



BOARD MEETING
Tuesday 5th July 2022 in House of Sport at 10.30am

MINUTE

Present:

George Lucas
Jay Colville
Gavin Boyd
Richard Bullick
Wilma Erskine
Kieran Harding

In Attendance:

Antoinette McKeown, Chief Executive
Orlagh Watters, Interim Head of Sports Systems
John Hart, Head of Policy & Innovation
Rebecca Morgan, Chief Operating Officer
Andrew Palmer, Operations Manager
Kirsty McCool, Finance Manager
Laura Carland, Board Secretariat

	ITEM	Status
1	Apologies Apologies were received from Kyle Ferguson, Wendy Elliott, Alison Nicholl, Denise Burns and Richard Archibald The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.	
2	Declaration of Conflicts of Interest None	
3	Minutes of the Previous Meeting 8th June The minutes of the previous meeting (8 th June) were approved.	Approved Members were content to approve the Minutes of the 8 th June Meeting
4	Matters Arising	
4.1	Internal Board Effectiveness Review The Chair advised Members that an Internal Board Effectiveness Review is conducted internally annually and externally every third year. Members noted that the two previous Board Effectiveness Reviews have been uploaded to Decision Time for Members' information. Members noted that questionnaires will be circulated to the Board and will be analysed and summarised in advance of the August Board Meeting.	For Information
4.2	McBride Judgement Update from McBride Working Group Members will recall from the previous meeting that on the back of our McBride discussion, it was agreed that a small group of Board and ELT Members would meet in June, and again in July, to discuss the impact of McBride and next steps. The discussion was held on Friday 24 th June and it was a productive and positive meeting. Main points to note from the discussion are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> That the level of information required for a pilot project to implement the McBride Judgment for Exchequer decisions and to provide Board ownership of decisions, was agreed by members. This would be applied immediately A McBride sub-committee comprising of the Chair and Vice Chair would meet fortnightly to take decisions on McBride in relation to Exchequer. If an 	For Information

	<p>emergency decision is required, the sub-committee will meet to accommodate this</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A table for decision making will be sent 2 days in advance and will be uploaded to Decision Time for Members to see • In the event of appeals, an Appeals Panel can be arranged with two other Board Members • Lottery Funding process will be tightened up in order to adopt any learning points and a table of decisions to be arranged to simplify records. • Further work is required to bring the Scheme of Delegation in line with the new Partnership Agreement and this work will be undertaken in parallel with PA approval, with a new Scheme of Delegation brought to the Board at a later date. <p>Members were content to support the recommendations from the McBride Judgment subgroup.</p> <p>Members noted that a further meeting would be scheduled in July for the McBride subgroup.</p>	
4.3	<p>ARAC Update from ARAC Chair</p> <p>The ARAC Chair, JC, provided a verbal overview of the discussions held during the ARAC Committee on 05/07/22 for the information of Members including the meeting held with ARAC Members and RSM in respect of the Internal Audit Report findings.</p> <p>JC stated that the meeting was a good example of teamwork and that whilst Members remain cautious, Members are supportive of the work intended via the next steps of the ELT and managers.</p> <p>Members noted that the ARAC Meeting as scheduled for the 1st August will be rescheduled to late August. In addition, Members noted that an exceptional ARAC Meeting will be scheduled for 28th July to facilitate the approval of the Annual Lottery Accounts 2021-22.</p> <p>It was agreed that the minutes of the ARAC Meeting would be circulated to the Chair of the Board in advance of a meeting between the Chair and MD, DfC, scheduled for the morning of 06/07/22. In addition, a link to the ARAC minutes would be included via link the Board Minutes and an extract from the ARAC Meeting would be included with the Board Minutes (See Below)</p> <p>Action: Minutes of the ARAC Meeting 5th July would be circulated to the Chair of the Board in advance of the meeting between the Chair and MD, DfC, scheduled for 06/07/22. ARAC Minutes to be included via link in the Board Minutes. The link to ARAC Minutes from 5th July can be found via the following link: Decision Time</p> <p>In addition, Members noted that a discussion relating to the receipt of a letter relating to Board Effectiveness from MD, DfC, has been received from the Chair and discussed during the ARAC Meeting prior to the Board Meeting. It was agreed that the letter from MD, DfC, would be linked to within the Board Minutes for the information of Members.</p> <p>Action: Letter from MD, DfC, would be linked to within the Board Minutes for the information of Members. The MD, DfC, letter can be found via the following link: Decision Time</p> <p>Members referred to an ARAC Agenda item advising the Committee of an incident that occurred in TNOC on 13/06/22 regarding two school children going missed during an Orienteering exercise held during a school residential. Members were advised that this incident resulted in commendation for TNOC from PSNI, Mountain Rescue and the school Principal TNOC in terms of their prompt response and comprehensive management of the incident. Members queried if Board Members should also have sight of this information and requested that Members receive the final outcomes report from this incident.</p> <p>Action: Members to receive the final outcomes report from the Orienteering Incident in TNOC on 13/06/22 for their information</p>	<p>For Information</p> <p>Action: Members to receive the final outcomes report from the Orienteering Incident in TNOC on 13/06/22 for their information</p> <p>Action: 'Health and Safety' to be added to the Board Agenda as a standing item</p> <p>Action: Minutes of the ARAC Meeting 5th July would be circulated to the Chair of the Board in advance of the meeting between the Chair and MD, DfC, scheduled for 06/07/22. ARAC Minutes to be included via link in the Board Minutes</p> <p>Action: Letter from MD, DfC, would be linked to within the Board Minutes for the information of Members.</p>

	<p>Members discussed the Orienteering incident at TNOC and proposed that 'Health and Safety' be added to the Board Agenda as a standing agenda item. Members were advised that Health and Safety is already included in the ARAC papers to Board on a quarterly basis. Members discussed applying proportionality in the context of the role of Sport NI, including TNOC and an effective response to a "live" safety test. After discussion, members agreed to a verbal update on 'Health and Safety' be provided via a standing Board Agenda item moving forward.</p> <p>Action: 'Health and Safety' to be added to the Board Agenda as a standing item</p> <p>Members held an extensive discussion on Health and Safety, both in Governing Bodies and in respect of the direct responsibility of the organisation and duty of care and also the information which should be provided at Board level.</p> <p>Members noted that a Health and Safety Review is being commissioned for both TNOC and SNISI in advance of their respective strategic reviews.</p>	
5	Business Plan 2022-23	For Information
5.1/5.2	Business Plan 2022-23 Board Paper & Business Plan 2022-23	For Information
	Members noted that the Business Plan 2021-22 has been subject to amendments and has been circulated to Members for their information. Members were advised that updates will be provided on a quarterly basis.	
6	Annual Financial Statements	
6.1/6.2	Exchequer 2021-22 Accounts Board Paper & Exchequer 2021-22 Accounts	Approved
	<p>Members noted that the ARAC Committee recommended the approval of the Exchequer 2021-22 Accounts.</p> <p>Members were content to approve the Annual Exchequer 2021-22 Accounts.</p> <p>Approval: Members were content to approve the Annual Exchequer 2021-22 Accounts</p>	Members were content to approve the Annual Exchequer 2021-22 Accounts
7	AOB	
7.1	Update on NI Gymnasts at Commonwealth Games	For Information
	The information relating to the NI Gymnasts at Commonwealth Games was tabled as read.	
8	Date of next meeting	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exceptional Meeting for 2021-22 Lottery Accounts to take place on 28th July 2022 at 10am 10th August 2022 in House of Sport, Belfast at 9.30am 	

Signed by Sport NI Chair: *George Lucas*

Date: 28th July 2022

Appendix One

Extract from ARAC Minutes on 5th July

Internal Audit Report

The Internal Audit information and associated appendices were tabled as read.

The COO spoke briefly to the reports and advised Members that the COO met with RSM in June after arriving in post. Members noted that following permission obtained from the CEO and Vice Chair as Chair of ARAC, audit exercises relating to Sporting Winners have been moved into the next years' reporting period in order to close out the 2021-22 audit work.

RM provided additional context to the Internal Audit report findings, noting that the reporting period was impacted by an absence of key staff for long periods of time, ongoing resourcing pressures, a lack of engagement from staff and an understanding of the consequences of audit requirements. Members noted that training for staff will be integrated into a forthcoming action plan to address this issue moving forward.

MM advised the ELT that during the prior discussions of ARAC before the meeting, MM proposed implementing a recommendation register as part of all ARAC papers. Members noted that there currently is an existing recommendation / risk register but there is scope to make this information more robust. Members noted that this reporting period was affected by staff shortages and long term absence, which led to time pressures that therefore reduced the amount of time available to review and ascertain evidence associated with recommendation responses. It was agreed that MM would meet with AP offline to discuss these procedures in more detail.

Action: MM to meet with AP offline to discuss recommendation procedures in more detail

The ELT extended thanks to MM for offering up MM's expertise and experience.

IMcC spoke to the Internal Audit Report which concluded with a 'Limited' assurance status and included further advisory information relating to Data Protection and GDPR. Members took the recommendations as read and noted that an action plan in response would be developed.

Members noted that following the CEO reporting full disclosure to the DfC Management Board on 29/06/22, RM met with RSM to discuss issues to address, existing challenges and next steps. Members also noted that discussions are ongoing between the CEO and KH, DfC, to keep DfC updated on all progress made.

Members commented on the report; noting that Members have expressed disappointment in the report findings. Members referred to RSM advising that the Committee may have been misled by the findings submitted to ARAC on 3rd May.

Members appreciated that the ELT and operations staff have demonstrated that recommendations are taken seriously and that teams will work together at all levels to address any procedural gaps or governance issues raised, in order to demonstrate an appropriate level of assurance by the next reporting period.

Members and ELT recognised the report as a learning opportunity going forward.

The CEO raised concerns about a statement that the Committee/Board may have been 'misled', stating that if this was the case, it was inadvertent and that if the Board was misled, there were grounds to consider if the Accounting Officer had been misled. Members noted that this reporting period had been heavily influenced by a number of factors outside the control of the organisation; namely the COO and entirety of the operations management team being absent at one time, coupled with wider managerial staff not yet in post due to restructuring. In addition, it was noted that the issues identified from this period were not escalated by RSM to the CEO in the absence of a COO and managers and that the CEO learnt of the issues as a result of an introductory meeting that the COO had called with RSM and reported back on. The CEO also stated that she was also concerned and disappointed but clear on an action plan to address the issues, which includes the need to address underperformance in Sport NI, flagged with the Chair and Vice Chair. Members noted that this period offers lessons to be learned and that there is recognition at both Board and ELT level of areas of under performance in the organisation which are currently being addressed directly.

In addition, the CEO offered thanks to the Chair and Vice Chair for their support during this period of transition.

As a result of forthcoming approval requirements, the Vice Chair proposed rescheduling the 1st August ARAC Meeting to a later date. It was agreed that this date would fall in late August and that the date would be agreed by correspondence.

Action: See Below

Members discussed the development of the action plan in response to the Internal Audit Report and noted that there would be key staff absent throughout the period of July in both Sport NI and DfC.

It was agreed that a verbal update on the action plan development would be provided during an Exceptional ARAC and Board Meeting, scheduled for the 28th July 2022 and that a comprehensive, formal action plan will follow at the rescheduled ARAC Meeting in late August.

Action: Verbal update on the action plan in response to the Internal Audit Report findings to be provided at the Exceptional ARAC and Board Meeting in July. A comprehensive action plan will follow at the rescheduled ARAC Meeting in late August.

Members noted that the Chair of the Board is meeting with MD on 06/07/22 and that a copy of the minutes of the ARAC Meeting (05/07/22) would be submitted to the Chair in draft form in advance.

Action: Copy of the minutes of the ARAC Meeting (05/07/22) would be submitted to the Chair in draft form in advance of Chair's Meeting with MD on 06/07/22.

MM recommended RSM extending the sample period from 11 to a larger sample during the next reporting period. IMcC advised that this figure will be dependent on the number of outstanding recommendations in the 2022-23 reporting period.