

NORTHERN IRELAND FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE BOARD

MINUTES OF A MEETING

25 FEBRUARY 2020

3.30 PM

PRESENT: Ms C McKinney, Chairperson presiding
Mr M Graham, Chief Fire & Rescue Officer (Interim)
Mr C Enright
Mr K Henning
Mr P Martin
Mr R Irvine
Mr G Smyth

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr M Deeney, Assistant Chief Fire & Rescue Officer
(Transformation, Performance & Governance)
Mr A Jennings, Assistant Chief Fire & Rescue Officer (Service
Support)
Mr A Walmsley, Assistant Chief Fire & Rescue Officer (Service
Delivery)
Mrs P White, Director of Finance
Mrs E Magee, Acting Director of Human Resources
Mr C Williams, Associate Consultant, LGA (Closed Session
only)
Ms I Hill, Board Administrative Secretary
Ms R Morgan, DoH Observer

The Chairperson noted that this element of the Meeting would be convened in Closed Session to consider an Item of Business deferred to the Board by the Remuneration Committee. The Committee had met immediately prior to the Board Meeting.

Review of Principal Officers' Terms & Conditions

The Chairperson welcomed Mr Williams to the Meeting.

Members noted the Report on the Review of NIFRS Principal Officers' Terms & Conditions which had been previously circulated.

Mr Williams suggested that, as Members have had an opportunity to consider the Report, he would refer to the key elements within the Report. Members agreed to this.

At this point,
the Interim Chief Fire & Rescue Officer left the Meeting

During a full and frank discussion, Mr Williams noted Members' views regarding the Report and also answered Members' questions/provided clarification.

The Chairperson suggested that further discussion on the Report be deferred. She proposed that a Special Board Meeting to be held on 4 March 2020 and that the Risk Management and Business Planning Workshop be postponed. **Members agreed to the proposal.**

The Chairperson thanked Mr Williams for his attendance.

The Meeting adjourned at 4.30 pm

The Meeting reconvened, in formal session, at 4.40 pm

The Interim Chief Fire & Rescue Officer;
Assistant Chief Fire & Rescue Officer Deeney, Jennings and Walmsley; the Director of Finance, the Acting Director of HR and Ms Morgan
joined the Meeting

Prior to the commencement of Business, the Chairperson referred to Mr Martin's appointment as Special Adviser to the Minister for Education. She paid tribute to Mr Martin for all his work and his support during his tenure on the Board. On behalf of the Board, she made a presentation to Mr Martin.

The Chairperson explained that Mr Martin's tenure would end on 31 March and extended best wishes to him in his new role.

Responding to the Chairperson, the Interim Chief Fire & Rescue Officer, on behalf of the Corporate Management Team, thanked Mr Martin for his contribution.

The Chairperson welcomed everyone to the formal Meeting of the Board.

Item 1: Apologies:

There were no apologies from Members.

Item 2: Declaration of Interests

The Chairperson enquired as to whether any Members of the Board wished to declare any potential conflicts of interest with any of the business items on the Agenda. Members confirmed there were no apparent conflicts of interest.

Mr Martin noted a potential conflict with respect to his position as Special Adviser to the Minister of Education. This was noted by the Chairperson who indicated that the appropriate procedures would be applied if necessary.

Item 3: Minutes of Board Meeting – 19 December 2019

The Minutes of the Board Meeting held on 19 December 2019, having been printed and circulated, were taken as read and signed as a true record, on the motion of Mr Henning, seconded by Mr Enright.

Arising from the Minutes:

Chairperson's Business

The Chairperson advised the Meeting of the imminent appointment (1 April) of the new Board Members.

Standing Order 2.6 -

Business Case for NIFRS Transformation Programme Phase 1

In response to a request from the Chairperson, the Interim Chief Fire & Rescue Officer updated Members on the current position noting that work continues.

Item 4: Reports from Board Committees, including noting of Committee Minutes and Adoption of Recommendations

Service Delivery Committee – Minutes – 16 January 2020

The Minutes of the Service Delivery Committee Meeting held on 16 January 2020 were noted.

Mr Irvine, Chairperson of the Service Delivery Committee, proposed that the Committee's recommendations, as detailed below, be adopted by the Board. This was seconded by Mr Smyth.

Service Delivery Committee – Recommendations

- **Approval to terminate Existing MoUs between NIFRS and Local Councils in relation to Fire Safety with the caveat that the MoU be replaced with internal workflow processes;**
- **Approval of NIFRS revised Display Screen Equipment Policy;**
- **Approval of NIFRS revised Lone Working Policy; and**
- **Approval of NIFRS Impounding Procedures.**

Resources Committee – Minutes – 16 January 2020

The Minutes of the Resources Committee Meeting held on 16 January 2020 were noted.

Mr Henning, Chairperson of the Resources Committee, proposed that the Committee's recommendations, as detailed below, be adopted by the Board. This was seconded by Mr Enright.

Resources Committee – Recommendations

- **Approval to assimilate the existing LDC Assistant Group Commander postholder to an LDC Group Commander post with the associated increase in pay;**
- **Approval of the draft NIFRS Energy Reduction Scheme 2019-2023 subject to amendment;**
- **Approval of the revised Recruitment of Ex-Offenders and the Security of Disclosures Policy and Procedure subject to amendment;**
- **Approval of the Service Delivery Directorate Restructure Phase 4 (Administration and Support roles).**

Audit, Risk & Governance Committee Meeting – 12 February 2020

It was noted that a Meeting of the Audit, Risk & Governance Committee had been held on 12 February 2020 and that the Minutes of the Meeting will be presented to the next Meeting of the Board.

Mr Smyth, Chairperson of the Audit, Risk & Governance Committee, proposed that the Committee's recommendations, as detailed below, be adopted by the Board. This was seconded by Mr Irvine.

Audit, Risk & Governance Committee – Recommendations

- **Acceptance of the Audit of Training; Audit of Service Delivery Directorate (Community Protection); and Audit of Management of Capital Expenditure and Estates Contracts Management;**
- **Approval of the Quarter 3 Update on the Corporate Business Plan (April – December 2019), along with Balanced Scorecard;**
- **Approval of the 2019/20 External Audit Strategy.**

Remuneration Committee – Minutes – 19 December 2019

The Minutes of the Remuneration Committee Meeting held on 19 December 2019 were noted. It was also noted that the recommendations contained therein had been adopted by the Board at its Meeting on 19 December 2019.

Remuneration Committee – Meeting – 25 February 2020

It was noted that a Meeting of the Remuneration Committee had been held immediately prior to the Board Meeting.

Mr Martin, Member of the Remuneration Committee, proposed the recommendation emanating from the Meeting, as detailed below, be adopted by the Board. This was seconded by Mr Henning.

Remuneration Committee – Recommendation

- **Approval of the Pay Remits for Operational Directors for the period 1 January to 31 December 2019; and Wholetime Personnel; On-Call Personnel; and RCC Personnel for the period 1 July 2019 to 30 June 2020 and submission of the documentation to DoH;**

Item 5: Chairperson’s Business

Accountability Meeting

The Chairperson advised Members that she and the Interim Chief Fire & Rescue Officer had attended an Accountability Meeting in January.

At this point,
Mr Martin left the Meeting (4.50 pm)

The Interim Chief Fire & Rescue Officer provided Members with a synopsis of the business discussed at the Accountability Meeting.

Meeting with the Minister

Members were informed that the Chairperson and the Interim Chief Fire & Rescue Officer were scheduled to meet with the Minister for Health on 11 March 2020.

Item 6: Standalone Strategic Items

Standing Order 2.6

Business Case for NIFRS Transformation Programme – Phase 1 – Establishment of a Programme Management Office

Under Standing Order 2.6, Members unanimously agreed to approve the Business Case for NIFRS Transformation Programme - Phase 1 – Establishment of a Programme Management Office (1 March 2020-31 March 2022).

Assistant Chief Fire & Rescue Officer Deeney highlighted that the Programme Management Office will be place for the duration of the Transformation Programme.

The Chairperson requested regular updates to the Board on the implementation of the Programme Management Office and the staff assigned to same.

The Board, on the motion of Ms McKinney, seconded by Mr Irvine, formally adopted the approval of the above Business Case.

Standing Order 2.6

Under Standing Order 2.6, Members of the Audit, Risk & Governance Committee unanimously agreed to recommend approval to defer the Audit of Performance Management: Call Response to 2020/21.

It was noted that this recommendation will be formally adopted at the next Meeting of the Audit, Risk & Governance Committee.

The Board, on the motion of Mr Smyth, seconded by Mr Henning, unanimously agreed to adopt the recommendation of the Audit, Risk & Governance Committee to defer the Audit of Performance Management: Call Response to 2020/21.

CHANGE IN THE ORDER OF BUSINESS

NIFRS Strategic Plan 2020-25

Members agreed to defer consideration of this Agenda Item to later in the Meeting.

Finance Report

The Briefing Paper updating Members on the financial position was noted.

The Director of Finance provided an overview of the information noting the Revenue budget position as at 31 January 2020 drawing attention to the key budget pressures. Referring to the additional budget allocation, the Director of Finance assured Members that NIFRS continues to plan for a break-even position at year-end.

The Director of Finance gave an overview of the Capital budget position as at 31 January 2020 noting that DoH had reduced the NIFRS capital allocation by £1m on a temporary basis.

The Director of Finance updated Members on the current position with respect to the Pension Administration project and Business Case approvals. She reported positively on NIFRS Prompt Payment performance highlighting that Internal Audit is content with the progress achieved.

The Director of Finance answered Members' questions relating to the information provided.

In response to a query from the Chairperson regarding SLA with Belfast City Legal Services and HSC Leadership Centre, the Interim Chief Fire & Rescue Officer updated Members on the current position with respect to these SLAs. The Chairperson requested that the Board be kept informed.

Pension Matters Lump Sum Death Benefit

Members noted a Briefing Paper relating to the payment of a Lump Sum Death Benefit.

The Director of Finance gave an overview of the information presented.

The Board, on the motion of Ms McKinney, seconded by Mr Henning, unanimously agreed to approve the recommendation as outlined in the Briefing Paper.

Business Cases

Addendum to the Business Case for a Learning Management System

The Executive Summary relating to the Addendum to the Business Case for a Learning Management System was noted.

The Acting Director of HR provided an explanation as to the purpose of the Addendum.

The Board, on the motion of Mr Irvine, seconded by Mr Enright, approved the Addendum to the Business Case for a Learning Management System.

Refurbishment of Antrim Fire Station

Members noted the Executive Summary relating to the Business Case for the refurbishment of Antrim Fire Station.

Assistant Chief Fire & Rescue Officer Jennings gave an overview of the information presented.

Mr Enright raised a number of points with regard to the matter of inclusion of running costs for the Station within the Business Case.

The Director of Finance in response suggested that a potential way forward would be to revise the template to include this information.

The Chairperson stated that this revised template should be presented to the Board.

The Board, on the motion of Mr Enright, seconded by Mr Irvine, approved the Business Case for the Refurbishment of Antrim Fire Station.

Provision of Enhanced Rescue Capabilities

The Executive Summary relating to the Business Case for the provision of Enhanced Rescue Capabilities was noted.

Assistant Chief Fire & Rescue Officer Jennings gave an overview of the purpose of the project.

The Board, on the motion of Mr Henning, seconded by Mr Irvine, approved the Business Case for the provision of Enhanced Rescue Capabilities.

Priority 2 and 3 Fire Alarm Installation Programme

Members noted the Executive Summary for the Business Case for the Priority 2 and 3 Fire Alarm Installation Programme.

The Board, on the motion of Mr Irvine, seconded by Mr Enright, approved the Business Case for the Priority 2 and 3 Fire Alarm Installation Programme.

Renewal of Maintenance Support – Command & Control System

Members noted the Executive Summary pertaining to the Business Case for the renewal of Maintenance Support for the current Control & Control System (Motorola ProCAD).

Assistant Chief Fire & Rescue Officer Jennings noted the background to the Business Case and its purpose.

The Board, on the motion of Mr Irvine, seconded by Mr Smyth, approved the Business Case for the renewal of Maintenance Support for the current Control & Control System (Motorola ProCAD).

Item 7: Relevant Correspondence

There was no relevant correspondence.

Item 8: Documents for Sealing

There were no documents for sealing.

Item 6: Standalone Strategic Items

NIFRS Strategic Plan 2020-25

Members noted the draft NIFRS Strategic Plan 2020-25 and Consultation Document.

The Interim Chief Fire & Rescue Officer highlighted the key areas within the Strategic Plan. Referring to the Financial Performance section he explained to Members that discussions were ongoing with DoH regarding this section.

The Chairperson requested that feedback on these discussions be brought back to the Board.

The Chairperson sought clarification as to how the Board would monitor, evaluate and scrutinise progress against the Plan.

The Interim Chief Fire & Rescue Officer noted that there is a Performance Management Framework in place and explained that progress against the Key Performance Indicators would be the key information for the Board with progress on the delivery of the Strategic Tasks being reported at Committee level. He assured Members that Lead Officers will be held accountable.

During discussion, the Interim Chief Fire & Rescue Officer noted Members' comments and answered Members' questions/provided clarification relating to aspects of the Plan. The Chairperson highlighted the lack of "good news" stories within the document and felt that this was an area which required further development within the Organisation.

Referring to the Consultation Document, the Chairperson suggested that further consideration should be given to developing a more user-friendly version to ensure that all target audiences are in a position to respond to the document.

The Interim Chief Fire & Rescue Officer noted that once approved the document will be submitted to DoH and then progressed to consultation.

The Board, on the motion of Mr Irvine, seconded by Mr Enright, unanimously agreed to approve the draft NIFRS Strategic Plan 2020-25 and the Consultation Document subject to the amendments suggested by Members.

Item 9: Schedule of Future Meetings

The schedule of future Meetings, etc, was noted.

THIS CONCLUDED THE BUSINESS
AND THE MEETING ENDED
AT 5.45 PM
