



BOARD MEETING
27 March 2014 @ 10.00am

PRESENT:

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

IN ATTENDANCE:

John Beggs (**JB**) Secretary to the Commission
Adrian McNamee (**AMN**) Head of Policy and Research
Arlene McCreight (**AMC**) Head of Corporate Services and HR
Laura Kennedy (**LK**) - minutes

1. Apologies

1.1. There were no apologies.

2. Declaration of Interests

2.1. All attendees confirmed they had no conflict of interests in relation to creditors listed.

3. Minutes of Meetings on 4 February 2014 & 27 February 2014

3.1. Minutes of Board Meetings on 4 February and 27 February 2014 were confirmed as an accurate record and agreed.

4. Matters Arising

Business Case – Legal Services

4.1. 5.4 – **JB** advised the Legal services provider was attending a meeting at the Commission on Friday 28 March 2014 to discuss advice on the legal status of the Commission.

Submissions to OFMDFM

4.2. 5.6 – **JB** confirmed the letter regarding approval for the Addendum to the Forum Business Case had been issued on 03 March 2014 and a follow up letter had been sent on 25 March 2014. A response was awaited. **KS** requested the Audit and Risk Committee be advised.

ACTION – JB

Audit and Risk Committee

4.3. 8.4 – **AMC** to arrange formal review meetings.

ACTION – AMC

5. Accounting Officer Update

Budget

5.1. It was noted that the Commission was on target to deliver the budget within 0.5%.
5.2. It was noted that a large amount of expenditure had taken place in March 2014. The Business Plan for 2014/15 would aim to ensure that planned work targets and expenditure in 2014/15 would take place throughout the year rather than accrued at the end.

- 5.3. **JB** noted the work of Commission Staff and Senior Management throughout the year.
- 5.4. **JB** advised the Commission's Finance Procedures were amended, and that procedures for Payroll and Travel & Subsistence claims had been drafted/revised as per Internal Audit recommendations and these were approved by SMT on 19 March 2014.

Accounts

- 5.5. **JB** advised CPD had been instructed to proceed with extending the contract for the Preparation of Accounts with Ross Boyd Ltd.
- 5.6. The Commission met with NIAO on 12 March 2014 and agreed the following;
- Commission based audit –provisionally 11 – 22 August with a view to having Draft Annual Report and Accounts prepared for review by the ARC at its meeting on 8 October 2014.
 - NIAO hope to have a copy of the Audit Strategy prepared for issue before the next ARC meeting on 9 April 2014.

Update on Procurement

- 5.7. The update on Business Cases and Procurement was noted.
- 5.8. It was also noted the Internal Audit on Purchasing and Procurement undertaken recently by the had received a Satisfactory assurance.

2013-16 Corporate Plan and 2013/14 Work Programme

- 5.9. It was noted the 2013-16 Corporate Plan and revised 2013/14 Work Programme and Budget were approved by Ministers on 18 February 2014.
- 5.10. **KS** queried the provision of Communications Services which were noted by the Accounting Officer.

Schedule of Dilapidations

- 5.11. Negotiations resulted in a final figure of £38,140 which was agreed by the Board on 9 December 2013.
- 5.12. DSO had agreed the Form of Release with the solicitor representing the Windsor House Landlord. The final schedule and payment were agreed and payment issued.

Management Statement & Financial Memorandum

- 5.13. Comments were sent to the Department on the most recent draft on 3 July 2013. A final draft is awaited.

DAO 09/13 Remuneration - non-executive directors

- 5.14. Following confirmation from the Department that all non executives must be paid through payroll from the start of the next financial year the Commission had liaised with CJS Payroll to determine what is required and arrangement made to include ARC members on payroll with effect from the start of the new financial year.

Submissions to OFMDFM

- 5.15. The update on submissions to OFMDFM were noted.

Update on Recommendations from Internal Audit & NIAO

- 5.16. The Commission had received the three remaining Internal Audit Reports and had drafted management responses for Board approvals.
- 5.17. All recommendations were accepted.
- 5.18. The update on NIAO Recommendations and Internal Audit was noted.

Freedom of Information

- 5.19. One FOI request was received on 5 March 2014. As response was drafted and issued on 25 March 2014.

Website

- 5.20. A review of the website was completed and lessons learned noted by SMT in March 2014.
- 5.21. Training for three members of Commission Staff on administering and maintenance of the website was due to take place on 11 April 2014.

Review of the Commission

- 5.22. The Commission provided responses to the Review's recommendations on 5 February 2014.

Recruitment

- 5.23. The Commission had started recruitment for the Policy Support Officer (AO) post through HR Connect.
- 5.24. The closing date for applications was 28 March 2014, with an assessment centre taking place (if required) on 24/25 April and interviews from 14 – 20 May 2014.
- 5.25. Two members of Commission staff and an external panel member will conduct the interviews.

6. 2014/15 Work Programme

- 6.1. It was noted a Final Draft 2014/15 Work Programme and Budget was submitted to the Department on 3 March 2014.
- 6.2. Comments from the Department on 20 March 2014 were accepted and the Work Programme amended. **JB** to resubmit to the Department.

ACTION: JB

7. 2014-17 Corporate Plan

- 7.1. Amendments to be made at Page 11 & page 24.
- 7.2. **KS** to update foreword
- 7.3. The draft 2014-17 Corporate Plan was approved for submission to the Department subject to amendments.

ACTION - AMC

ACTION – KS

8. Draft 2013/14 Work Programme Outturn

- 8.1. The additional outputs in 2013/14 were noted and it was agreed these should be reflected in the final Work Programme outturn.

ACTION - AMN

9. Draft 2013/14 Client Outturn

- 9.1. The paper was noted and it was agreed that client contact should be monitored at SMT and only new and emerging issues should be escalated to the Board

ACTION - SMT

10. Risk Register

- 10.1. The Risk Register was discussed and approved.
- 10.2. **JB** advised that the Risk Register would be revised and evidence provided to the Audit and Risk Committee at the meeting on 9 April 2014.

11.Board Decisions

External Complaints Policy

11.1. The External Complaints Policy was discussed and approved by the Board.

Business Plan Planning Process

11.2. The Business Plan Planning Process was discussed and approved by the Board.

Business Continuity Plan

11.3. The Business Continuity Plan was discussed and approved by the Board.

11.4. It was noted that testing would be completed week commencing 31 March 2014.

ACTION - AMC

Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Policy

11.5. The Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Policy was discussed and approved by the Board.

Disability Action Plan

11.6. The Disability Action Plan was discussed and approved by the Board.

11.7. Public consultation on the Disability Action Plan to begin as soon as possible.

ACTION - AMC

Equality Action Plan

11.8. The Equality Action Plan was discussed and approved by the Board.

11.9. Public consultation on the Equality Action Plan to begin as soon as possible.

ACTION - AMC

Internet Usage Policy

11.10. The Internet Usage Policy was discussed and approved by the Board.

Social Media Policy

11.11. The Social Media Policy was discussed and approved by the Board.

Internal Audit Reports – Management Responses

11.12. The Internal Audit Reports were discussed and approved by the Board.

11.13. It was agreed that the Commission would complete an Annual Fraud Return even if not commissioned by DFP via the Department.

ACTION - AMC

Consultation on Corporate and Business Plan

11.14. Discussion took place regarding consulting on the Corporate and Business Plan

11.15. It was noted that the Legislation governing the Commission detailed a requirement for the Commission to consult on the Work Programme.

11.16. It was agreed to table for discussion at the Accountability Meeting

ACTION – JB

11.17. It was agreed to pass the matter for consideration by the Commissions legal service provider

ACTION – JB

Final Advice on Dealing with the Past

11.18. The Final Advice on Dealing with the Past was approved for submission to Ministers following amendment.

ACTION - AMN

11.19. It was noted Commission advice cannot be published until after a response from Ministers or the Department has been received.

12.AOB

Audit and Risk Committee Membership

12.1. The Board approved the recommendation to appoint a third ARC Member from another public body. AMC to discuss with the Department before commencing the process.

ACTION - AMC

Historic investigation - Pilot Forum

12.2. **JB** advised that review of the case had resulted in a decision for take no further action.

12.3. **JB** to advise Audit & Risk Committee at the next meeting and the Department at the next Accountability Meeting.

ACTION - JB

Meeting on 2 April 2014 with Libyan Victims

12.4. **AMC** provided an update on arrangements for the meeting and it was noted Commission staff were not directly involved.

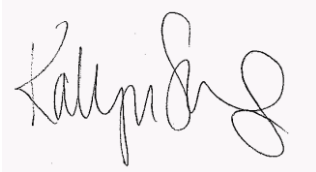
Meeting on 31 March 2014 with VSS Board and Victims Groups

12.5. It was agreed all groups should be reminded that attendees should be representatives of the Board or executive team.

ACTION - AMN

NAME: **Kathryn Stone OBE**

SIGNED:



DATE: **08 April 2014**