

Minutes of seventy-fifth meeting of the Board of the Public Appointments Service held in Chapter House, at 2.30pm on 11th April 2018

Present: Mr. Tom Moran (Chairman), Ms. Anne-Marie Taylor, Ms. Fiona Tierney, Dr. Eddie Molloy, Mr. David Cagney, Mr. Damien McCallion, Mr. Paul Lemass, Ms. Mary Connaughton, Mr. John O'Callaghan, Ms. Catherine Dobbins (Secretary).

Minutes of previous meeting and matters arising

The minutes were agreed and these will be published on the website.

The Chairman welcomed the Board and provided an overview of his background. The Board noted that the CEO is resigning from the end of June 2018 and that the recruitment process for a replacement CEO will commence shortly.

Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

CEO's Report for the Board

Operational Report

The Board noted the operational report which had been circulated.

The CEO informed the Board that the level and volume of work is continuing to be high. The CEO discussed some of the initiatives contained in the operational report including the International Organisations' Career Development Roundtable (CDR) held in December which included a PAS hosted event for EPSO and highly successful careers fair. The careers fair proved particularly successful in getting graduates to engage with publicjobs.ie. Based on PAS experience of that event it is now proposed that PAS would run its own public service careers fairs (potentially in Dublin, Cork, Limerick and Galway).

The event PAS ran for International Women's Day was also discussed and the high calibre of speakers and content were noted. It was agreed that in advance of the 2019 event that consideration would be given to the level of the audience.

The CEO provided an update on strategic projects underway in PAS including the rollout of the e-learning training to board members and the successful follow-up workshops being held. The Board agreed that this training would offer assurance to candidates and the CPSC as to the professionalism of PAS boards. Other initiatives such as the use of a robot and the pilot use of artificial intelligence to aid short listing were welcomed. The successful pilot of remote proctoring and the use of video interviewing as an alternative to paper-based short listing were also discussed. The huge progress PAS is making in relation to these types of innovative approaches was acknowledged and it was agreed that PAS would consider opportunities to showcase some of these initiatives, while having regard to the caution expressed in terms of some internal customers.

The CEO gave a presentation to the board on key data which was recently shared with the Civil Service Management Board. It was agreed that even 70% accuracy in civil service workforce planning would greatly assist PAS in achieving effective recruitment planning. It was agreed that this presentation would also be made to the Corporate Assistant Secretary group. The CEO informed the Board that PAS is meeting each Secretary General on a one-to-one basis in relation to their organisation's forecasted recruitment needs as compared to actual requests.

The Board noted that PAS is at capacity in terms of interview rooms and space for staff. It was recognised that there are benefits to having all interviews on site in terms of control but it was agreed that alternatives would be considered where there continues to be capacity issues. The new “Autism Friendly” interview room was welcomed.

Risk Management

The Board noted the ongoing equality cases and the High Court case (where a motion to dismiss has been entered). The CEO informed the board that analysis of the data for these competitions shows no evidence of discrimination in any of the equality cases, and to date, PAS has been successful in defending these types of cases. The Board welcomed the briefing of selection boards on equality of opportunity and the reinforcement of this at selection board member workshops.

The Board discussed the paper on the key risk of cyber security and noted the increased mitigations in place. It was agreed that the risk of board members releasing data would be reviewed and actions taken where necessary on an ongoing basis.

Financial Position

The Board noted the financial reports for 2017 and 2018 to date. It was noted that PAS received a supplementary in 2017 due to underfunding for activity levels. It was noted that expenditure to date on all subheads is ahead of the vote which is all activity driven. This will be discussed in detail at the next meeting.

Internal Audit Update

The Board noted the draft minutes of the last two Internal Audit Committee meetings on 1st December and 20th February. The Board noted the Audit Reports on Accounting and Reporting and Appointments to State Boards.

Risk Management

The Board noted Corporate Risk Register (noting the highest rated risks in red) and the Risk Management Business Plan. A discussion was held as to how PAS determines what non-core work to undertake. The need to finalise the development of a Best Practice Guide for clients where PAS cannot undertake their work was highlighted. The Board noted that the Recruitment and Selection Toolkit would be available on the new publicjobs.ie (which is due to be launched shortly).

The mitigations in relation to the risk around data protection were noted. It was agreed that this issue would be highlighted to board members at the board member workshops.

The Board recommended that the senior management team hold a risk management session on the potential risks facing PAS without reference to the current Corporate Risk Register.

The Board suggested bringing in other managers from PAS to discuss key risks for which they have responsibility.

Presentation of the Internal Audit Annual Report

The Chairman presented the Internal Audit Annual Report to the Board (due to his previous role as Chair of the Internal Audit Committee). The Chairman stated that the Internal Audit Committee was satisfied that PAS act on all recommendations and that the Internal Audit function provided excellent support to the committee.

Any Other Business

The Board acknowledged the passing of Mr. Frank Murray and recognised the significant role he played in the establishment of PAS, and as first Chairman of the Board. The CEO agreed to express condolences to Mrs. Murray and her family on behalf of the CEO and the Board.

Next Meeting

TBA. It was agreed that the Board would meet at 9am where possible.