



The Commission for
Victims & Survivors

BOARD MEETING
30 July 2018 @ 9.50am

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
Sarah Beare (**SB**) - minutes

1. Introduction and Apologies

1.1. 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 22 June 2018 were approved.

4. Action notes

4.1. AP1 - Research Projects Governance Paper– it was noted that updates were being progressed by the Corporate Services Manager on her return to the office and that the paper would be circulated by 03 August 2018. **JT** asked if any concerns had been raised and **CG** provided an overview of changes.

ACTION – CG

AP2 – Draft Research Proposal for SEUPB funding and send to VSS – **PS** advised that the meeting with SEUPB had been rescheduled and would take place on 30 July 2018. Clarity was provided around the purpose of the meeting and it was agreed that an update would be provided at the next Board meeting on 13 September 2018.

It was noted that clarification was required as to whether availing of SEUPB funding in association with the VSS to take forward research projects would meet the Commission's statutory duty to undertake research.

ACTION: PS

- 4.2. AP3 – Source Formal Advice on legislation re Legacy consultation – **PS** advised that this had not yet been progressed due to work relating to the Legacy consultation. A discussion on the timeframe and options took place. **JT** advised that legal advice before the end of the consultation was desirable but that it was essential prior to the submission of advice.

ACTION: PS

- 4.3. AP5 – Send QUB Media Guidelines onto Regional Community Network – **PS** advised that this had been actioned and feedback provided.

5. Annual Report and Accounts

- 5.1. **CG** presented the draft Annual Report and Accounts for the year ending 31 March 2018. He advised that feedback from Deloitte had not yet been received and would be followed up. It was noted that the ARAC had reviewed the document at their meeting on 28 June 2018 and all requested amendments had been incorporated. **JT** sought clarification on the requested amendments and **CG** provided an overview.
- 5.2. Subject to Board approval, the Annual Report and Accounts would be presented to NIAO by 31 July 2018, with fieldwork and review to be undertaken, beginning 28 August 2018.
- 5.3. **JT** sought assurance on the projected underspend. **CG** advised that an underspend of 1.3% was still projected and that he was confident that this figure would be unchanged following NIAO review.
- 5.4. **JT** requested that the Performance Summary from page 6 be moved to paragraph 3, page 3 to provide a full breakdown of objectives achieved.

ACTION – CG

- 5.5. The Annual Report and Accounts were approved by the Board subject to the amendment at 5.4 and the findings of Internal Audit. The document would be returned to the Board should any significant changes be made on receipt of feedback from Deloitte.
- 5.6. **JT** acknowledged the work of the Corporate Services Team in the preparation of the Annual Report and Accounts and thanked **CG**.

6. Research and Policy Development Update

Research

Peace IV Funded Research Projects

- 6.1. **PS** presented the Highlight Report on the Peace IV Funded Research Projects. It was noted that a meeting of the Research Advisory Committee took place on 05 July 2018 and that feedback had been collated in the PIDs. **JT** noted the importance of NISRA's participation, enabling them to provide feedback on methodology.
- 6.2. **PS** advised that the PID for the Transgenerational Legacy project had been approved with the first payment released. It was noted that the PID for the Review of Trauma Services Project was pending. It was noted that the Research Advisory Committee would be reconvened following approval of both PIDs.

- 6.3. **PS** advised that the tender for the Effective Advocacy Services Project had gone live on eTendersNI, and would end on 31 July 2018. It was noted that this could be extended. **PS** advised that 16 organisations had accessed the documents on eTendersNI and noted that admin support for the project would be provided by the Commission.
- 6.4. Pre-existing concerns regarding the quantity of tender submissions previously received and delivery of the Effective Advocacy Services Project were discussed and noted. It was agreed to contact CPD to enable a decision to be taken on the closing date for tenders.

ACTION: PS

- 6.5. **PS** confirmed that the Commission would be able to recoup procurement costs from the Executive Office and that these costs could be used to augment the existing project amount.

Omnibus Survey

- 6.6. **PS** advised that data from the Omnibus Survey would be used throughout the Legacy consultation engagement and would be used in the consultation response and advice to government.

Policy

Update on Legacy Consultation

- 6.7. **PS** advised that the Research and Policy Development Team were working with the Communications and Engagement Team to plan and conduct consultation events with stakeholders. **PS** advised that she had begun work on a session plan.
- 6.8. **JT** advised that she was content with the engagement plan and acknowledged the work in its preparation. **JT** also clarified that the Commission would be helping attendees to understand the mechanisms that the NIO were consulting on and would not influence responses.
- 6.9. It was noted that **JT** and **JB** would be attending a group event on 30 July 2018.

Update on Monitoring and Evaluation (VSS)

- 6.10. **PS** advised that the Policy Officer was drafting the Q4 Analysis Report. No policy related recommendations were noted.
- 6.11. **PS** advised that she would follow up with the VSS who were to forward final verification reports from funded groups. A discussion took place regarding accessing data. **JT** advised that the Commission would seek to resolve any issues informally before escalating to discussions at monthly CVS/VSS meetings and finally, if required, in writing.

ACTION - PS

Update on Standards

- 6.12. **PS** provided an update and advised that the Policy Officer would follow up on a meeting with PHA and Healthy cities representatives to discuss the amalgamation of both the PHA and Commission Standards to ease pressure on smaller dual funded organisations.

ACTION: PS/Policy Officer

- 6.13. **JT** advised that clarification that amalgamation would not impact on monitoring/reporting to CVS in relation to adherence to Standards. **PS** acknowledged this and advised that there would be no change to the Commission's role and this would be confirmed in writing.

Update on Pension

- 6.14. **PS** advised that the Commission had been asked by the Secretary of State to update advice on the Pension for the Severely Injured and that a meeting to provide clarification on the scope, which did not include reviewing the definition of a victim, would take place on 30 July 2018.

Welfare Reform

- 6.15. **PS** advised that the Policy Officer had prepared a summary of the PIP Independent Review and was evaluating the impact of recommendations made by the Commission. It was noted that this would be circulated to attendees.

ACTION: PS/Policy Officer

- 6.16. It was noted that a meeting with the Permanent Secretary of DFC would be requested.

ACTION: PS

- 6.17. **TMC** requested that feedback be shared with the PNWG.

ACTION: PS/TMC

Consultations

- 6.18. See update on Legacy Consultation at 6.7.

- 6.19. No other consultations noted.

Update on Co-Design

- 6.20. It was noted that the last Co-Design Meeting took place on 23 July 2018.

- 6.21. **JB** advised that he had now received the initial Report of the Victims and Survivors Co-Design Programme, Phase 2 planning day held on Tuesday 29th May 2018 and was awaiting a second version from the Executive Office.

- 6.22. A discussion took place regarding officials being unable to make Ministerial decisions and the potential impact of this on the Commission. **JB** advised that low level engagement would continue and that officials would meet with the Forum after the close of the Legacy consultation.

- 6.23. A discussion took place regarding the Evaluation of the Strategy for Victims and Survivors, including resource implications. **JB** advised that potential issues around independence would be discussed at the Commission's next Accountability meeting.

7. Communications and Engagement Update

- 7.1. **TMC** advised that, due to time constraints caused by the rescheduling of the Board meeting, the Communications and Engagement Report had been condensed and focussed on June 2018 stakeholder engagements and advised that the Communications Service Provider report was unavailable.

- 7.2. **TMC** provided an update on engagement during June 2018 and noted a decrease in engagement with policy makers was due to leave in June. It was noted that this period was used to raise awareness of the Legacy consultation and that as a result, an increase in activity in engagements, social media and website traffic was projected for July 2018.

- 7.3. It was noted that the demographic and gender of those interacting through the Commission's Facebook page had changed and would be kept under review.

- 7.4. It was noted that the top tweets in June 2018 were in relation to focus groups and an event attended by Commission staff.

- 7.5. It was noted that the most popular web pages during June 2018 were the VSS and Staff pages.
- 7.6. JT noted her thanks to the Communications and Engagement Officer for the preparation of the Stakeholder Engagement Activity Report at short notice.
- 7.7. JT requested an update on the revised May 2018 Stakeholder Engagement Activity Report. TMC advised that a revised report had been tabled at the Diary Review Meeting on 28 June 2018. JT requested that the updated report be returned to the next Board meeting on 13 September 2018.

ACTION - TMC

- 7.8. A discussion took place regarding the presentation of activity under Outcome 6. The importance of capturing the resource requirements in management of the Forum was noted. The possibility of presenting the Forum's activity separately was discussed. It was agreed to consider options.

ACTION: C&E Team

8. Accounting Officer's Update

Performance Report

Outcome Delivery Plan (ODP) 2018/19

- 8.1. The draft Outcome Delivery Plan 2018/19, updated to the end of Q1, was noted. JB advised that the ODP 2018/19 had been approved by the Departmental Board and would be resubmitted after updating due to some significant changes and additions.
- 8.2. A discussion took place regarding the timeframe for resubmission.

Budget Report

- 8.3. The 2018/19 Resource Budget Report, highlighting spend was noted. CG advised that a new format for presenting the budget had been used and this was welcomed by JT.
- 8.4. JB advised that spend for Q1 had been projected as £192k with spend totalling £189k.

Update on Business Cases and Procurement

- 8.5. The update on Business Cases, Procurement and Post Project Evaluations was noted.
- 8.6. It was noted that the PPE for the Independent Review of Organisational Capability and Capacity had been drafted for review. Although this PPE was not yet due based on the Executive Office Business Case Database, best practice, used internally by the Commission, listed this as overdue.

Audit

- 8.7. The updated paper on the implementation of audit recommendations was noted.

Risk Management

- 8.8. The Corporate Risk Register to the end of Q1 was discussed. It was noted that this would be updated in line with Legacy engagements.

ACTION: TMC

- 8.9. Risk 4 (VSF2) Recruitment: Balance of representativeness of Forum was discussed and it was noted that the risk remained Red.

- 8.10. **JB** advised that action had been taken to engage members and improve attendance at meetings. An increase in attendance at the July 2018 meeting and therefore an improved balance of representativeness was noted.
- 8.11. **JT** clarified that the balance had mainly been affected by low attendance at meetings and not through resignations and also acknowledged the actions taken to mitigate the risk.
- 8.12. A discussion took place regarding the replenishment of the Panel until September 2019.
- 8.13. It was noted that actions to mitigate risk in relation to Risk 1 (G1) Failure to comply with Data Protection guidance, FOI, Complaints and implementation of GDPR had been progressed with data protection training taking place in September 2018. This risk remained Amber.
- 8.14. Risk 2 (F2) Lack of sufficient funding for Research to ensure the effective delivery of the Commission's statutory duties was discussed. It was noted that this risk remained Amber.
- 8.15. Risk 5 (P1) Standards - Inability of CVS to monitor, evaluate and measure the Impact of the Standards was discussed. It was noted that this risk was currently Amber. **JT** advised that she would consider this risk at the September Board meeting with a view to escalating it to Red should there still be issues in receiving data.
- 8.16. It was noted that Risk 6 (R1) Peace IV Research Programme – Inability to procure contractor for third research project would remain Amber until the contract has been awarded.
- 8.17. It was noted that Risk 7 Inability to fulfil statutory duties or progress policy advice due to the absence of Ministers in post remained Amber.

All other items were deferred until the next Board meeting on 13 September 2018.

9. AOB

Internships

- 9.1. **PS** advised that a request had been received for the Commission to provide an internship and gave an overview of the individual's CV.
- 9.2. **TMC** updated on the Commission's current policy in relation to Good Practice Guidelines for Ethical Internships and highlighted previous Commissioners' concerns in relation to pay/value for the intern.
- 9.3. Following discussion, all attendees were broadly supportive of a change in policy regarding internships, subject to assurances around GDPR and pay.
- 9.4. It was agreed to formalise a process for internships by forming links with the QUB Science Shop and/or equivalent options and to update the Commission's policy accordingly.

ACTION: PS/CG

Parliamentary Review

- 9.5. **JB** advised that the Commission had been asked to be a part of the Parliamentary Review 2019, showcasing best practice as a learning tool to the public and private sector.
- 9.6. It was noted that the main aim of the Review was to demonstrate how organisations/individuals have become outstanding leaders in their field and how they have responded to challenges within the industry, sharing best practice as a template for reform.
- 9.7. It was noted that a 1000 word submission was required which would be edited and featured in the Parliamentary Review which would be sent out to over half a million leading

policymakers including MPs, Peers at the House of Lords, Chief Executives, Vice Presidents, Chief Information Officers, Chief Technology and Procurement Officers. 200 copies would be available for the Commission.

9.8. **JB** advised that the cost would be £2,500 + VAT and noted the benefits of participating, such as building the profile of the Commission and in sharing best practice (Outcome 4).

9.9. Following discussion, it was agreed that the Commission would participate subject to available budget.

ACTION: JB/CG

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Judith Thompson". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal flourish at the end.

NAME: Judith Thompson

SIGNED:

DATE: 13/09/18

