



BOARD MEETING
Wednesday 11th October 2023
House of Sport, Belfast at 9:30am

BOARD MINUTE

Present

Gavin Boyd (Chair)
 Kyle Ferguson
 Kieran Harding
 Wendy Elliott
 Alison Nicholl
 Richard Bullick
 Denise Burns

In Attendance

Richard Archibald, Interim CEO
 Brian McKimm, Interim Chief Operations Officer
 Orlagh Watters, Interim Head of Sports Systems
 John Hart, Head of Policy and Innovation
 Simon Burrows, G7 Accountant
 Lorraine Gribbon, ELT PA
 Laura Carland, SSO

	ITEM	STATUS
1	Apologies Apologies were received from A McKeown, G Lucas and T Murphy	
2	Declaration of Conflicts of Interest None	
3	Minutes of the previous meeting 13th September 2023 The minutes of the previous meeting (13 th September 2023) were accepted. Approval: Minutes of the previous meeting (13th September 2023) were accepted.	Approval: Minutes of the previous meeting (13th September 2023) were accepted.
4	Actions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Actions Arising Register of Actions completed/outstanding Members reviewed the outstanding actions; noting that there were no specific outstanding actions of concern.	
5	Matters Arising None	
6	Chair's Briefing The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting; extending a welcome to BMcK as Interim Chief Operating Officer. The Chair advised Members that the position of Chief Operating Officer has been advertised externally, as has the permanent position of Head of Sports Systems. The Chair advised that LS, has been appointed as HR Consultant to support the Board on issues relating to Human Resources and stated that Members would be provided with a briefing from the Chair on this appointment following the Board Meeting.	
7	Interim CEO Report	

	<p>The Interim CEO Report was tabled as read.</p> <p>The Interim CEO extended a formal welcome to the Interim COO to the organisation.</p> <p>Members discussed the Interim CEO Report.</p> <p>The Interim CEO advised Members that the ELT attended a workshop relating to Outcomes Based Accountability (OBA) hosted by DfC colleagues on 10/10/2023.</p> <p>Following Members' queries, the Interim CEO provided an overview of a recent meeting held in respect of the Bangor Aurora Aquatic Pool & Leisure Complex following the recent failure of the mechanisms in the pool and the next steps for upgrading the 50m pool and returning it to full operation.</p> <p>Members referred to the Tollymore National Outdoor Centre (TNOC) Review and SNISI review. Members held a discussion regarding the use of consultancy services, steps to initiate the procurement process via Central Business Unit (CBU) and how this contract will be managed and measured. Members noted that the current scope and 'strategic' terminology of the project in its current form may have unintended procurement implications and may require engagement with DfC colleagues in order to progress the work. After discussion, it was agreed that the Interim COO and Operations Manager would review the documentation with the aim of adjusting the scope of the project and accelerating the procurement process, if possible. It was agreed that should options to expedite the procurement process prove unsuccessful, the TNOC and SNISI reviews would be brought back to the Board for further consideration.</p> <p>Action: Interim COO and Operations Manager to review the documentation with the aim of adjusting the scope of the project and accelerating the procurement process, if possible. Should options to expedite the procurement process prove unsuccessful, the TNOC and SNISI reviews would be brought back to the Board for further consideration.</p>	
7.1	<p>Staff Engagement Survey</p> <p>The HPI provided a brief overview of the summary paper and spoke to the overall survey results received from permanent and agency staff. Members discussed the paper and the survey results; discussing how Sport NI could potentially benchmark the recent results against other organisations.</p> <p>Members noted that due to the formatting of the survey - shaped in response to feedback from the Staff Engagement Working Group - three new questions for the 2023 survey impact on how the survey can be directly compared with the previous years' results and the overall score will be influenced as a result.</p> <p>Members discussed specific results, noting areas of demonstrated improvement and reflecting on issues which may have contributed to lower scoring areas including staff development, senior management and the management of change following the restructure legacy. Members and the ELT discussed the context of the current, and previous, results and the challenges posed. Members requested to see the raw comments in the report from staff for their information; noting that specific comments will require review to ensure that individual staff cannot be identified.</p> <p>Action: Members to receive 'raw' comments from the Staff Engagement Survey Report for their information</p> <p>The HPI spoke to the recommendations of the report and Members discussed next steps which would include further All Staff sessions and arranging training for staff. Members discussed staff attending future Board meetings to present on individual papers and projects and ELT stated they would support this proposal if Members were content to agree.</p> <p>Members were advised that staff were recently surveyed on working patterns and the procurement of bespoke kit. The ELT advised that following receipt of the initial results, staff appear to support the proposal for three core office days – namely Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday. Members discussed the current hybrid working patterns when compared with other ALBs and councils. Members discussed the management of exit interviews and PDPs within the organisation and the need for consistent staff management measures.</p>	

	<p>Members discussed the agency staff results; noting recommendations to signpost staff to existing wellbeing initiatives, implementing consistent performance reviews and communicating with staff on contracts and contract renewals. Members noted that whilst full time recruitment throughout grades is ongoing, staff expressed the need to expedite to appoint agency staff to permanent posts where possible. It was agreed that the ELT would review the options for full time recruitment of agency staff at EO grade level and update the Board accordingly on available options or the current status of this work.</p> <p>Action: ELT to consider options for recruiting EO agency staff to permanent posts with a view to updating the Board on available options or the current status of this work</p>	
7.2	<p>Sports System Investment Programme</p> <p>The Sports System Investment Programme paper was tabled as read.</p> <p>There were no issues or queries to raise in respect of the paper, however, Members requested further detail in respect of the estimated timeline of the programme. Members noted the Sports System Investment Programme paper.</p>	
8.0	Finance	
8.1	<p>Finance Update Paper</p> <p>The Finance paper was tabled as read.</p> <p>Members were provided with a verbal overview of the ongoing financial work of the organisation which included the Exchequer Accounts for 2023-24 being submitted in draft to NIAO w/c 09/10/2023, ongoing work to identify and address anticipated underspend in relation to salary and wages and ongoing budget holder meetings with management and Directors.</p> <p>Members were referred to discussions held earlier in the financial year, regarding an exercise due to be undertaken by RSM to rectify figures against the archived SUN system and the newly implemented CIVICA system. Members were advised that this exercise has not been conducted to date. Members noted that further information on this issue will be submitted to ARAC for discussion and consideration. Members discussed next steps including the options for NIAO undertaking this exercise directly on behalf of Sport NI. In addition, Members discussed typical papers produced by RSM for ARAC on a quarterly basis for the information of Members.</p> <p>Members discussed the resource consumption information and the identified underspend figures to date. Members and the ELT discussed the ongoing challenges presented by CIVICA following the implementation process and how these challenges will be managed going forward for of the duration of the contract. The Interim COO advised that the Finance Team will be undertaking manual exercises to ensure the accuracy of figures.</p>	
9.0	ARAC Update	
9.1	<p>Members noted that the next ARAC Meeting is scheduled to take place on 23/10/2023. Members were advised that any issues identified during the Finance update would be discussed in full at the next ARAC Meeting [23/10/2023].</p>	
	Outstanding Lottery Accounts	
	<p>Members were provided with an overview and update on the ongoing work to certify the Outstanding Lottery Accounts; noting that the final draft 2016-17 accounts are currently being reviewed by NIAO following a review of narrative of the [2016-17] accounts. Members were advised that work has commenced on the 2017-18 Outstanding Lottery Accounts. In addition, Members were advised that – depending on resources – work is ongoing in partnership with NIAO to bring forward the overall Lottery accounts timeline forward from 2026 to an earlier estimated deadline, if possible.</p> <p>Members noted that updated information on the Outstanding Lottery Accounts will be submitted to the next ARAC Meeting on 23/10/2023.</p>	
10	Business Plan	
10.1	Business Plan 2023-24	

	Members noted the inclusion of the current draft of the Business Plan 2023-24. There were no issues or concerns to raise in respect of the current draft.	
10.2	Draft Objective Report Cards	
	<p>The Interim CEO circulated additional Business Plan Objective Report cards for the information of Members.</p> <p>Members discussed the information; positively welcoming the format and detail of the individual report cards.</p>	
11	Women in Sport Action Plan Development	
	<p>The HPI spoke to the Women in Sport Action Plan Development paper. Members were updated on the current levels of engagement and visibility, how this work relates to the Active Living Strategy, the Women in Sport Panel and the Female Sports Forum and the context for the development of the plan. In addition, the Chair provided further context on this work following recent discussions at the Task and Finish Group meetings.</p> <p>Members discussed the paper; noting that any strategic work would require DfC colleagues to feed into the plans. Members noted the proposed target date of International Women's Day 2024; discussing the need to update the action plan, review and consult with existing DfC strategic data and information and develop a firmer timeline for the work.</p> <p>After discussion, it was agreed that a positions paper would be drafted to reflect the discussion at the Board Meeting [11th October 2023]. This paper would set out the strategic context, provide an overview of investment to date, detail what the current level of work and engagement on this issue is within the sports system, identify any existing gaps and illustrate how the draft plan links to the Terms of Reference of the Women in Sport panel. In addition, this paper would consider how NI, ROI and All-Ireland Governing Bodies are impacted by potentially differing legislative targets in respect of female representation and women in sport.</p> <p>Action: HPI to draft positions paper on Women in Sport Action Plan</p>	
12	Health and Safety Update By Exception	
	Nothing by exception	
13	ELT Items By Exception	
13.1	Raising Concerns / Whistleblowing	
	<p>The Raising Concerns / Whistleblowing policy was tabled as read.</p> <p>Members discussed the policy; noting that union consultation has been held on the information.</p> <p>Members referred to the time taken, to date, to reach approval stage and stated the need to ensure NIAO guidance is integrated appropriately into the document. Members discussed the appointment of a 'Champion' role for staff following the implementation of the policy and after discussion, it was agreed that Members would note the comments made on the policy. Members approved the Raising Concerns / Whistleblowing policy with the caveat that the Interim COO would take forward a review of the information to ensure NIAO guidance is integrated sufficiently</p> <p>Approval: Members approved the Raising Concerns / Whistleblowing policy with the caveat that the Interim COO would review the Raising Concerns / Whistleblowing policy to ensure the integration of NIAO guidance.</p> <p>Action: Interim COO to review the Raising Concerns / Whistleblowing policy to ensure the integration of NIAO guidance.</p>	
13.2	Opportunities Fund Sports Systems Investment	
	<p>The Opportunities Fund paper was tabled as read.</p> <p>The Interim HSS provided an overview to the background, context and historical approach to Crowdfunding projects; highlighting the opportunities to provide upskilling at club level and offer a modern approach to generating income. Members noted the need to ensure robust and accurate data throughout the lifetime of the contract. Members positively received the</p>	

	<p>paper but highlighted the need to ensure monitoring and evaluation measures are reflected within the budget.</p> <p>After discussion, Member were content to approve the paper and associated business case. Approval: Members approved the Opportunities Fund paper and associated business case.</p>	
14	AOB	
	<p>Members were advised that following the confirmation of the Euros 2023 competition being held in the UK and Ireland, whilst Sport NI does not have direct involvement with the Casement Park redevelopment project, Sport NI will continue to engage with DfC colleagues on issues in preparation for the event.</p> <p>Members were advised that the climbing wall facilities at TNOC are currently in place under a sublet agreement with Mountaineering Ireland; the contract of which is scheduled to end within the financial year. Members noted that Mountaineering Ireland have proposed passing on this asset to Sport NI and that formal discussions on this arrangement will be held in respect of options and insurance implications before firm decisions are made.</p> <p>In addition, Members were advised of new sports, namely – Cricket, Squash, Lacrosse, and Baseball/Softball, Flag Football – being welcomed to the Olympic level moving forward.</p>	
15	Date of next meeting	
	The next Board Meeting is scheduled to take place at 9:30am, on 8th November 2023.	

Signed by Sport NI Chair: *George Lucas*

Date: 8th November 2023