

*96<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Public Health Agency Board*

*Thursday 19 October 2017 at 1:30pm*

*Conference Rooms 3+4, 12-22 Linenhall Street, Belfast*

**Present**

Mr Andrew Dougal	- Chair
Mrs Valerie Watts	- Interim Chief Executive
Mrs Mary Hinds	- Director of Nursing and Allied Health Professionals
Mr Edmond McClean	- Interim Deputy Chief Executive / Director of Operations
Dr Carolyn Harper	- Director of Public Health/Medical Director
Councillor William Ashe	- Non-Executive Director
Mr Leslie Drew	- Non-Executive Director
Mr Thomas Mahaffy	- Non-Executive Director
Ms Deepa Mann-Kler	- Non-Executive Director

**In Attendance**

Mr Paul Cummings	- Director of Finance, HSCB
Mr Robert Graham	- Secretariat

**Apologies**

Mr Brian Coulter	- Non-Executive Director
Alderman Paul Porter	- Non-Executive Director
Mrs Fionnuala McAndrew	- Director of Social Care and Children, HSCB
Mrs Joanne McKissick	- External Relations Manager, PCC

**75/17 | Item 1 – Welcome and Apologies**

75/17.1 The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were noted from Mr Brian Coulter, Alderman Paul Porter, Mrs Fionnuala McAndrew and Mrs Joanne McKissick.

75/17.2 The Chair welcomed the members of the public who had come to attend today's meeting.

**76/17 | Item 2 - Declaration of Interests**

76/17.1 The Chair asked if anyone had interests to declare relevant to any items on the agenda. No interests were declared.

**77/17 Item 3 – Minutes of previous meeting held on 21 September 2017**

77/17.1 The minutes of the previous meeting, held on 21 September 2017, were approved as an accurate record of that meeting.

**78/17 Item 4 – Matters Arising**

*62/17.5 AAA Screening Report*

78/17.1 Ms Mann-Kler asked if the data on AAA incidence within the prison population was now available. Mr Graham agreed to follow this up with Mrs McDevitt.

*68/17.6 Appointment of Non-Executive Directors*

78/17.2 The Chair advised members that there was a delay of one week in the publication of the advertisement for new PHA non-executives. In response to a question from Ms Mann-Kler, he said that the advertisement would be encouraging applications from groups where the Board is currently under-represented.

*57/17.3 TIG Working Group on Social Care Procurement Clauses*

78/17.3 Mr Mahaffy asked if any of the outputs of the group were available as previously requested. Mrs Watts agreed to follow this up in Mrs McAndrew's office.

**79/17 Item 5 – Chair's Business**

79/17.1 The Chair circulated a paper he had received from Public Health England which related to the length of reports presented to the Board.

79/17.2 The Chair said that the recent financial training that non-executive had received was excellent and he thanked those involved in organising it, and in particular Mr Simon Christie for preparing the glossary of terms. Councillor Ashe said that the training was very important as part of members' induction. The Chair said that the Chief Executives' Forum was keen to run similar training and he suggested that a similar course in the area of strategic planning may also be useful. Members agreed that the training was very beneficial as it was specific to PHA, and that the Director of Finance was also present.

79/17.3 The Chair advised members that he had attended the UK Public Health Forum in Edinburgh and that one full day was given over to "health as a human right". He said that the meeting heard from two individuals who had been homeless and that it transpires that anyone who is homeless is not permitted to register with a GP.

79/17.4 The Board noted the Chair's Business.

**80/17 Item 6 – Interim Chief Executive’s Business**

- 80/17.1 The Interim Chief Executive said that at the last Board workshop she had presented recommendations on the operating model for the future PHA following a request by the Permanent Secretary. She added that this model outlined which functions could transfer to PHA and that the paper had been presented at the Transformation Implementation Group (TIG). She advised that at the TIG meeting, the recommendations were noted and will form part of an overall operating model which will be presented to a new Health Minister for approval.
- 80/17.2 The Interim Chief Executive advised that TIG is also considering a report by Sean Donaghy regarding the transition of eHealth to the Department of Health. She said that all of this work was important in terms of looking at new integrated ways of working in any future health service model and there was a need to strengthen integration and collaboration across the HSC. She went on to say that any new system needs to be built around patients and communities, and not institutions and bureaucracy, and that it must be financially sustainable.
- 80/17.3 The Interim Chief Executive said that, in relation to PHA, she would continue to work with the Department of Health to support the development of policy across the public health agenda.
- 80/17.4 The Chair had a query about timescales, but he acknowledged that the absence of a Health Minister does not help the current situation. He asked about where the function of connected health would sit. The Interim Chief Executive said that Sean Donaghy would be looking at this as part of this work.
- 80/17.5 Mr Drew said that it is importance that there is a change of culture and that processes are reviewed, before looking at how IT can help.
- 80/17.6 Ms Mann-Kler thanked the Interim Chief Executive for the update, but said that in any cultural change it is important that people feel part of the change and it was unfortunate that there has been no role for PHA Board to play a part in the transformation process. The Interim Chief Executive said that it is intention to work with the senior management teams of both HSCB and PHA to identify a work programme as a follow on to the staff workshops that were held in April 2017. She said that the issues that staff had raised were being progressed, but that there was more work to do.
- 80/17.7 Ms Mann-Kler noted that the paper suggested the future PHA as having an advisory function to the Department of Health. The Interim Chief Executive clarified that this had been put into the paper as an option, but that the Permanent Secretary has made it clear that the future PHA will remain an ALB. Ms Mann-Kler said that in the paper PHA’s role of promotion and protection was listed second behind its role of carrying out this advisory role for the Department. The Interim Chief Executive said that there was no priority order, and that protecting people will be the

- focus of the future PHA.
- 80/17.8 The Board noted the Interim Chief Executive's business.
- 81/17 Item 7 – Finance Report (PHA/01/10/17)**
- 81/17.1 Mr Cummings presented the Finance Report for the period up to 31 August and said that there was little variation from the previous report. He advised that there was a year to date surplus of £919k which was as a result of two factors – underspends in demand-led services and the administration budget. He said that there had been meetings with Directors to review the budgets and that he anticipated that over the next few months there would be little change as recruitment to fill key posts is taking time. Dr Harper added that a key issue was that many posts were being filled internally.
- 81/17.2 Mr Drew asked if it would be possible for members to see any new Investment Plans and Mr Cummings said that these could be shared. Mr Drew went on to express concern as to whether filling all the vacant posts would be sufficient to reduce the management and administration surplus given we are over halfway through the financial year, and if the funds could be used elsewhere. Mr Cummings said that PHA would do all that it could within the regulations, but there was an option to transfer funds non-recurrently to the programme budget. The Interim Chief Executive informed members that a mid-year budget review meeting with all budget managers is due to take place and decisions will be made based on the outputs of that meeting. Mr Cummings said that any surplus would be gratefully received by the Department to ease some of the pressures across the HSC as a whole. Dr Harper added that PHA always ensures that funding is spent appropriately.
- 81/17.3 Ms Mann-Kler asked about the additional £40m of funding allocated to health. Mr Cummings explained that all government departments regularly review their budgets and a result of the most recent review other departments had surplus funds, some of which were able to be transferred to health. He pointed out that health had submitted bids for £100m. Ms Mann-Kler said that it would be useful if strategically significant issues like this could be reported to the Board to enable members to understand the context.
- 81/17.4 Ms Mann-Kler asked whether there will be any surplus funds from the DoH that may be allocated to PHA campaigns. The Interim Chief Executive said that PHA is looking at how it could reduce expenditure on campaigns which will form part of the discussions regarding next year's budget. Mr Cummings cautioned that over the next two years, the pressures on the health budget are around £400m.
- 81/17.5 The Board noted the Finance Report.

**82/17 Item 8 – Presentation by Samaritans Ireland**

- 82/17.1 The Chair welcomed Deirdre Toner and Julie Aiken from Samaritans Ireland to the meeting and invited them to deliver their presentation on the work of the organisation.
- 82/17.2 Ms Toner gave an overview of the history of the Samaritans and its work as well as how it trains its volunteers. She moved on to give an overview of the work carried out in prisons and schools and its future priorities.
- 82/17.3 Ms Toner finished the presentation by saying that Samaritans recognise that suicide prevention is a complicated situation and that there is a broad range of issues in people's lives.
- 82/17.4 Mr Drew said it was encouraging that Samaritans is providing services to employers as well as being a helpline. He suggested that changes in the digital environment must be costly. Ms Toner said that there is funding in place to ensure that Samaritans helpline is free to access. She added that it is important that all of Samaritans' volunteers are trained appropriately to deal with calls ensuring that all legislation, e.g. Data Protection is adhered to. Mr Drew asked how many calls Samaritans would deal with on an annual basis. Ms Toner said that for Northern Ireland approximately 200,000 calls would be received annually.
- 82/17.5 The Chair noted that 78% of calls are not linked to suicide. Ms Toner said that there are individuals who would be repeat callers who are likely to self-harm and Lady 2 noted that Samaritans offers a different type of service to the Lifeline service.
- 82/17.6 Ms Mann-Kler asked if demand is increasing and if refugees and asylum seekers have access to Samaritans services. Ms Aiken said that there has been a rise in the number of callers in Northern Ireland. Ms Toner said that volunteers are trained from different communities and that there is access to the wider UK team of volunteers if assistance is required for different nationalities. Ms Mann-Kler asked about developments within digital media and Ms Toner said that there is progress being made in these areas.
- 82/17.7 Councillor Ashe asked about the 12-week training programme for volunteers and what precautions are taken to ensure the mental health and wellbeing of staff. Ms Toner outlined how volunteers are trained and the support mechanisms that are in place. She said that in every branch there is a Safeguarding Officer and an expert in Data Protection. She added that there are services available for volunteers. Councillor Ashe asked how long individuals normally volunteer for. Ms Toner said that after 9/10 months it is possible to assess whether a person is suited to the role. She added that people can take on different volunteer roles and spend up to 15 years with the organisation.
- 82/17.8 The Chair asked whether repeat callers have to re-tell their story each

time they ring. Ms Aiken explained that there is a policy whereby the organisation seeks to reduce people's dependence on the service and that instead of them repeat calling, Samaritans can call them.

82/17.9 The Chair thanked Ms Toner and Ms Aiken for their presentation.

**83/17 Item 9 – PHA/HSCB Annual Quality Report (PHA/02/10/17)**

83/17.1 Mrs Hinds presented the Annual Quality Report which she explained is a report that PHA and HSCB are required to publish by the Department of Health. She explained that the format is also laid down by the Department, but that based on comments received by members in previous years, this year's report is more concise and is more user friendly. She said that it is PHA's intention to launch the report as part of World Quality Day in November.

83/17.2 Mrs Hinds outlined to members the five key sections within the report (Transforming the Culture, Strengthening the Workforce, Measuring the Improvement, Raising the Standards and Integrating the Care) and noted one or two of the main achievements within each section. She advised that as part of the preparation for the report different teams within HSCB and PHA were asked to highlight particular areas, which were shortlisted for inclusion in the final report.

83/17.3 The Chair praised the format of the report, but asked about 7-day working and availability of AHPs in Emergency Departments. Mrs Hinds said that through the Integrated Care Partnerships, direct access to physios is being looked at, and that there are pilots in two Trust areas.

83/17.4 Ms Mann-Kler said that the report was excellent and asked if PHA can benchmark against other parts of the UK. Mrs Hinds explained that benchmarking is difficult as different countries measure different outcomes, but she said that PHA is participating in national audits where it is possible to drill down into specific data, and that there are areas of good practice in Northern Ireland.

83/17.5 Mr Drew commended the report saying that it was easy to read. He suggested that in future reports there could be some analysis comparing performance of previous years. Mrs Hinds agreed to look at this and noted that in areas such as SAIs and complaints, comparative data is available.

83/17.6 The Chair asked that Mrs Hinds convey the Board's thanks to all of those who had been involved in the compilation of the report.

83/17.7 The Board **APPROVED** the Annual Quality Report.

**84/17 Item 10 – Mid-Year Assurance Statement (PHA/03/10/17)**

84/17.1 The Interim Chief Executive advised that the PHA is required to submit a

- mid-year Assurance Statement to the Department of Health and that the Statement being presented today has been considered by both the Agency Management Team and the Governance and Audit Committee. She explained that the format of the Statement is set down by the Department.
- 84/17.2 The Interim Chief Executive drew members' attention to the Internal Control Divergences and said that that the areas covered were the same as in previous statements, but with the addition of some narrative regarding the non-recurrent removal of funding for PHA campaigns. She went on to say that following last week's Governance and Audit Committee, an insertion was made in Section 12 drawing reference to the recent finance training that members attended.
- 84/17.3 The Interim Chief Executive said that if members were content to approve the statement it will be sent to the Department of Health.
- 84/17.4 The Board **APPROVED** the Mid-Year Assurance Statement Report.
- 85/17 Item 11 – Governance and Audit Committee Update (PHA/04/10/17)**
- 85/17.1 In the absence of Mr Coulter, the Chair asked Ms Mann-Kler to update members on the last meeting of the Governance and Audit Committee.
- 85/17.2 Ms Mann-Kler said that following the last meeting of the Committee, Mr Coulter had written to the Chair of the BSO Audit Committee passing on the Committee's concerns about Shared Services. She advised that a response was received which gave an update on the action plan, and that while some progress has been made, there remains a lot of work to be done.
- 85/17.3 Ms Mann-Kler said that the Committee was given an update on the latest developments with regard to cyber security. She reported that a regional Cyber Security Board has been convened by the Department of Finance, and there is an HSC Cyber Security Business Continuity Board. She added that the Committee discussed the need for clarity regarding roles, responsibilities and accountability for cyber security, and the need for an overall cyber security strategy.
- 85/17.4 Ms Mann-Kler moved onto the Internal Audit reports. She said that the first report considered, on research and development (R&D) gave limited assurance with governance and oversight arrangements cited as an area of concern. She added that there was a suggestion that an annual report on R&D is brought to the Board. She assured members that there are no issues with how the R&D function is carried out. The next report was on risk management and she advised that this report gave satisfactory assurance and that there was a suggestion about holding a Board workshop on risk management. She said that the Committee Chair felt that the current oversight arrangements were satisfactory. Ms Mann-Kler

- advised that a report on contracts with the community and voluntary sector gave satisfactory assurance in terms of the management of contracts but limited assurance in terms of the procurement of contracts.
- 85/17.5 Ms Mann-Kler said that the mid-year follow up of Internal Audit recommendations showed that 86% of previous recommendations have been fully implemented and the remainder partly implemented.
- 85/17.6 Ms Mann-Kler updated members on fraud and said that the latest Fraud Liaison Officer Update Report showed three new cases and one completed case. She advised that the complete case did not find any fraud in relation to transactions with PHA.
- 85/17.7 Ms Mann-Kler moved onto corporate governance. She said that members considered the revised Corporate Risk Register as at 30 June was considered and that one new risk has been added in terms of cyber security. She added that a risk relating to the reduction in campaigns will be included at the next review at 30 September.
- 85/17.8 The Chair asked about the limited assurance in the procurement of contracts. Mr Cummings said that this related, in the main, to the slowness of how procurements are being progressed and the challenge of meeting the timetable with reduced staff and expertise. Mr McClean added that the procurement plan is a 3/4 year plan, and that PHA is beginning to fill gaps in capacity.
- 85/17.9 The Interim Chief Executive asked about the risk in relation to campaigns. Mr McClean said that in the absence of campaigns, PHA has limited means to get across the public health messages it is required to as part of its legislative remit of informing the population. The Chair said that AMR is a huge issue and that Public Health England is beginning a campaign and he was concerned that PHA does not have a plan. Mr Stephen Wilson, who had joined the meeting at this point, said that PHA has developed a plan, but one that does not involve mass media.
- 85/17.10 Ms Mann-Kler advised that the Governance and Audit Committee noted the updated Assurance Framework and approved the updated Risk Management Strategy and Policy. She said that the Committee received updates on the Information Governance and General Data Protection Regulations Action Plans, where there is a focus on staff training in information governance with regular reminders being issued to staff regarding this.
- 85/17.11 Ms Mann-Kler said that the Committee approved the Mid-Year Assurance Statement and noted the SBNI Declaration of Assurance.
- 85/17.12 Members noted the update from Ms Mann-Kler.



**86/17** | **Item 12 – Any Other Business**

86/17.1 | There was no other business.

**87/17** | **Item 13 – Date and Time of Next Meeting**

*Thursday 16 November 2017 at 1:30pm*

*Conference Rooms 3+4, 12/22 Linenhall Street, Belfast.*

Signed by Chair:

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Ann Douglas".

Date: 16 November 2017