



BOARD MEETING 2 July 2013

PRESENT:

Commissioner Kathryn Stone (Chair - **KS**)

Arlene McCreight (**AMC**)

Head of HR & Corporate Services

Neil Foster (**NF**)

Research Officer

Laura Kennedy (**LK**) - notes

1. Apologies

- 1.1. There were apologies from Adrian McNamee
- 1.2. It was agreed that from the next meeting the Personal Secretary would attend Board Meetings as a notetaker.

2. Declaration of Interests

- 2.1. All attendees confirmed they had no conflicting interests including any related party transactions with any supplier of the Commission as listed.

3. Minutes of Board Meeting – 6 June 2013

- 3.1. Minutes of Board Meeting on 6 June 2013 were agreed.

4. Matters Arising

- 4.1. 13.2 – Letter to Lord Eames to be drafted

ACTION: LK

- 4.2. 5.2. - Formal advice on appointment of new Internal Audit provider to be issued to the Chair of the Audit & Risk Committee (ARC).

ACTION: LK

AMC advised the Department had confirmed that the training for staff to undertake procurement exercises was not currently available with a review to take place in September. The resulting implications for the Commission's deadlines and targets in the 2013/14 Work Programme and on the Commission's budget were noted. Alternative accredited providers of training to be considered.

ACTION: AMC

- 4.3. **KS** to formally write to OFMDFM to advise of concerns.

ACTION: KS

- 4.4. 5.8 – It was noted that the Policy Officer had resigned on 27 June 2013. Interim arrangements to cover the work of the Policy Officer had been put in place and would be subject to review. Head of Corporate Services was liaising with HR Connect to determine how to fill the vacancy. It was agreed the appointment of an AO would be placed on hold

and further discussion regarding staffing would take place at Senior Management Team Meetings.

ACTION: AMC

4.5. 9.4. – It was confirmed that letters had been issued to all respondents.

5. Annual Report & Accounts

5.1. **AMC** advised that CPD had been contacted by the Commission in mid-April to undertake a tender to engage an accountant for the Preparation of Accounts. A closed tender was issued to 4 accountancy firms and closed on 17 June 2013 with nil response. An open tender was then issued from CPD on eSource and was due to close on 8 July. Indications were that there would be a response from the tender and it was hoped an accountant would be appointed on 10 July to undertake work immediately, to have draft Accounts prepared for 31 July 2013.

5.2. The Performance against Strategic Objectives was agreed. To be issued to Department for review

ACTION: AMC

6. Accounting Officer's Report

6.1. **KS** presented the Accounting Officer's Report and advised the Commissioner has a total budget allocation of £1,061,000 for the 2013/14 year.

6.2. The Commission received a letter from the Department on 11 June 2013 detailing the Departments' expectation on budget management for all ALBs to operate within their allocated budget, avoiding overspend and managing underspend within a tolerance level of 0.5%.

6.3. The Commissions new Internal Audit provider was ASM. A draft strategy for Internal Audit in 2013/14 would be drafted for discussion and agreement at the ARC meeting on 17 July 2013.

6.4. NIAO had provided an outline of their strategy for the Commission's 12/13 Annual Report and Accounts. A draft of the year-end financial statements were to be provided to NIAO by 9 August 2013 and NIAO would begin fieldwork on 12 August 2013, with the process completing in October 2013.

6.5. The 2013-16 Corporate Plan and 2013/14 Work Programme were submitted to the Department on 13 June 2013

6.6. The Secretary to the Commission is expected to be in post by 5 August 2013.

6.7. The next ARC meeting would take place on 17 July 2013.

7. Budget

7.1. The 2013/14 Budget was reviewed and any variances noted.

7.2. The Commissioner highlighted the importance of meeting the Department's expectation on budget management for all ALBs to operate within their allocated budget, avoiding overspend and managing underspend within a tolerance level of 0.5%.

7.3. **AMC** advised she would be writing formally to the Department to request the Department provide advice on when the requested monthly drawdown will be transferred into the Commissions account.

ACTION: AMC

8. Risk Register

- 8.1. The Risk Register was noted.
- 8.2. It was agreed to remove point number 7) Lack of clarity on governance structures from the Register.
- 8.3. It was agreed that training at appropriate levels for all staff regarding risk should be taken forward.

ACTION: AMC

9. 2013 – 2016 Corporate Plan

- 9.1. The revised 2013 – 2016 Corporate Plan was submitted to the Department on 13 June 2013.

10.2013/14 Work Programme

- 10.1. There were no outstanding targets from the 2012/13 Work Programme.
- 10.2. The revised 2013/14 Work Programme was submitted to the Department on 13 June 2013.

11.Policy, Development and Research

- 11.1. **NF** presented a report outlining the progress and amendment of targets set within the Work Programme for the Policy, Development and Research Team for the 2013/14 year.
- 11.2. Outputs achieved in month and cumulative outputs achieved in year were noted.
- 11.3. It was noted that the VSS was undertaking research similar to the Commission's proposed research on Quality Standards and there was a possibility the Commission's research project may not be taken forward. Alternative projects with the required Departmental approval, or the possible surrender of allocated funds would be discussed and agreed.

ACTION: AMN & NF

12.HR/Corporate Governance/Administration Board Update

- 12.1. **AMC** provided a report giving updates from HR, Corporate Governance and Administration.
- 12.2. A revised Business Case to engage Communications Expert was being developed and would be forwarded to CPD to take forward a tender when approved.

ACTION: AMC & LK

13.Staffing/Resources

- 13.1. There were no further updates regarding Staffing/Resources.

14.Internal Audit

- 14.1. There were no further updates regarding Internal Audit.

15.Update on Audit Recommendations

- 15.1. All recommendations and updates were noted and would continue to be monitored.

16.Update on OFMDFM Submissions

16.1. Additions to the paper were agreed.

17.Project Management Guidance

17.1. The draft guidance was noted. Further review and comments were required before the guidance could be finalised and adopted.

ACTION: Secretariat

18.Complaints

18.1. A complaint received in June 2013 was noted. AMC advised the complaint had been fully investigated and a response issued within the timeframe outlined in the Commission's External Complaints Procedure.

19.AOB

19.1. There was no AOB

Date of next meeting – Tuesday 13 August 2013 @ 10.30am

NAME: **KATHRYN STONE**

SIGNED: 

DATE: 13 August 2013