

**DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, SOCIAL SERVICES
AND PUBLIC SAFETY**

DEPARTMENTAL BOARD

Minutes of the meeting held on Friday 18 June 2010, in Room C3.18, Castle Buildings at 12:00.

Present:	Andrew McCormick	Michael McBride
	Sean Donaghy	Norman Morrow
	Miriam McCarthy	Sean Holland
	Donncha O'Carolan	Linda Brown
	Martin Bradley	Helen Roulton

In attendance: Linda Devlin, Bernie Stuart, Clare Baxter and Anne Adair.

1.0 Apologies and Opening Remarks

1.1 Andrew McCormick welcomed all to the meeting and noted apologies from Danny McCaughan, John Cole (Bernie Stuart was in attendance on his behalf), Phillip Robinson and Jonathan Bill.

**2.0 NISRA Presentation – Norman Caven and Eugene Mooney
(DB/45/2010)**

2.1 Andrew McCormick welcomed Norman Caven and Eugene Mooney to the Board meeting to present a paper on the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA).

2.2 Norman Caven advised that he was the Chief Executive of NISRA and the Registrar General for Northern Ireland and as such had

responsibility for the statisticians who work throughout the NICS and that he also had responsibility for completion of the census which will take place in 2011.

- 2.3 He advised that, following a meeting in Whitehall, Bruce Robinson had circulated the National Statistician Statement, "Statistics Matter" and had suggested that a presentation about NISRA be made to departments across the NICS.
- 2.4 While no changes in service delivery are planned, he advised that the report encourages statisticians to become more involved in policy areas and that administrative data sets are increasingly being used to address policy queries.
- 2.5 In 2007 an independent UK Statistics Authority was established to promote and safeguard the production and publication of official statistics.
- 2.6 A review of pre-release access statistics will commence before the autumn.
- 2.7 Members of the Board noted the information presented and Andrew McCormick thanked Norman Caven and Eugene Mooney for attending.

3.0 Minutes of Board Meeting – 21 May 2010 (DB/45/2010)

- 3.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 21 May 2010 were agreed and approved for publication on the Department's website.

4.0 Chairman's Report

- 4.1 Andrew McCormick congratulated Donncha O'Carolan on his recent appointment as Chief Dental Officer and also noted the appointments of two other senior officers in the Department, Paddy Woods as Deputy

Chief Medical Officer and Diane Taylor as Director of Human Resources (HSC). He noted that Diane will join the Board as a member at the next meeting.

- 4.2 He also congratulated Sean Donaghy on his success in the NHSCT Chief Executive competition.
- 4.3 He advised that the Department's Workplace Health Improvement Programme (WHIP) had been highly commended in the Irish News Workplace and Employment Awards the previous evening and he paid particular tribute and thanks to Pat Polin and his team who implement the programme.
- 4.4 Since the last Board meeting, there had been three Committee appearances by the Minister and members of the top team as well as representatives from the HSC Board and Public Health Agency. These appearances had focused mainly on expenditure and budget announcements.
- 4.5 The draft Commissioning Plan has been approved by the HSC Board and the Agency and has been formally submitted for Ministerial approval.
- 4.6 The Chancellor, George Osborne, has announced cuts to the NI Block of £127m in 2010/11 and DFP have been considering potential departmental budget reductions. June monitoring is scheduled for discussion at the next Executive meeting.
- 4.7 Linda Devlin provided an update on Ministerial business.
- 5.0 Media Analysis – Clare Baxter (DB/46/2010)**
- 5.1 Clare Baxter presented the media paper, advising that efficiency savings and the budget remained the main focus for the Press Office.

5.2 Members of the Board noted the paper.

5.3 Clare Baxter and Linda Brown left the meeting.

6.0 Finance Report – Sean Donaghy (DB/47/2010)

7.0 Pharmaceutical Clinical Effectiveness Programme – Norman Morrow (DB/48/2010)

8.0 Quarterly Capital Report – Bernie Stuart (DB/49/2010)

9.0 Departmental Board Performance Evaluation – Linda Devlin (DB/50/2010)

9.1 Linda Devlin advised that this paper was the latest in a series addressing the operation of the Departmental Board.

9.2 She advised that, in line with HM Treasury Guidance, it was proposed that the Board would undertake an annual performance evaluation and that, every two years, it would formally consider its remit, constitution and operating procedures.

9.3 In order to decide how to evaluate the Board's performance, various methodologies and tools were considered and a diagnostic tool entitled "*Doing the Business: managing performance in the public sector – an external perspective*", published by HM Treasury and the Cabinet Office, was finally selected. The tool is based on self-assessment, is evidence-based, can be used more than once so benchmarking is possible and it is free of charge. A detailed questionnaire has been developed for completion by Board members over the summer. In-house analysis of the results will then be carried out by the Secretariat after which an action plan will be developed.

9.4 Members of the Board approved the proposed approach to evaluating the performance of the Departmental Board.

Action: Linda Devlin

10.0 Performance against PfA Targets – Sean Donaghy (DB/51/2010)

10.1 Sean Donaghy presented an update of performance against PfA targets, advising that there had been an improvement in performance in Quarter 4 but that there continued to be issues in maintaining standards against some targets, particularly those set for elective and emergency care.

10.2 Members of the Board noted the year end position and also agreed the need to take a more strategic view of performance in future.

11.0 DARC Annual Report – Helen Roulston and Colin Evans (DB/52/2010)

11.1 Andrew McCormick welcomed Colin Evans to the meeting to assist in presenting the Departmental Audit and Risk Committee (DARC) report for 2009/10.

11.2 Helen Roulston noted the following points from the report:

- Work has taken place to strengthen the Department's assurance framework with each of its seventeen Arms' Length Bodies (ALBs).
- The DARC noted and welcomed the new Governance Division in the Department.
- There is a new requirement for the DARC to monitor Post Project Evaluations (PPEs).
- The DARC will monitor the progress of Public Accounts Committee (PAC) reports.

- The DARC reviewed the first Strategic Internal Audit plan which is based on the Department's Corporate Business Plan and Corporate Risk Register.
- The DARC noted the Department's financial position with concern and was also concerned about the delay in obtaining an up to date actuarial valuation for the HSC Superannuation Scheme Resource Accounts.
- The financial deficit in the Northern Trust had been brought to the DARC's attention during the year.
- The Department is now required to complete its accounts in line with the International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) and shadow accounts were prepared which were largely in line with these standards.

11.3 With regard to risk management, Colin Evans advised that, since the last Board meeting, it had been agreed that the DARC would review the Statement of Internal Control (SIC) and that it would provide input only if a major control weakness was identified.

11.4 He advised that, over the coming weeks, he would like to meet with the Department's Directors to assess the risks facing individual Directorates, stressing that this would be a two-way process to provide mutual advice and an improved audit service.

Action: Colin Evans

11.5 Following discussion and agreement to make some minor amendments, members of the Board noted and approved the draft report and agreed that Colin Evans should arrange to meet with Directors in the near future.

Action: Helen Roulston

Andrew McCormick thanked Colin Evans for attending.

12.0 Quarterly Updates on Departmental Modernisation and Improvement Projects – Relevant Board Members (DB/53/2010)

13.0 Business for Next Meeting

13.1 As there were no substantive items for the agenda for the meeting scheduled for 15 July, it was agreed that the next meeting would be held on 20 August. Items for the agenda to be advised to the Secretariat and approved by the Chair in advance.

FOI Statement

The following redaction has been applied to the record above:

Reference	Redaction/Exemption Applied
6.0 – Finance Report	S35 – Policy under development
7.0 – Pharmaceutical Clinical Effectiveness Programme	S35 – Policy under development
8.0 – Quarterly Capital Report	S35 – Policy under development
12.0 – Modernisation and Improvement Projects	S35 – Policy under development