

Minutes of eighty-first meeting of the Board of the Public Appointments Service held in Chapter House, at 2.00pm on 17th April 2019

Present: Mr. Tom Moran (Chairman), Ms. Anne-Marie Taylor, Ms. Shirley Comerford, Mr. John O'Callaghan, Dr. Eddie Molloy, Ms. Mary Connaughton, Ms. Rosarii Mannion, Mr. David Cagney, Ms. Catherine Dobbins (Secretary).

Apologies: Mr. Paul Lemass.

The Board met without the executive present in advance of the official meeting commencing. The Chairman will lead a discussion on potential actions arising from this meeting at a later Board meeting.

Minutes of previous meeting and matters arising

The minutes were agreed (with one amendment) and these will be published on the website.

Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

CEO's Report for the Board and Operational Report

The Board noted the Operational Activity Report which has been circulated in advance of the meeting.

The CEO gave a presentation to the Board on a number of key areas as part of the CEO's Report for the Board. This included an update on the pilots of the new CO model, the involvement of clients in this process, and the positive feedback received from those clients. The next such event is scheduled to take place on 18th May and the Board noted the level of risk assessment conducted in advance of such an event and any major process change. The Board noted that the trigger to run such events would depend on the number of vacancies and agreed that there is an ongoing need for clients to engage more proactively with the workforce planning process to ensure PAS is made aware of likely demands in a timely manner to ensure that PAS can respond to those demands appropriately. It was noted that PAS intends to evaluate this new approach in the Autumn, including the additional resource demands it imposes, and will consider the case for an external evaluation in 2020. The Board discussed potential ways of ensuring quality, including tracking appointees from this process through probation centrally (if considered possible by D/PER). It was agreed that this new approach would form the basis for a paper, with feedback being used as part of a continuous improvement cycle.

The plans for PAS to review the model used for graduate recruitment in terms of increased client involvement in the process and the application of new ways of thinking to that process, was welcomed.

The CEO updated the Board on the strategy development timelines and the proposed process to be used. It was agreed that PAS is committed to progressively strengthening all aspects of its strategic management process.

The CEO provided an update to the Board on medical consultant recruitment and the concerns raised by PAS with the HSE and D/Health in relation to the proposed pilot approach to be adopted by the HSE in some areas. The CEO agreed to continue discussions with both parties in order to get more clarity and to communicate the concerns of PAS in relation to this proposal, including the potential reputational risk to PAS.

Risk Management

The Board noted the update provided as part of the CEO's Report on the key risk theme of Brexit.

Financial Position

The Board noted the financial position to date in 2019.

Internal Audit Update

The Board noted the report on IT Security and Business Continuity Infrastructure and agreed that it was a comprehensive report and that PAS had agreed to action all recommendations.

Presentation of the Annual Report from the Audit Committee

The Chair of the Audit Committee (Ms. Clare McGrath) presented the draft Annual Report of the Audit Committee. She stated that some minor amendments to this report will be agreed at the next Audit Committee meeting but there are no material changes. Ms. McGrath informed the Board that there is very positive management engagement with audit recommendations and that the implementation of recommendations is managed and reported on, with a single owner now in place for all recommendations and clear timelines for implementation. Ms. McGrath provided assurance to the Board on the systems in place and the co-operation received by the Committee to date. It was agreed that an alternative Board nominee would be sought for the Audit Committee to ensure that a Board nominee can attend all audit committee meetings.

Report on request from An Garda Síochána

Padriag Love made a presentation to the Board on a report he prepared for PAS following a request from An Garda Síochána for additional service from PAS. He highlighted the three areas where assistance is required from PAS and the proposed model to be used. He outlined the approach to costing the additional input from PAS in terms of staffing and operational costs and the potential risks involved. It was agreed that responding positively to the request would potentially be in the public interest but there would be a need to get assurance in relation to additional funding and to act on the basis of a memorandum of understanding which would ensure the role of PAS is fully agreed and all possible risks to PAS reputation mitigated. It was agreed to appoint a project manager to this project and to keep the Board informed of developments.

ChapterHouse Development and Accommodation Issues

The CEO provided an update on Chapter House Development and other accommodation issues and the potential risks to PAS. OPW are to provide potential solutions to PAS and the CEO is engaging with them in this regard. The paper circulated in advance was noted. OPW representatives due to attend the meeting were unable to attend due to the meeting running late. The CEO and Chairperson agreed to meet the OPW representatives at a later date to discuss potential solutions to reduce the risk of service disruptions in PAS, and to

express the concerns of the Board in relation to potential impacts on PAS business of major development work required in PAS and the external development underway adjacent to PAS.

Corporate Business Plan

The Corporate Business Plan circulated in advance of the meeting was discussed. It was agreed that there would be an update on the KPI project at the next meeting and that consideration would be given to ensuring clear personal and corporate accountability in the new Strategy.

Corporate Risk Register

It was agreed that PAS should incorporate all of the potential risks posed by third parties (e.g. board members) as appropriate in the risks included in the corporate risk register. It was also agreed that the lack of systemic workforce planning and the impact of this on PAS should be incorporated into the relevant risks in the Corporate Risk Register. It was agreed to include potentially inefficient processes in PAS as part of the delivery risk. It was agreed to review the net score for risk number 3. It was also agreed that PAS would continue to conduct scenario planning in relation to the potential risk of clients carrying out their own recruitment on a significant scale.

The Board agreed that a potentially significant risk reacted to third parties (e.g. board members) in relation to high quality interviewing and high levels of data security. It was agreed that the Board would get a presentation on this area at the next meeting to include mitigations in place.

D/PER Governance Arrangements and Role of the PAS Board

The Board acknowledged the corporate governance arrangements in place between D/PER and PAS.

The Board agreed the majority of the changes suggested by the Management Board. Under the area of "CEO: Manner of Appointment!", it was agreed that reiterating that the CEO is the licence holder and Accounting Officer for PAS was sufficient, in addition to the fact that the CEO is appointed by the Minister.

Board Evaluation Update

The Chairman discussed the Board evaluation process and agreed to focus on areas for improvement to be discussed at a subsequent Board meeting. It was agreed that the summary of responses be circulated to the Board.

PAS Annual Report

It was agreed that the Board would revert with any feedback over the next two weeks.

Next meeting

12th June at 2pm.