

NICS Board Meeting
Hydebank Wood
Tuesday 23 May 2023 @ 9.30am
Minutes

Board Members

Jayne Brady (Chair)
Frances Ruane (NEM)
Laura McKeaveney (NEM)
Richard Pengelly
Hugh Widdis
Katrina Godfrey
Peter May
Mike Brennan

Patrick Magee (NEM)
Colum Boyle
Mark Browne
Julie Harrison
Denis McMahon
Ian Snowden (for Neil Gibson)
Jill Minne

In Attendance

Jayne Byrne
Richard Johnston
Emer Morelli

Tony Simpson
Aidan McMahon
Pamela Carson (minutes)

1. Welcome, apologies and declarations of interest

The Board recorded its thanks to Governor Richard Taylor for the welcome to Hydebank Wood.

Apologies were received from Alex Gordon and Neil Gibson.

No declaration of interest received.

2. Draft minutes and update on action points from 28 March 2023

Minutes of the meeting of 28 March 2023 were approved, but it was queried whether the minutes should in future contain greater depth.

It was agreed that members of the Board would meet to consider best practice record keeping and report to the September meeting. R Pengelly, P Magee, N Gibson and C Stewart to take forward supported by J Byrne.

P Grocott to attend a Permanent Secretaries Stocktake to provide an update on engagement with the US Special Economic Envoy to Northern Ireland.

Action: HOCS Office

Agenda item	Actions	Responsible officer	Status @ 02.05.23
4. Preparing for a New Mandate	Prepare a paper for consideration on engagement with EU already in place.	R Johnston to co-ordinate	Paper circulated
	Circulate details of meetings held in DC during St Patrick's week.	HoCS	Complete
	Review financial figures presented by N Gibson and advise of any discrepancies.	All	Complete
	Follow up with NIO on timeline for announcement of the budget and immediate issues requiring decision.	HoCS	Complete
	Develop a paper to meet NIOs request for information on transformation and fiscal sustainability (response to NIO letter of 24.3.23)	N Gibson with input from Perm Secs	Complete
	Budget update session with Parties entitled to form an Executive to be arranged to which all Perm Secs will attend.	HoCS office	Complete
6. NICS Pay Award	To provide feedback to the NIO/SoS on the comments raised by the TUS.	HoCS	Complete
	Follow up with the ESRI and CSO regarding occupational wage benchmarking	R Johnston	Sourced & shared with NICSHR
	To get an update from Civil Contingencies on future Industrial action for circulation to Departments.	J Byrne	Completed
7. Draft Board Work Programme	Provide feedback on draft.	All	Completed
8. AOB	Comms piece to be recorded for circulation to staff on appointment of NEMs, US Visit and budget position.	HoCS	Completed
	Consideration to be given to an update note being circulated to all staff following Board meetings.	All	Ongoing

3. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

4. Renewal – Deep Dive

The Renewal team provided an update on the developments to the NICS Renewal Strategic Framework and Action Plan. It was noted that the documents were still in draft and had been shared but not agreed with Non-Executive Members, Delivery Leads and Portfolio Board. The request from the Renewal Team was that the original design phase of the project be extended, which was agreed by the Board.

In discussions on the Renewal programme the following points were brought out:

- It was felt that the Programme Structure and Governance was not as fully developed as would be desirable, and clearer definition of these structures including clarity on SRO / workstream leads would be helpful, it would also be helpful to see a mapping of actions proposed by prior studies that would be addressed by Renewal.
- A number of comments were received on whether the “well led” theme may be capable of misinterpretation and it was agreed that this should be revisited in the extended design phase.
- More work was required to bring out the outcomes / delivery focus of the NICS and the benefits that NI citizens were benefitting from.
- As Renewal progressed it was felt that the project should become more data led and HR / employee dashboards should become more regularly available to the NICS Board.
- Whilst there was general support for the programme there were calls for it to be more aspirational and more focused on the collaborative nature of the work across the NICS.
- Greater transparency on HR related matters was requested, which could be effected by the production of a HR dashboard to the Board on a regular basis.

An outlook of the planned developments for the next 3 months was outlined including identifying the affordable and feasible in the current budgetary position; Developing a wider change management/engagement plan; and the interim governance structure.

Following discussions, the Board agreed the direction of travel proposed with further engagement and communication over the next 3 months.

It was agreed that the mapping of actions from various reports, including RHI, Capability and Capacity etc, should be circulated.

(Action: Renewal Team)

5. Transformation

DoF officials presented a proposed framework for stabilization, effective and stable government, transformation and PfG, outlining the current position and a suggested direction towards sustainable devolution, to be discussed with political parties. The Board reviewed in detail the presentation to be used in these discussions and a significant number of modifications were suggested which the drafting team agreed

to take on Board and prepare a revised paper for the HoCS and colleagues to use in the next stage of discussions.

Following discussions, the Board noted the ongoing work by officials across departments and agreed the working team and the HOCS should amend the paper ahead of the upcoming meeting with the parties. The Board commended the work and agreed to support to aid the upcoming discussions.

6. Update on progress on the PWC External Review Action Plan

The Board noted the update on progress in implementing the actions set out in the NICS response to the Independent External Review, and that system wide lessons identified were being implemented and embedded.

7. AOB

The Board noted the next meeting in July.

The Board noted the Work Programme and a request was made for a HR dashboard to be provided to the meetings going forward.

(Action: NICSHR)

8. Date & Venue of Next Meeting

The next meeting will be **Tuesday 25 July 2023 @ 9.30am.**
Venue: TBA

The meeting concluded with a tour of Hydebank Wood College.