



BOARD MEETING

17 April 2018 @ 10.30am

PRESENT:

Judith Thompson (Chair - **JT**) Commissioner

IN ATTENDANCE:

John Beggs (**JB**) Secretary to the Commission
Patricia Stewart (**PS**) Head of Research and Policy Development
Craig Gartley (**CG**) Head of Corporate Services
Tina McCann (**TMC**) Head of Communications and Engagement
Laura Loughridge (**LL**) - minutes

1. Introduction and Apologies

1.1. None.

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 14 March 2018 were approved.

4. Action notes

4.1. AP1 - *Contact TEO for further clarification around publication of factual information contained in appendices to BCS review* – **JB** advised TEO had confirmed that Commission would not be able to use the information in the report as a general rule. However, if there was anything specific, the Commission could seek approval to use it. It was agreed to identify key information and to request its usage.

ACTION – JB

4.2. AP2 - *Progress Storyboard Project as a priority* – **TMC** advised that the project had been placed on hold in order for the team to meet requirements in preparation for the implementation of the General Data Protection Regulations. The project would be taken forward in June 2018.

ACTION - TMC

4.3. AP3 - *Develop governance paper re drawdowns for PIV* – Further information re strategic/high level to be included and circulated at May Board meeting and June ARAC meeting.

ACTION – JB & CG

- 4.4. AP5 - *Develop visual representation 'map' of Standards* – The use of a Prezi was being explored. Standards to be added to agenda for next meeting.

ACTION - LL

- 4.5. AP7 - *Progress procurement for Pastoral Support for 2018/19* - It was advised that interim arrangements to provide pastoral support for Forum members and staff were in place. A long term process was in the procurement phase
- 4.6. AP9 - *Future Research Update Reports for Board to include NISRA Omnibus Survey and Legacy issues* – COMPLETE
- 4.7. AP11 - *Seek meeting with DfC in order to prepare response re Forum Advice Paper on Welfare & Pensions issues* – **PS** advised that the consultation report had been completed and submitted. It was agreed that the Commission would pursue a meeting with the Permanent Secretary of DfC once their analysis of consultation responses had been completed, and the Commission notified.

ACTION – PS

- 4.8. AP12 - *Discuss options on Advocacy Research Project* – **PS** had drafted an Options Paper for consideration by **the Commissioner** and **JB**.

ACTION – COMMISSIONER AND JB

- 4.9. AP13 - *Draft CP 2018-20 and ODP 18/19 to be forwarded to VSS* – COMPLETE
- 4.10. AP15 - *Schedule diary for Commissioner/ C&E Team to discuss next stage of development of C&E Board Report* - COMPLETE

5. Accounting Officer's Update

Performance Report

- 5.1. **JB** provided an overview of the Outcome Delivery Plan 2017/18 which was updated at the end of Quarter 4 and had been presented at the last ARAC meeting.
- 5.2. The Commissioner queried all of the year end outturns and sought clarification on the status of Key Actions 1.1, 2.1, 3.1 & 4.1. It was accepted that the Forum's contribution could be better articulated in terms of end of year reporting deadlines, and overdependence on an advice paper.
- 5.3. It was agreed to amend the wording against year-end targets 1.1, 2.1 & 3.1 and work presented at Forum residential scheduled for May 2018.

ACTION - JB

- 5.3. It was agreed to seek clarification on the status of Key Action 3.4. Dealing with the Past Advice.

ACTION - JB

Corporate Plan 2018-21

- 5.3. The Commissioner noted that the Corporate Plan had been submitted to the Department and was content that it reflected the shift to an outcomes focused approach, and included the ability to monitor and evaluate outcomes.

Outcome Delivery Plan 2018/19

- 5.4. The Commissioner noted that the plan had been submitted to the Department, and would be under review by the Departmental Board in April or May. However, she noted that

further work was required in order to ensure measuring the impact of each outcome was articulated.

- 5.5. Discussion took place regarding measuring outcomes, and the use of papers or reports as an output, but not as a measurement of whether or not an outcome has been achieved.
- 5.6. It was agreed that a Policy Impact Statement would be included in the ODP 18/19, as an evaluation tool to articulate how the Commission has achieved outcomes in year, and that the Commissioner and SMT would meet to develop the Impact Statement.

ACTION – LL

- 5.7. Corporate Planning Day to engage the input of all staff to be arranged.

ACTION – CORPORATE SERVICES

- 5.8. Incorporate Policy Impact Statement as a form of measurement and an output into the Outcome Delivery Plan 2018/19.

ACTION – JB

Budget Report

- 5.9. **CG** confirmed an underspend in 2017/18 of approximately £4 which is 0.5% and within tolerance. It was noted that pressure late on in March, due to unavoidable circumstances, had been absorbed by year end projects.
- 5.10. **JB** noted that the spreadsheet budget report included an error which was misleading, and advised that any queries from the ARAC, because of the error, had been answered.
- 5.11. **The** letter from Mark Browne, Director, TEO providing notification of the Commissions re Opening Budget position was noted.
- 5.12. The draft Resource Budget for 2018/19 was noted. **CG** reviewed the breakdown of figures in the Outcome Delivery Plan and under each heading on the Budget.
- 5.13. It was noted that the TEO representative had advised at the ARAC meeting on 12 April 2018 that the Department did not consider the Research Projects funded by Peace IV to be the only research the Commission would undertake in 2018/19 and beyond. The Commission would be expected to undertake research from within its own programme budget, in order to continue to fulfil its statutory duties.
- 5.14. It was agreed that SMT would plan ahead and scope additional funding through monitoring rounds to support in-house resources.
- 5.15. **CG** noted the need for the Commission to prepare for the impact of the Consolidation of Departmental Accounts.
- 5.16. **JB** advised that NIAO had noted at the ARAC meeting on 12 April that the Commission would be required to provide a return to TEO in a timely fashion and would need to have suitably reliable and robust figures in order to complete the return as accurately as possible.
- 5.17. **CG** advised this would mean the Commission's budget would not be able to be as flexible as it had previously been in-year.

Update on Business Cases and Procurement

- 5.18. The update on Business Cases, Procurement and Post Project Evaluations was noted.
- 5.19. It was advised that, pending completion of a procurement process, the contract for Communications service provision had expired at the end of March 2018.

Communications Support Services 2018-19

5.20. The Tender process had closed on 23 March 2018 and Clarification Presentations were to be held on 19 April 2018. The contract Value was £24,000 (including VAT).

Audit

5.21. The update on the implementation of audit recommendations was noted.

Internal Audit

5.22. It was advised that the Internal Audit Strategy 2017-2020 had been approved and that the Plan for 2018.19 was under review, pending advice from the ARAC.

5.23. The Final Report of Review of compliance with aspects of the Standards for Services was noted, and the recommendations would be included on the Update.

ACTION - LL

5.24. It was noted that draft reports on Corporate Governance and 16/17 Follow up had been received and management responses were being drafted. The final reports would be included at the next Board Meeting.

ACTION - CG

5.25. **JB** noted that the NIAO Strategy had been received and reviewed by the ARAC, and would be included at the next Board meeting.

ACTION – LL

Risk Management

5.26. The Risk Register updated for the end of Quarter 4 was noted. The Risk Register contained 5 medium rated risks with amber status, and 3 low rated risks with green status

5.27. **JB** advised that it did not reflect the activity and risks presented by criticism from stakeholders and the media regarding Forum related issues which had developed at the start of April 2018.

5.28. The proposed new Risk Management Strategy and Risk Register were noted and **JB** confirmed the ARAC were content to proceed with the new approach. It was noted that a mechanism for elevating risks from Team Registers to the Corporate Risk Register within a quarter was included in the Risk Management Strategy.

5.29. It was agreed that **the Commissioner** and **JB** would meet regarding the new Corporate Risk Register before the next Board meeting.

ACTION – PERSONAL SECRETARY

Communications and Engagement

- 5.30. **TMC** provided an overview of the Communications and Engagement Report and noted that external activity related to Corporate Outcome 6 would be included in future.
- 5.31. **TMC** reviewed the analysis of the report, the focus of the previous month and the activity the Communications and Engagement team would take forward in the next month and quarter.
- 5.32. **TMC** noted that the section of media enquiries did not include information from the Communications service provider, as it had not yet been received. It was noted that the monthly reports were updated to include additional information related to each month as and when it was received.
- 5.33. **JT** noted the work that went into producing the report and how she was now satisfied that it met requirements. It was agreed that the Communications Plan for 2018/19 would be reviewed against the monthly reports at SMT and Board to ensure planned activity was being taken forward, and as an evidence base for future planning.

ACTION – Communications and Engagement Team

- 5.34. Upcoming Forum Activity in April and May 2018 was noted.
- 5.35. The Interim Review of the Forum being undertaken Supporting Justice was noted. The Commissioner noted that it would be useful for the findings of the Review to be available for consideration at the Forum residential Meeting, scheduled for 18/19 May, in order to progress work programme planning for the coming year.
- 5.36. Discussion took place regarding the activity and engagement of the Forum Pensions and Need Working Group with the DUP and Wave.

Five Year review of Equality Scheme

- 5.37. The Five Year Review was approved. It was noted that it would be published on the Commission website, with notification to all CVS consultees to be issued.
- 5.38. It was agreed that a Quarterly Report on Equality and Good Relations would be included in the AO Update at future Board Meetings.

ACTION - JB

Review of the Commission

- 5.39. The update on Recommendations from Report was noted.

Audit and Risk Assurance Committee

- 5.40. Final minutes of the previous meeting, and draft minutes of the recent meeting would be provided to the Commissioner.

ACTION - LL

- 5.41. **The Commissioner** noted the support of the ARAC following the recent criticism of the Commission in the media. **JB** confirmed that the Chair of the ARAC had noted this after the ARAC meeting on 12 April, and that TEO had confirmed they also supported the Commissioner and the Commission.

Staffing

5.42. Staffing structure and job descriptions for all posts have been reviewed and are in the process of being finalised by the Secretary, following a recommendation from the CIPFA review.

Freedom of Information

5.43. No FOI requests received in the last month.

Complaints

5.44. No complaints received in the last month.

5.45. The updated External Complaints Policy was considered and further amendments were to be made. To be returned to the next Board meeting.

ACTION – JB & LL

Gifts & Hospitality

5.46. Gifts and Hospitality for the last quarter were under review and would be made available on the Commission's website as soon as possible.

5.47. There had been no exceptional gifts or hospitality received or provided in last quarter.

Fraud

5.48. There were no reported instances of fraud during the last quarter.

6. Update on Research Projects

6.1. The Update on the Research Projects was noted.

6.2. **JB** provided an overview of the discussion that had taken place with the Chair of the Board and the CEO of the VSS regarding the Commission's concerns about the quality and quantity of data it had received from the VSS. He advised that the VSS would provide a report ahead of the June Trilateral meeting, which would be reviewed before concerns were escalated.

ACTION – JB & RPD TEAM

6.3. It was agreed to include monitoring and evaluation of data received from the VSS on the update for future meetings.

ACTION – PS

Research Projects funded by Peace IV

6.4. It was agreed to update the Research Advisory Committee.

ACTION - PS

6.5. It was agreed that the Update on Research and Policy Development should be ahead of the AO Update on the agenda.

ACTION – LL

6.6. The Commissioner approved recommendations to proceed to a new tender process for the Advocacy Research Project.

Attitudinal Survey

6.7. Meeting to be arranged to discuss the use of the data arising from the NISRA survey.

ACTION – PERSONAL SECRETARY

6.8. **JB** noted that the data was very useful and would be published in stages to meet requirement.

7. General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR)

7.1. The Action Plan on GDPR was noted.

7.2. **CG** advised the report and recommendations arising from the self –assessment had been received and that the Action plan would be amended to include a timeframe the officers responsible for implementing the recommendations.

7.3. It was noted that Craig Gartley, Head of Corporate Services had been appointed Data Protection Officer, and that his Job Description would be update accordingly.

ACTION - JB

7.4. It was noted that as DPO **CG** would be required to report directly to the Board.

7.5. It was noted that advice and guidance was to be received from TEO regarding assurance they required in advance of GDPR.

7.6. **CG** advised that recommendations would be taken forward and policies and procedures brought to the Board to approve as required.

8. AOB

8.1. None

NAME: **Judith Thompson**

SIGNED:



DATE: 15 May 2018