



The Commission for
Victims & Survivors

BOARD MEETING
15 June 2017 @ 10.30am

PRESENT:

Judith Thompson (Chair - JT)

Commissioner

IN ATTENDANCE:

John Beggs (JB)

Secretary to the Commission

Craig Gartley (CG)

Head of Corporate Services

Tina McCann (TMC)

Head of Communications and Engagement

Peter Mann (PM)

Acting Head of Policy and Research

Laura Loughridge (LL) - minutes

1. Introduction and Apologies

- 1.1. JT welcomed LL back from maternity leave.
- 1.2. There were no apologies.

2. Declaration of Interests

- 2.1. All attendees confirmed they had no conflicts of interest.

3. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

- 3.1. The Minutes of the meeting on 9 May 2017 were approved.

4. Action notes

Consultation on Nominations for the Honours System

- 4.1. Following consultation with the Forum, it was agreed that, in principle, nominations of individuals for Honours would be considered or progressed going forward.

Co-Design Meetings

- 4.2. JB to include actions and outcomes of Co-Design meetings in Board updates as required.

ACTION: JB

Safeguarding Policy and Development of Client Management Procedures

- 4.3. TMC to send policy to JB & CG for review and comment. Final draft to be included at next meeting for review. JT highlighted the importance of this policy and its associated procedures.

ACTION: TMC

PEACE IV Project Plans

- 4.4. Communications Plan for Peace IV to be included in planning process.

ACTION: PRT & CET

Activity Statistics

- 4.5. New reporting mechanism to be in place for next Board meeting.

ACTION: TMC

Review of the Strategy Final Summary Report

- 4.6. Seminar to be arranged to launch the Strategy Final Summary Report.

ACTION: PM

- 4.7. Policy Advice to be proof read, published and promoted, with guidance for staff, in order to answer queries, circulated.

ACTION: NF & PM

VSS Management Information System

- 4.8. It was noted that review of how VSS data is shared should be ongoing. The next trilateral meeting was on 27 June and an update would be provided at the next Board meeting.

ACTION: PM

5. Accounting Officer's Update

Performance Report

- 5.1. **JB** advised that TEO had provided feedback on the Outcome Delivery Plan 2017/18 and the Corporate Plan 2017-20 advising more thought is required in terms of the outcomes/outputs looking to be achieved and the terminology of these. Some specific comments had been made throughout the documents in tracked changes/comments. These would be considered by SMT and brought to the July Board Meeting.

ACTION: SMT

- 5.2. The lack of Ministerial approval in year of the Outcome Delivery Plan and the Corporate Plan had been noted by the Commission and TEO. The risk to the organisation had been noted in the Corporate Risk Register and would continue to be monitored with updates at Board meetings as required.

ACTION: JB

- 5.3. The Outcome Delivery Plan would include updates for the end of Q1 at the next Board meeting.

ACTION: SMT

Budget Report

- 5.4. The Commission had received an indicative Budget letter from TEO with a 2.5% reduction on 2016/17.
- 5.5. **CG** noted that the budget had been updated in order to include projects on hold whilst budget confirmation was outstanding. The budget would remain under monthly review and expenditure was on target at the end of Q1.

Update on Business Cases and Procurement

- 5.6. The Business Cases, Procurement and Post Project Evaluations paper was noted.

NISRA Omnibus Survey

- 5.7. It was noted that now the Commission has greater budget certainty, the approved Business Case to include questions in the NISRA Omnibus Survey would proceed. The Commission would include 15 questions in the Autumn survey.

Update on Peace IV

- 5.8. It was noted that procurement for each of the three PEACE IV funded Research Projects was being progressed.

External Audit/Annual Report and Accounts

- 5.9. **CG** advised that the first draft of Annual Report and Accounts would be provided to the Accounting Officer for review by the end of the week and then would be passed to Deloitte for quality assurance review. It was anticipated Deloitte would review and return the Accounts in time for circulation to the ARAC for their meeting on 29 June 2017 (papers to be issued on 22 June 2017).
- 5.10. The update on Audit Recommendations was noted.

Internal Audit

- 5.11. **CG** circulated the draft Internal Audit Strategy for 2017-20. It was noted that the ARAC would review the strategy at its next meeting on 29 June. The recommendations of the ARAC would be brought to the July Board meeting for approval.

ACTION: CG

Risk Management

- 5.12. The updated Risk Register was noted. The Commission's Corporate Risk Register contained 6 medium rated risks with amber status, 1 low rated risk with green status and 1 high rated risk with red status.
- 5.13. It was noted that the red risk rating of CR4 took into account the significant level of work internally and at a strategic level to mitigate against that risk.
- 5.14. The Risk Management Strategy was approved with the Risk Appetite for each risk confirmed as;

Corporate Risk	Risk Appetite
1. Inability to promote awareness of and safeguard the needs of victims and survivors	Open
2. Inability to keep under review adequacy and effectiveness of law and practice affecting the interests of victims and survivors	Open
3. Inability to keep under review adequacy and effectiveness of services provided for victims and survivors by bodies or persons.	Cautious
4. Inability to advise Secretary of State, the Executive Committee or any other body providing services for victims and survivors on matters concerning the interests of victims and survivors.	Open
5. Inability to ensure the views of victims and survivors are sought concerning the interests of victims and survivors	Open
6. Inability to engage effectively with the Forum for consultation and discussion.	Open
7. Inability to ensure and maintain an effective financial and administrative environment	Averse

8. Inability in performance management and delivery of strategic Outcomes through business planning and programme/project management	Minimalist
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5.15. Risk Register to be updated to reflect revised Risk Appetites.

ACTION: CG

Communications Strategy

5.16. The draft Communications Strategy document was reviewed. It was agreed that the Commissioner, **JB, TMC** and the Communications service provider would meet to discuss detail and finalise the document.

ACTION: Personal Secretary

5.17. The Commissioner requested the strategy focus on the achievement of CVS Strategic objectives and outcomes for victims and survivors. Finalised Communications Strategy to be reviewed at next meeting.

ACTION: TMC

5.18. It was noted that the Communications and Engagement Team are developing a database to monitor organisational wide engagement activity for reporting purposes. This will be in use from the July Board meeting.

ACTION: CET

5.19. In May 2017 the Commissioner engaged with a range of stakeholders including individuals, government officials and international stakeholders in relation to Legacy, Mental Health and Services to victims and survivors. Commission staff engaged with a number of individuals in relation to health and well-being, legacy and mental health.

Website and Social Media

5.20. It was noted that the Facebook page was launched in May 2017.

5.21. The activity statistics paper was noted. The Commissioner advised a UTV appearance had been omitted from the paper and requested it be included.

ACTION: TMC

Forum Business Case

5.22. **TMC** confirmed a benchmarking exercise to compare expenditure on the VSF with other civic Forums would be completed and included in the Forum Business Case.

5.23. The Forum Business Case 2017-19 was currently being drafted and was due to be reviewed and signed off by the Accounting Officer before end June 2017, in preparation for submission to the Department and review and approval over July & August.

5.24. The next meeting was scheduled to take place on 20 June 2017, in Belfast.

Review of the Commission

5.25. It was noted that the Review Team (BCS/DoF) had requested a number of documents and information from the Commission in the final preparation of their report.

5.26. The Commissioner noted that a draft of the report had not yet been shared with the Commission. She noted the increased level of anxiety in staff in the wake of the Review and the anticipation of its findings. It was also noted that the report could make recommendations which should be accounted for during forward planning and the

development of the Outcome Delivery Plan. Budget may also be required to be allocated in order to implement any recommendations. It was agreed to request a draft of the Report be shared with the Commission as soon as it is available.

ACTION: JB

Audit and Risk Assurance Committee

5.27. It was noted that the next meeting of the ARAC was scheduled for 29 June 2017. The draft Annual Report and Accounts would be included on the agenda for review.

Scheme of Delegation

5.28. The updated Scheme of Delegation was noted.

Freedom of Information

5.29. No FOI requests had been received in the last quarter.

Complaints

5.30. No complaints had been received in the last month.

Gifts & Hospitality

5.31. It was noted that Gifts and Hospitality Registers for the last quarter were still under review and would be made available on the Commission's website as soon as possible.

5.32. No exceptional gifts or hospitality had been received or provided in last quarter.

Fraud

5.33. There had been no reported instances of fraud during the last month.

Staffing

5.34. The Commission had two vacancies, Forum Manager (SO) and Head of Research and Policy Development (DP).

5.35. **JB** advised HRConnect were engaged to undertake the recruitment process for the Head of Research and Policy Development. The Job Description and Personnel Specification for the new Communications and Engagement Officer (to fill the Forum Manager vacancy) was still under review.

5.36. Staffing structure and job descriptions for all posts were under review by Secretary to the Commission following the recent recommendation from CIPFA review.

6. Policies for Approval

6.1. The following policies were approved;

- Tender Policy
- Internal Complaints Procedure
- Flexible Working Policy
- File Retention and Disposals Policy

7. AOB

7.1. There was no AOB.

NAME: **Judith Thompson**

SIGNED: *Judith Thompson*

DATE: *16th August 2017*