the Regional HSC organisations and approved the draft protocol for the management of SLAS. A report on the current status of vacancies and recruitment agency workers and associated costs within the BSO was presented by the Director of HR&CS and was subsequently presented to SMT for discussion. The SRO for Encompass joined BDC and provided members with a detailed brief on his role. The Committee

were encouraged by the SROs willingness to engage with BSO to ensure the successful completion of the Encompass Programme.

10.2 Minutes of BDC – 14 June 2021 – Appendix A

The Minutes of the BDC meeting held on 14 June 2021 were noted by members.

11. Covid 19 – Exception Reports

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.

12. AOB

The Acting Director of Operations referred to the recent press coverage on the breakdown in supply of CO2 in England. He assured members that PALS have engaged with the HSC Gas contractor, who has confirmed there is no breakdown in supply of CO2 to medical facilities in HSC.

The Chair reminded members of the Board Workshop scheduled to take place on Tuesday 12 October 2021. The workshop will receive updates on the Review of BSO, HSCB Closure - Migration to BSO and a further update on Encompass.

13. *Date of Next Meeting*

The next meeting of the BSO Board will take place on Thursday 28 October 2021 at 10.00 am

The Chairman thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting.

Chair

Chief Executive

Date _____