



BOARD MEETING

21 April @ 2.00PM

PRESENT:

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

IN ATTENDANCE:

Andrew Sloan (AS)	Chief Executive Officer
Peter Mann (PM)	Acting Head of Research and Policy Development
Stephen Moore (SM)	Temporary Head of Corporate Services
Alana Fisher (AF)	Communications and Engagement Officer

Marie Neill (**MN**) - minutes

1. Introduction and Apologies

1.1 **JT** welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2. Declaration of Interests

2.1. All attendees noted they had no conflicts of interest.

3. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

3.1. The minutes of the meeting on 30 March 2020 were agreed.

4. Action Notes

4.1. *AP1 – Contact Ciaran Mulholland to obtain final report re psychological element of VASPA advice* – It was noted that **AS** would contact TEO to check if they had been in contact with Ciaran Mulholland and would follow up to ensure final report received as soon as possible.

ACTION - AS

4.2. *AP8 – Commence recruitment for Personal Secretary vacancy and take forward JEGS process as a priority* – It was agreed that HR Connect would be contacted to ascertain if recruitment for Executive Personal Assistant and Head of Finance and Corporate Affairs could be progressed further during the Covid-19 period. It was noted that JEGS paperwork was being drafted for submission to NICS HR and currently being reviewed by Commissioner.

ACTION – MN/AS

5. Research and Policy Development

Research

Update on Research projects funded by Peace IV

- 5.1. The Highlight Report was noted.
- 5.2. It was noted that a Research Advisory Committee took place on 9 April and discussions took place in relation to implications with Covid-19 and possible impact on timescales for submission of interim reports and delivery milestones.
- 5.3. It was noted a further Research Advisory Committee would be arranged for early-mid May where the continuing impact of Covid-19 restrictions would be considered.
- 5.4. **PM** advised that interim reports were expected to be received by the end of April.
- 5.5. It was agreed that CVS would write to TEO, SEUPB and VSS in order to provide the project board with an update on project plans and to discuss interim reports. **PM** would also advise groups of any updates or project delays.

ACTION – NF/PM

- 5.6. **PM** provided an update on the Needs Review Project and it was noted that a job description for the Research Manager had been finalised and agreed for circulation to agencies in order to facilitate the appointment as soon as possible. **PM** advised that a further detailed update would be provided at the next Board meeting.

ACTION - NF

Policy

Update on Policy Advice re the Victims and Survivors Strategy 2009-2019

- 5.7. It was noted that the survey to inform the new Victims Strategy had been finalised and agreed to be issued during the first week in May.
- 5.8. It was noted that RPD team would liaise with TEO regarding alignment and any revised timeline on policy advice and research projects. It was agreed that the RPD Team Risk Register would be updated for next Board Meeting.

ACTION - PM

- 5.9. **JT** acknowledged that the RPD team were doing everything possible in order to manage what was within our control and monitor the situation in order to deliver.

Update on Monitoring and Evaluation (VSS)

- 5.10. It was noted that the last trilateral meeting took place on 3 March 2020.
- 5.11. It was noted that all quarterly review reports were currently up to date and had been submitted to TEO.

Update on Monitoring of Standards

- 5.12. It was noted that a draft reporting schedule had been developed and discussed internally and next steps would be engagement with the VSS (through the Commissioner's monthly meeting) to agree an approach for 2020/21 onwards.

Update on VASPA Advice

- 5.13. It was noted that **NF** had been in contact Dr Ciaran Mulholland requesting that the final research report in respect of the psychological element of the project be forwarded to the Commission and a meeting had been requested in order to bring this matter to a close.

Other issues to note

- 5.14 It was noted that a draft response to DfC's 'Call for Evidence for the second Independent Review of the PIP assessment process' would be ready for approval on 27.04.20 and the consultation would close on 29.04.20.

6. Communications and Engagement Team Update

- 6.1. The Communications and Engagement Team updated report for March activity was noted.
- 6.2. It was noted that there had been a significant increase in engagement activity around Forum Replenishment and the new Victims and Survivors Strategy.
- 6.3. A discussion took place around the redevelopment and update of the Commission's website. **JT** asked if there would be any budget implications and **AS** advised that he and **AF** would meet to discuss further and make preparations for a possible bid in June monitoring round.
- 6.4. It was agreed that **AF** would make arrangements for a workshop with all staff to take place and bring a presentation to the next Board meeting

ACTION - AF

- 6.5. The Forum Replenishment project plan was noted and **AF** provided an update on engagement and progress to date. It was noted that the CET Risk Register had been updated to include any possible impact of Covid-19 on engagement plans.
- 6.6. It was noted that it had been agreed to extend the current contract for Communications Services which was due to end on 31 March 2020, until 30 June 2020, following discussions with CPD and implications around Covid-19.

7. Accounting Officer Update

Annual Report and Accounts 2019/20

- 7.1. It was noted that preparation work for Annual Report and Accounts was underway and would be distributed to relevant staff for input.

Monthly Management Accounts

- 7.2. The forecasted spend to year end was noted with an estimated underspend of £1.5k

Risk Management

- 7.4. The Commission's Corporate Risk Register containing 1 medium rated risk with amber status and 2 high rated risk with red status was noted.
- 7.5. It was agreed that the Corporate and Team Risk Registers would be reviewed and updated to include planned actions due to impact of Covid-19

ACTION – SM/NF/PM/AF

Freedom of Information

- 7.6. No FOI requests had been received since the last meeting.

Complaints

- 7.7. No complaints had been received since the last meeting.

Subject Access Requests

- 7.8. No SAR had been received since the last meeting.

Gifts & Hospitality

- 7.9. Gifts and Hospitality for each quarter were reviewed and made available on the Commission's website.
- 7.10. There had been no exceptional gifts or hospitality received or provided since the last meeting.

Fraud

- 7.11. There had been no reported instances of fraud since the last meeting.

Data Breaches

- 7.12. There had been no data breaches reported since the last meeting.

Guidance Received

- 7.13. There had been no guidance received since the last meeting.

8. Corporate Services Update

Outcome Delivery Plan 2020/21

- 8.1. It was noted that the Outcome Delivery Plan would be updated when the 2020/21 budget had been confirmed.

Update on Business Cases and Procurement

- 8.2. The update on Business Cases, Procurement and Post Project Evaluations was noted.
- 8.3. The updated Contracts Register was noted.

Audit

- 8.4. The paper on the implementation of audit recommendations was noted.
- 8.5. It was noted that Cavanagh Kelly had been awarded the contract for Provision of Internal Audit Services from 1 April 2020 for a period of 3 years with an option to extend for a further 2 years (on a 1 plus 1 basis).

Policies under Review

- 8.6. The policy review schedule was noted.

Audit and Risk Assurance Committee

- 8.9. It was noted the next meeting of ARAC would take place on 6 May 2020.

Recruitment and Reorganisation Project

- 8.10. The Recruitment and Reorganisation project plan was noted and it was agreed that this would continue to be monitored and reviewed as necessary during the Covid-19 situation.

9. AOB

9.1. None

NAME: **Judith Thompson**

SIGNED: 

DATE: 11/8/2020