

**MINUTES OF THE 414th MEETING OF THE LABOUR RELATIONS AGENCY BOARD HELD AT
10.30 am ON THURSDAY, 25th FEBRUARY 2016
IN THE BOARDROOM, ASSEMBLY BUILDINGS, FISHERWICH PLACE, BELFAST**

Present: Marie Mallon (Chair)
Louise Crilly
Deirdre Fitzpatrick
Michelle McGinley
Gary McMichael
Alison Millar
Albert Mills
Jill Minne
Daire Murphy

In Attendance: Tom Evans Chief Executive, (CEO)
Gerry O'Neill (Director, Corporate Services, (DCS)
David McGrath (Director, Advisory Services) (DAS)
Alison Wolfe (Minutes Secretary)

Action

	Action
<p>1. Apologies</p> <p>Apologies were received from Pauline Shepherd and Penny Holloway.</p>	
<p>2. Conflicts of Interest</p> <p>There were no interests declared.</p>	
<p>3. Chair's Opening Remarks</p> <p>The Chair explained that in advance of the business planning workshop there would be a formal Board meeting to deal with two specific items of business; to consider an update on budget performance and to agree a timeline for the production of the Annual Report and Accounts.</p> <p>The Chair referred to the earlier induction session for new Board members which individual members found helpful.</p>	

<p>4. Budget Performance to end January 2016 (Paper 22/15 – updated)</p> <p>The DCS introduced the paper setting out the budget performance position at the end of January 2016 indicating a potential 2.7% revenue underspend due to the measures taken to plan for a potential in year budget reduction primarily through not filling a number of staff vacancies. The Board noted that DEL have now agreed that the Agency can initiate recruitment competitions but that staff will not be in post until the next financial year.</p> <p>On the capital front refurbishment work is underway on the public facing areas of the Gordon Street premises along with updates to computing and telephony systems and an upgrade to the Regional Office network.</p> <p>The Agency is still awaiting approval of the pay remit before implementing the recent pay settlement. The CEO advised that the Agency has not received official confirmation of the budget allocation for 2016/17; but that the Minister had indicated verbally at a recent meeting to discuss the Employment Bill that the Agency's budget would not be cut given the increased emphasis on the Agency's dispute resolution services with the potential introduction of Early Conciliation.</p> <p>The DCS outlined the timeline for the production of the Annual Report and Accounts indicating that a draft copy should be available for the Auditors to commence their work on 9 May.</p> <p>After a short discussion the Board agreed that the public Board meeting should be held in October 2016 to present the Annual Report & Accounts.</p> <p>The Chair, on behalf of the Board, expressed appreciation to the Senior Management Team and Finance section for their work on the accounts. The CEO referred to the very proactive role played by NIPSA Branch 28 who met regularly with Management to discuss the budget position.</p>	<p>CEO/DCS</p> <p>Secretary</p>
<p>5. Employment Bill</p> <p>The CEO reported that the Employment Bill had now passed through Further Consideration Stage with final stage scheduled for 1 March 2016; with the clauses dealing with Early Conciliation being endorsed. The CEO also reported that the legislation included enabling provisions relating to Neutral Assessment and Zero Hours contracts.</p> <p>The CEO agreed to inform Board members when the legislation has received Royal Assent.</p>	<p>CEO</p>
<p>6. Date of Next Meeting</p> <p>The next meeting of the Agency Board will take place on Thursday, 28th April 2016 at 10.00am in the Agency's offices, Gordon Street, Belfast.</p>	<p>Secretariat</p>