

Minutes of sixty-fourth meeting of the Board of the Public Appointments Service held in Chapter House, 26-30 Abbey Street Upper, Dublin 1, at 11am on 23rd February 2016

Present: Ms. Judith Eve (Chairman), Ms. Fiona Tierney, Dr. Eddie Molloy, Ms. Anne-Marie Taylor, Ms. Oonagh McPhillips, Mr. David Cagney, Ms. Catherine Dobbins (Secretary).

Apologies: Mr. Damien McCallion, Ms. Eimear Kenny, Mr. Paul Lemass.

Minutes of previous meeting and matters arising

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

Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

CEO's Report for the Board

Operational Report and Risk Management

The CEO thanked the Board for agreeing to the change of date for the meeting due to her attendance at a development programme, which is proving to be very valuable in relation to corporate governance.

The CEO discussed the operational report and highlighted certain issues for the Board. The Board discussed the volume and range of activity and the existing resource constraints (including budget and space). The CEO provided an update on senior executive recruitment, professional and technical (including the series of LAC campaigns) and administrative recruitment (including plans for a HEO and new CO campaign). An update was also provided on the Garda Trainee campaign and it was confirmed that all targets had been met for the previous campaign.

The CEO stated that the State Boards process is working well, with good feedback received. The Board welcomed the continued awareness raising around State Boards and the work on making the application process and database more user friendly. The Board noted that the Terms of Reference for the review of the State Boards process are currently being drafted.

The CEO discussed how PAS is attempting to manage its diverse stakeholder pool, including engagement across the system. Consideration is being given to service level agreement structures and the development of revised service standards specific to the particular recruitment process or recruitment need. The Board welcomed the increased involvement by PAS with the central strategic HR agenda and welcomed the plans for PAS to receive greater feedback from the workforce planning process.

The CEO updated the Board on the proposed new organisation design to meet the varying demands of clients, with an increased demand for specialist professional and technical roles in addition to the demands for a variety of administrative roles (facilitated through large volume recruitment campaigns). The Board welcomed the appointment of a new Principal Officer who will focus on front of house, operational management, client relations management and State Boards. This will allow one of the existing POs to focus on governance and assurance and meeting the various compliance obligations of PAS.

The Board discussed the performance of PAS in the Civil Service Employee Engagement Survey and welcomed the high level of staff engagement and retention. The CEO updated the Board on the recent visit by the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform, including the update provided to him on the PAS approach to testing.

The CEO updated the Board on the work being carried out on the STAR recruitment platform and the project now underway. An update was also provided on the paperless boards model (and the new provider procured for these services).

The Board noted that there were no major governance or risk related issues during this period. The Board agreed to have a further governance session and tour of the office now that the new board members are in place.

The CEO made a presentation to the Board on key outcomes and key strategic developments in PAS in 2015. The Board discussed the preparation of a business case for additional resources for PAS in order to deliver on the wide range of demands from clients. The CEO also updated the Board on the current position with the building lease and the ongoing engagement with OPW to get back the space loaned to D/Justice, in order to deal with increased demands for space to accommodate additional staff and a major testing programme. The Board also discussed the proposed new approach to client relations management.

Financial Position

The Board noted the Financial Report and the level of expenditure to date.

Internal Audit Update

The Board noted the draft minutes of the last audit committee meeting. The CEO updated the Board on the procurement of the outsourced internal audit services through the OGP Framework. The CEO stated that she will sign off on a letter of assurance in relation to the payroll shared service.

Strategic Business Plan for 2016

The Board discussed the draft Strategic Business Plan and welcomed these range of initiatives aimed at ensuring delivery of all strategic objectives. The Board suggested that a project be included on examining other recruitment models; an update will be provided at every second Board meeting on the progress with these projects.

Risk Management Business Plan for 2016

The Board agreed this annual plan.

Key Strategic Issue – Client Relationship

The Board discussed a key client relationship and the approach to be adopted by PAS in engaging with this client and evaluated the risks involved. It was agreed that PAS should only consider taking on this client if provided with the required resources (including a specific team of approx. ten staff), and assurances that PAS has clear end-to-end responsibility for the recruitment and selection process. The Board expressed the view that this would best be grounded in legislation.

Key Strategic Issue – Values in the Recruitment Process

The Board discussed how public service values are already embedded in PAS competency frameworks and how selection boards are briefed on their application. It was agreed that this would be discussed further at the meeting in June and the Board would consider in advance whether there is anything else PAS can do in this area

Next Meeting

22nd April at 11am