

SIB BOARD MEETING MINUTES
19th February 2018
Held at 10am on Tuesday 19th February 2019 at
Lighthouse Building, Gasworks Business Park, Belfast

Present:

Gerry McGinn
Duncan McCausland (DMcC)
Marie Therese McGivern (MTMcG)
Kathryn Thomson
Danny McSorley (DMcS)
Brett Hannam (BH)

In attendance:

Scott Wilson (SW)
Martin Spollen (MS)
Conor Taggart (Board Apprentice)
Helen McNeill (Note Taker)

Apologies: None.

Declaration of Interests

Marie Therese McGivern declared her involvement in the City Deal Programme Board and the (SIB led) communications strategy for Further Education.

Duncan McCausland declared his Board membership at Maze Long Kesh (in particular reference to the Heathrow Hub mentioned in the CEO's report).

1. Minutes of the previous meeting (January 2019)

The minutes were approved, subject to minor amendments.

2. Chairman's and Directors' Business

In advance of Sue Gray joining the meeting for agenda item 7, the Board discussed the issues it might raise with her. BH explained the current areas of work which SIB undertakes for DoF. SW noted that Sue Gray is supportive of wider SIB work which seeks to encourage the transformation of culture across NICS Departments.

Board members noted Sue's support in their own areas of work for increasing diversity and the skills base in the further education sector; creating more transparency and communication between the NICS and the public and using her contacts at HM Treasury to encourage relationship building.

The Chairman reported to Board members on his recent correspondence with TEO regarding the processes for non-executive directors' re-appointments. In the absence of Executive approval, TEO is currently taking legal advice on how best to proceed. At the next Board meeting (March 25th), there will be a workshop on stakeholder mapping by the SIB Communications Director.

The SIB Review action plan will be a standing item on the agenda over the next few months, Separate meetings between the Chairman, Chair and the Audit Committee and the CEO have been arranged to monitor and review progress.

3. Report from the Remuneration Committee

The Chair reported on the business of the Remuneration Committee, which had met earlier that morning.

The Committee had received reports on:

- The progress of negotiations with TEO and DoF on the issue of ARAs. Progress with the 2017/18 Pay Remit;
- An issue regarding the death in service benefit arrangements offered by SIB that had the potential to impact on the lifetime pension allowance cap. Formal approval was granted for the remuneration decisions from August 2018 – February 2019.

4. CEO, ISNI and AMU Reports

The CEO report was taken as read. The CEO noted a number of points that had arisen since the report had been written:

- Desertcreat: Phase 1 of Desertcreat had been delayed by 5 weeks because a subcontractor had left. The business case for Phase 2 is being considered by DoF having been approved by DoH.
- Project Management Apprenticeship Scheme: the scheme is no longer running in the Cabinet Office, so it is unlikely that it can be introduced by SIB.
- SIB Office Move: Suitable car parking arrangements have now been agreed.

DMcS asked about the letter of support issued by SIB for the Heathrow Hub plans. Brett confirmed that the letter is merely a formal support mechanism..

DMcC noted that security of electricity supply for NI remains an issue in the context of the N/S Interconnector judicial review. He had met with DfC Permanent Secretary and discussed the Buy Social Tracking System, which would be progressed. He noted that the impact of the concentration on Brexit across the NICS is leaving little capacity for work on other programmes.

The ISNI Report was taken as read. The Board discussed the re-profiling of funding for the A5 road. In the absence of the Executive, and in light of the other work that MS now leads, it was agreed that future reporting on ISNI should be presented on an exception basis.

MS presented a new standing report to Board covering the new DARE (Data Analytics and Research) Unit. The DARE programme outlines the work currently in planning. This includes Systems Dynamic Modelling and SBRI initiatives to enable Departments to make informed decisions about future policies. MS cited the example of data gathering on educational choices for 14-19 year olds and how this might help DE shape future decisions.

Other work has been very well received by the Permanent Secretary of DfI, as have recent presentations explaining the work and the impact of the unit across NICS Departments.

Two reports are currently being completed by Johann Gallagher, looking at the implications of climate change and technology on future infrastructure planning.

SW's AMU report was taken as read. He asked that Board members note that the Asset Management Register project and the Energy Management Strategy have both been approved by the NICS Board. The Board congratulated the AMU team and were encouraged by the use of the 'demonstrator' approach to asset data gathering to show what achievements can be made across the NICS.

SW had attended a meeting with DoF and the Cabinet Office committee. The Director General of the Government Property Unit had explained how the public and private sectors might work together to inform wider asset management development. BH noted that, as

part of the same visit, the acting CEO of the IPA had visited SIB to hear about our work and discuss further points of collaboration between the two organisations.

5. Papers for Noting

The Chairman referenced the draft business plans and the finance report and they were taken as read with no comments. Board members were asked by the Chair to forward any comments that they may have before the next Board meeting.

6. Organisational Review

Brett Hannam made a short presentation on his initial proposals in respect of the Organisational Review. This had arisen from the SIB review and he reminded the Board of its terms of reference, which were to examine:

- In light of SIB's recent growth, what senior structure would provide effective management of, and support to, staff while retaining the benefits of a lean, responsive and informed organisation;
- Whether the organisation has sufficient resilience to operate effectively in the unplanned absence of the CEO or other key personnel;
- How to ensure that internal candidates have opportunities to develop skills and experience in a way that would enable them to compete for the position of CEO and other senior roles when new appointments are required; and
- How to ensure that the senior structure is able to engage effectively with all staff, especially those embedded in external organisations, so that they do not feel isolated or detached from SIB.

Following internal discussion with colleagues, BH was making a number of proposals for addressing these issues. If the Board was content, these could be further developed to the point where they could be put to TEO and for independent validation.

In summary, the proposals were for:

- The creation of a smaller Senior Leadership Team to support the CEO;
- The introduction of a 'Pillar Structure' to aid external communication of the range of SIB's work and to make internal reporting more coherent;
- The introduction of additional 'Special Interest Groups' to build on the success of the Project Managers' Forum in promoting collegiality and professional development;
- The introduction of a new approach to senior staff succession planning overseen by a Board 'Senior Staff Nomination Committee'; and
- The introduction of new technology to improve internal communications.

In the discussion that followed, Board members made the following points:

- Any proposed solution should be fair and be capable of withstanding any legal challenge (e.g. on grounds of gender or equality).
- The staff organisation chart should distinguish between full and part-time staff and between permanent and temporary appointments.

- The current organisational structure uses a range of job titles and it is unclear whether there is a hierarchy or an equivalence between certain titles.
- It is possible that no current member of staff is qualified to succeed BH. How can SIB assist those who wish to be candidates for this role to acquire the necessary skills and experience?
- Should there be a 'job sizing' process as part of this review?
- Are the current performance management processes fit for purpose?
- What selection process are there for the role of Group Leader? Will these be strong enough to withstand a challenge on gender or equality grounds?
- What will be the role of the Senior Leadership Team?
- Are the proposed spans of control satisfactory?

The Chair proposed individual meetings with Board members before the next Board meeting to gain further feedback. In light of this, he would invite BH to submit a more developed proposal.

7. Meeting with Sue Gray, Permanent Secretary, DoF

Sue expressed her support for SIB and how helpful it is to her work in DoF. She congratulated Scott on the work that SIB is currently engaged in, and reiterated her endorsement of AMU work on the energy strategy and asset management.

She is very content with the NICS use of SIB. However, her longer term approach is to increase and diversify the skills base across the NICS, and knowledge transfer should be developed.

The Board was very encouraged by Sue's approach and her support for SIB's work.

ACTION POINTS

- Chairman to arrange one-to-one meetings with Board members to seek further feedback on the approach to the organisational review. BH to take this into account in a more developed paper.
- Chairman to organise a second meeting with DMCC, CEO and Paul Priestly to assess progress with SIB Review action plan.
- Chairman to consider a periodic review of the Board Pack.

Chairman