Strategic Investment Board
Minutes of meeting held on 10 February 2026
The Kelvin Building

In attendance:

Board Members
Duncan McCausland (Chair)
Marie Therese McGivern
Kathryn Thomson
Danny McSorley
Steve Harper

Senior Leadership Team
Scott Wilson (Chief Investment Officer)
Jennifer Morgan (Chief Delivery Officer
Claire Cromie (Chief Innovation Officer)
Jean Wylie (Communications Director)
Ursula Doherty (HR Director)
Louise Johnston (Finance Director)

Apologies
Gregor Hamilton. (Replacement Minute taker: Helen McNeill)

Introductions: New Senior Leadership Team

- DMcC welcomed the senior leadership team to the Board meeting. There was a short discussion led by DMcC explaining that the expiry date of Board members has now passed.
- TEO has informed DMcC of the intention to write to current Board members offering an extension period of their terms of office for another six month period.
- This has yet to be approved by Ministers and the Public Appointments Commissioner, and will be followed by the launch of a recruitment competition for new Board members and Chair. It was agreed that any decisions taken in the meeting would be in principle.
- DMcC confirmed that the CEO's annual review is complete. Six objectives have been set for the incoming year. These are to be carried out by the CEO in collaboration with the new Senior Leadership Team. All members of the Senior Leadership Team confirmed that they are content with the proposed objectives.

Change to meeting date

- It was agreed that the 9th June meeting of the audit committee (signing of annual accounts) should be moved to the 11th June to accommodate the (online) attendance of all Board members.

Declarations of interest and Board Terms of Reference
These were taken as read and no new declarations of interest were made.

1. **Minutes of the previous meeting**

- The Minutes of the January 2026 meeting were approved.
- Action points from meetings should be noted at the end of the minutes, rather than under each heading.

2. **Chairman and Directors' Business**

- A review of the structure of the Board (papers/agenda and management information) is to be undertaken as part of the annual internal audit review. The internal auditor plans to schedule meetings with Board members to ask for contributions to inform this review.

3. **TEO: Current Issues**

- Partnership Agreement: Will be discussed at the next SIB/TEO Stocktake meeting.
- SIB Financial Derogation sign off by Ministers: The financial derogation was signed off annually by Ministers. This provided SIB with the ability to approve business cases without additional TEO approval. Without this derogation, SIB's limit is £25k.
- The SIB staff pay remits (2024-5 and 2025-6) are awaiting sign off from TEO Ministers. The Board asked that SH write to all staff communicating the current status of the pay remit approvals process.
- The creation of an SLT is now complete and can be removed from the issues log.
- The invitation to HOCS to attend a Board meeting can be removed, and reinstated when there is a new Board in place.

4. **Report from Chair of Audit & Risk committee**

MTM reported to the Board that the following items had been covered at committee:

- The risk register has been updated. Item 3 (creation of SLT) has been removed, as this is now complete.
- External audit – NIAO and the calendar for annual accounts was agreed and the audit fee was agreed.
- The internal audit process was signed off.

- E Mail Phishing Exercise and report: MTM noted the report which showed a decline in the number of staff who were compliant with the instructions
  The report showed that there has been a decline in the number of staff who had followed instructions or been compliant with the guidelines on how to handle these types of e mails.
  MTM recommended that information should be again cascaded to all staff about the importance of recognising and taking action on phishing e mails.
  Mandatory training and embedding a culture of cybersecurity and data protection awareness should be monitored and reported.

5. **SLT/CEO: KPI Report and Updates**

SH (CEO) reported that the first monthly meeting of the SLT had taken place.
The Chief Delivery Officer and the Chief Innovation Officer are currently putting in place arrangements to be able to transition out of current client commitments.

Three principal pieces of work which have emerged from the first SLT meeting are as follows:

1. Begin to scope a baseline for project management information and review the best system to be able to capture, report and analyse the data.
2. Establish an appropriate performance management system for SIB staff. To be developed at the same time as the pay policy review.
3. Establish a communications strategy for informing SIB's stakeholders what the strategic remit of SIB is.

Each of the Senior leadership team members gave verbal updates on their respective areas.

Investment

- SW reported that comments from First and from Deputy First Ministers had been received on ISNI.
- A discussion took place on possible next steps to advance the ISNI
- SW reported on his appearance at the Public Accounts committee with DoF.
- Enabling Action 6: Progress on DataMap for ISNI – SW has discussed with Permanent Secretaries the lack of data supplied from Departments, particularly from DoH and DE.
- SIB has now completed an end to end review of DE capital projects which has proven very useful, and the next one to be carried out will be for DoH.
- Uncertainty remains as to whether there will be a three year Executive budget agreed and implemented before the end of this financial year.

Delivery (including discussion on the major capital projects RAG status reported to Board)

- The Board agreed that there should be a review of the scope and presentation of the progress on delivery of all projects, not just the major capital projects.
- KT and DMcS asked about the current SIB involvement in Casement Park and MLK. SW reported that SIB have set up an internal review on the development of Magee University campus.
- Chief Delivery Officer (J Morgan) agreed to begin a scoping exercise and seek to implement improved mechanisms to collate data and more relevant reporting of project data/progress or escalation for future Board meetings.
- The SLT have discussed the need to collect and report project data to make reporting across the organisation easier to access and analyse.
- SW suggested looking at the DATAmap system, currently used for ISNI projects as an example of collating project data.

Innovation

- The Chief Innovation Officer reported on the KPI marked amber. There is ongoing liaison with partners, including TEO, to be able to deliver the AI Unit business case. The need to balance supply and demand for this work is the current priority.

Corporate

- The recruitment competition for a Communications and Marketing Manager is currently underway.
- Options for the Social Value Team to transfer to DoF have been sent in writing to the DoF Permanent Secretary in line with the
- Board members noted that all the corporate KPIs were on track and had no further comments to make.

6. Finance

- Board members were content with the Management Accounts paper and had no comments to make.

7. Media Pack

- The media pack was taken as read and Board members noted the recent press on ARC21/NI Waste infrastructure.

8. Presentation: Social License

- Jean Wylie presented the current work which SIB is undertaking on gaining social license for projects.
- The concept and definition of Social License has been accepted by the NICS Board ISNI committee and the SIB Comms team has developed a social license workstream with DfE (Magee UU campus) and Belfast Rapid Transit.
- There is a presentation on social license planned for the next SRO meeting, with the aim of increasing the understanding and importance of social license across project management processes.
- Board members endorsed the development, operationalisation and resourcing requirements of further social license work in SIB and approved the development of a business plan to be considered.

9. AOB

DMcC opened suggestions for locations to hold Board meetings at external venues. Suggestions included the Strule campus in Omagh, the FE College in Coleraine or the Ulster American Folk Park.