

Minutes of a Board Meeting of Strategic Investment Board Limited

Held at 10am on Tuesday 12 May 2020 by videoconference

Present: Gerry McGinn (GMcG)(Chair)
Duncan McCausland (DMcC)
Danny McSorley (DMcS)
Brett Hannam (BH)
Marie Therese McGivern (MTM)
Kathryn Thomson (KT)

In attendance: Gregor Hamilton (GH)
Martin Spollen (MS) (Items 14-18 only)
Johann Gallagher (JG) (Items 14-18 only)

Declarations of Interest and Board Terms of Reference

1. The previously stated declarations of interest were confirmed.
2. The board Terms of Reference were noted. Board members confirmed for the record that they had read the board papers.

Minutes of Previous Meeting

3. The minutes of the April 2020 board meeting were approved (subject to rectification of a paragraph numbering error).

Chairman's and Directors' Business

4. GMcG noted that a number of organisations were now anticipating returning to more normal operations post Covid-19 and considering which changes to work practices might be appropriate. This was something which might be considered at the June meeting. He noted that notwithstanding the current unusual circumstances it was important that proper audit trails were maintained by all public bodies in respect of all expenditure.

5. DMcC noted for the record that the Orange Book and new Code of Conduct were to be discussed at the next meeting of the Audit Committee.

6-8 A number of points relating to the Covid-19 crisis were discussed.

9. DMcC noted that MTM, GMcG and DMcC were all due to retire from the board in September, and suggested that in the absence of a process underway to appoint their replacements, it might be sensible to extend their appointments in the meantime. GMcG agreed to raise this matter with the Permanent Secretary at TEO.

Report from Audit Committee

10. DMcC reported for the minutes on the proceedings of the Audit Committee (all board members having attended the Audit Committee meeting). He reported that the committee had discussed:

- -the Risk Register (and specifically Covid-19 Register);
- -the Draft Accounts;
- -the Internal Audit Report (“Satisfactory”);
- -Audit Committee Effectiveness Report; and
- -New Partnership Agreement, New Orange Book.

11. DMcC noted that the Audit Committee Minute would be brought to the board at the next Board Meeting.

12. DMcC explained that the intention was for the Audit Committee and the board to formally sign off on the Accounts at their respective next meetings on 15th June.

13. GMcG expressed his thanks to the finance team for their work in finalising the accounts.

SIB Covid-19 Epidemiological Modelling

14. MS gave a short presentation on the work of the DARE Unit in building a Northern Ireland specific epidemiological model for Covid-19. He explained the four main areas of modelling being:

- -epidemiology of the pandemic itself;

- -service response modelling;
- -morbidity modelling; and
- -economic impact modelling.

MS explained how the team's model had informed the government response. He noted how data required to be quickly updated and included in the model to permit the authorities to calibrate the effect of relieving the lockdown. He spoke of the role that contact tracing and micro-surveys would play in this.

15. DMcC stressed the importance of ensuring careful records are kept of what was said and considered in respect of this matter.

16. DMcC suggested that MS return to further report to the board at a future date to update it on progress.

SIB Support to Recovery Post Covid-19

17. JG gave a presentation on the areas and types of support that SIB could provide to the Executive (and local authorities) to support economic recovery in the aftermath of the Covid-19 pandemic. She noted the very severe impact which was forecast across the whole NI economy, the likely slump in GDP and the expected rise in UK public sector borrowing, as well as the potential social implications through increased poverty, inequality and mental health issues. JG also noted some opportunities that the current situation could provide to fast track infrastructure and accelerate changes to working practices. She outlined a number of ways in which SIB could orient itself to address emerging priorities and support clients in delivering new policy solutions. These fell under the principal headings of:

- Strategic Advice;
- -Physical and Social Infrastructure;
- -Digital Infrastructure; and
- -Asset Management.

JG identified areas where work was already in progress, although the outlook remained very uncertain.

18. DMcC asked that a copy of JG's presentation be circulated to the board, and the board agreed that JG should return at a future date to deliver an update.

NIAO Report on Delivery of Major Projects

20. The Board discussed the report and its findings. GMcG agreed that he would liaise with BH and bring a proposal to the June board as to how best to progress the matter.

Chief Executive's Report, ISNI Report

21. BH explained that there was no ISNI Report as departments had been fully engaged elsewhere and data was slow in arriving

22. BH updated the board on certain matters which had progressed since the CE Report had been prepared. In particular he noted that:

- Jean Wylie had now found some NICS staff support for her work in the NI Hub;
- -the lack of waste residuals arising as a result of the lock-down; -the Deputy First Minister had tweeted to the effect that TEO would take on a sponsorship role for the proposed GEMS in Derry/Londonderry; and
- -Michael Donnelly was at that moment representing SIB in a large group discussion with David Sterling to consider post Covid-19 changes to NICS working practices.

23. DMcS asked about the precise role of the NICS Hub. BH explained that it collates information from departments and reports it to the Civil Contingencies Group and ministers.

24. DMcC asked for the agenda for the SIB virtual staff conference to be circulated to the board.

25. DMcC noted the IT Assist position on use of "Zoom" but put on record that the Audit Committee had considered the issue of security around Zoom and received assurance that used properly there were no security issues.

26. The board noted the update in the CE Report on the three "red" projects.

27. GMcG noted that the pressure of time had necessitated a shorter than usual discussion of the CE Report, and proposed a more detailed discussion at the June meeting. DMcS asked that the effect of social distancing on construction costs could be considered at that meeting.

Chair

ACTIONS OUTSTANDING FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

Ref	Action	Person Responsible	Expected Completion Date
1/20/3	Record training by Board Members in personal logs.	Board Members	Suspended
1/20/5	Chairman to write to Mark Browne in respect of SLT proposal.	Chair & CEO	Awaiting clearance by TEO
4/20/1	Remuneration & Personnel Committee to consider horizon scanning/scenario planning in context of Covid 19.	Chair	Meeting scheduled for 1/6/20

ACTIONS FROM MAY 2020 MEETING

Ref	Action	Person Responsible	Expected Completion Date
5/20/1	Potential extensions to board members' terms of office to be raised with TEO.	Chair	June 2020
5/20/2	Chair and CEO to consider possible representations to TEO in respect of NIAO report on delivery of major projects.	Chair & CEO	June 2020