

NICS Board Meeting
Executive Room, Stormont Castle
Friday 24 September 2021
Draft Minutes

Board Members	
Jayne Brady (Chair)	Mark Browne
Denis McMahon	Hugh Widdis
Alex Gordon	Mike Brennan
Peter May	
Katrina Godfrey	Moira Doherty
Colum Boyle	Richard Pengelly
Anthony Harbinson	
In attendance	
Jill Minne	Karen Pearson
Tom Reid	Jane Holmes
David Hughes (For Agenda item 1 only)	
Hannah Cavalleros (Secretary)	Mairead Rooney (Secretariat)

1. Raising a Concern Policy & Speak up Champions

Colum Boyle and David Hughes provided an overview of the paper provided to support the proposal to work towards a single high level policy for the NICS on addressing concerns raised and appoint speak-up champions in support of the policy.

Following discussion around a range of issues including the need for a clear definition of “a concern”, It was agreed that some further refinement was required. Jayne highlighted the importance of a communication and engagement strategy around the policy. It was agreed that Colum will engage with the GD3 group on the draft policy and provide an update at a future Board meeting.

[Action Colum Boyle]

Board members expressed their appreciation to Colum and David.

2. (a) Apologies

Apologies were received from Tracy Meharg. Moira Doherty attended in place of Tracy Meharg.

(b) Minutes of the meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 20 August were agreed.

(c) Matters arising

Updates were noted as follows:-

- Discussion on SCS moves/development to be scheduled for an October meeting of PSS.

[Action: HOCS Office]

- A discussion on Conflicts of Interest guidance to be scheduled for consideration at a future PSS meeting.

[Action: Colum Boyle/HOCS Office]

(d) Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

3. Brexit Update

Tom Reid provided an update on the publication of the UK Command paper and other related issues.

4. Covid Recovery - Consolidated Covid-19 Recovery Plan -Oversight Arrangements – Discussion Paper

Karen Pearson provided Board members with an overview of the paper on the implementation and oversight of the Building Forward: Consolidated Covid-19 Recovery Plan.

She advised that following discussion at the PSS meeting on 3 September, the Covid Recovery Team had held a number of workshops with NICS departments to identify those interventions that will impact over the next 6 months, demonstrate a collaborative approach to delivery of the Interventions and are cross cutting in nature.

The interventions fall under the following themes:-

- Sustainable Economic Development
- Green Growth and Sustainability
- Health of the Population; and
- Tackling Inequalities

Karen advised that in terms of oversight and reporting arrangements, Permanent Secretaries had previously endorsed the establishment of an oversight group with membership at Grade 3 level from all departments. The draft TOR for the group were considered and agreed, subject to some amendments, to incorporate the group's role to drive the implementation of the recovery plan.

Discussion took place around a range of related issues, including alignment of the recovery plan with the draft PfG, the significant budget implications of the recovery plan and the need to ensure inclusion of the recovery plan in the Executives Budget discussion on the 6th October.

Karen Pearson also provided an update on officials' appearance at a meeting of the Executive Office Committee on 22 September when an update on the COVID-19 recovery plan was provided.

Jayne Brady proposed and it was agreed to include recovery and the upcoming 3 year Spending Review as an agenda item for PSS on 1 October. A meeting

with Jayne Brady, Colum Boyle and DoF officials will be scheduled on the budgetary process in advance of the next PSS meeting.

**[Action: Colum Boyle/
HOCS Office]**

5. (a) Strategic HR Report

Jill Minne provided an update on key issues within the Strategic HR Report.

Board members noted the paper and agreed that NICS HR should conduct a full review of the NICS Special Leave Policy.

6. NICS Board ToR

Jayne Brady presented the paper on the draft Terms of Reference and invited comments from Board members.

There followed a general discussion. It was agreed that members would provide any further feedback to Jayne, to allow for an updated paper to be circulated and included for discussion at the PSS meeting on 1 October.

[Action: All/ HOCS Office]

7. Date of Next Meeting

It was noted that PSS is due to meet on 1 October, the date of the next Board meeting will be confirmed in due course.