

Minutes of Advisory Board meeting held on Wednesday 13 October 2021 at 10am

Members present: Martin Pitt (Chair)
Noel Hyndman
Marie Mallon
John Turkington
Kieran Donnelly, Comptroller and Auditor General
Rodney Allen, Chief Operating Officer

In attendance: Suzanne Walsh (Director) Agenda item 4
Louise Donnelly (Board Secretary)

<p>The Chair welcomed members to the meeting.</p>
<p>1. Apologies No apologies were noted.</p>
<p>2. Declaration of Conflicts of Interest There were no issues declared by Committee members or attendees.</p>
<p>3. Minutes of Meeting The Chair noted the minutes of the meeting held on 18 May 2021 were agreed by all parties concerned. The Matters Arising from the meeting were also noted as having been actioned.</p>
<p>4. Report from meeting of Audit and Risk Assurance Committee (ARAC) Noel Hyndman provided an update to members on the ARAC meeting held on 21 September 2021 noting specifically the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A workshop session for ARAC members has been scheduled for 18 October 2021 on the subject of risk appetite and risk management.• The newly appointed Internal Auditor, Ian McCartney (RSM) was welcomed to his first ARAC meeting.• A discussion on IT Security resulted from a paper provided by Brian O'Neill to brief members on the recent Cyber Security review.
<p>5. Report from meeting of Remuneration Committee Marie Mallon provided an update members on the Remuneration Committee held on 1 September 2021 noting specifically the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• After careful consideration members with much regret felt unable to proceed with 1.8% pay increase and agreed to a proposal of implementing a 1% pay increase across all grades backdated to 1 April 2021. This recommendation was made to the C&AG. The Committee expressed thanks to Orla Kee, Brian O'Neill and Rodney Allen for their hard work in maintaining good relations and communications with TUS during this challenging time.• Members considered and agreed to an allowance proposed for the role of Local Government Auditor.
<p>6. Investors in People (IIP) Rodney Allen briefed members on the IIP accreditation process to date and was pleased to announce the Office had successfully achieved accreditation as a Developed organisation.</p> <p>Members were provided with a summary of the IIP report providing details on achievements to date and guidance on what work is required to continue to progress and perform better.</p>

Members noted the content of the report and offered congratulations on the status achieved. After discussion on the proposed next steps and onward progression through the accreditation process members endorsed the proposals made. Members noted the importance of further development in any healthy, learning and growing organisation and that accreditations and standards can be helpful in measuring progress.

7. Succession Planning

Rodney Allen advised he had written to the Chairman of the NI Assembly Audit Committee (NIA AC) on 22 September 2021 and that his letter had been considered by NIA AC at their meeting on 29 September 2021. Following this meeting a letter dated 30 September was received from the Clerk of NIA AC, a response to this letter is currently being drafted.

Members noted the position to date, Rodney Allen agreed to keep members updated.

8. Refurbishment Project

Rodney Allen updated members on the following key areas:

- The aims of the project;
- The driving force for the project;
- The procurement/delivery status; and
- The strategic risk management.

The Board noted the current status of the project and took assurance from the ongoing risk management and review procedures in place.

9. Quality Control Arrangements

Suzanne Walsh joined the meeting and briefed members on the quality control review arrangements currently in place and explained the rationale behind proposed changes to further enhance the independence of reviews using an external organisation.

Following discussion the Board endorsed the report to proceed with reviews being undertaken wholly by an external organisation and suggested consideration could therefore be given to reducing the number of reviews undertaken annually. The matter would be further considered by the senior management team and the Board will be updated accordingly.

10. ECNI – Section 75 Statutory Equality and Good Relations Duties Acting on the evidence of public authority practices

Members welcomed the paper provided and noted the content.

11. Date of Next meeting

Board effectiveness workshop scheduled for 18 October 2021 followed by main Board meeting on 8 February 2022.