


**MINUTES OF THE 446<sup>th</sup> MEETING OF THE LABOUR RELATIONS AGENCY BOARD HELD AT  
10.00 am ON THURSDAY, 27 JUNE 2019  
IN THE AGENCY'S OFFICES 2-16 GORDON STREET, BELFAST**

<b>Present:</b>	Marie Mallon (Chair) Louise Crilly (10.55 am) Deirdre Fitzpatrick Michelle McGinley Albert Mills Jill Minne														
<b>In Attendance:</b>	<table border="0"> <tr> <td>Tom Evans</td> <td>Chief Executive, (CEO)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Don Leeson</td> <td>Director, Corporate Services (DCS)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Alison Wolfe</td> <td>Minute Secretary</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Avril Alexander</td> <td>Employment Relations Manager</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Mary O'Brien</td> <td>Employment Relations Manager</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Paul Herink</td> <td>IT Manager</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Paul Lowe</td> <td>Employment Relations Manager (EC Project Manager)</td> </tr> </table>	Tom Evans	Chief Executive, (CEO)	Don Leeson	Director, Corporate Services (DCS)	Alison Wolfe	Minute Secretary	Avril Alexander	Employment Relations Manager	Mary O'Brien	Employment Relations Manager	Paul Herink	IT Manager	Paul Lowe	Employment Relations Manager (EC Project Manager)
Tom Evans	Chief Executive, (CEO)														
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	<b>Action</b>
<p><b>1. Apologies</b></p> <p>Apologies received from Gary McMichael, Alison Millar, Daire Murphy, Pauline Shepherd, and Mark McAllister.</p>	
<p><b>2. Conflicts of Interest</b></p> <p>No conflicts of interest declared.</p>	
<p><b>3. Presentation on Early Conciliation</b></p> <p>The Chair welcomed Paul Lowe, Mary O'Brien, Avril Alexander and Paul Herink, in attendance to outline preparations for EC.</p> <p>The CEO introduced the presentation indicating that at the recent Department oversight meeting Colin Lewis emphasised the critical importance of the EC project, a key target in the DfE Business Plan. Following the presentation Board members sought clarification on a number of issues and agreed that a detailed paper on communications should come to the August Board meeting.</p> <p>The Chair commended the quality of the presentation, which provided significant assurance that the project is on track for a January 2020 start. The Chair also thanked Board members for their input.</p>	<b>Keelin Kelly</b>
<p><b>4. Chair's Opening Remarks</b></p> <p>The Chair reported that Pauline Shepherd has not accepted the offer to extend her term of office. The Board formally recorded their appreciation of Pauline's significant contribution to the work of the Board; the Chair agreed to write to Pauline.</p>	<b>Chair</b>

<p>The Chair expressed her concern about the emerging difficulty in achieving a quorum for recent meetings. She recognised the challenges faced by Board members who have other commitments. Agreed that the schedule of Board meetings should issue to Board members and, where necessary, individual meetings will be re-arranged. The Board also agreed to examine the possibility of reducing the quorum for meetings from 6 to 5, which will require an amendment to Standing Orders.</p> <p>The Chair emphasised the importance of the June Board meeting which deals with a number of end-year business-critical issues. The Chair acknowledged that the ARAC has already done much of the 'heavy lifting' on behalf of the Board in terms of considering the Annual Report and Accounts and the Corporate Risk Register.</p> <p>Board member appraisal meetings are now complete; forms to issue for comment and signature. Agreed to discuss the revised Board Learning and Development Plan and the focus of the next Board workshop at the August Board meeting.</p> <p>The Chair informed members of the sad news that Ricky O'Rawe, who had facilitated the March 2017 Board workshop, had died.</p> <p>Louise Crilly agreed to be the named Board contact on the Whistleblowing Policy.</p> <p>The Chair advised of the need to replace Jill Minne on the Finance &amp; Personnel Committee. Gary McMichael has indicated that he would be willing to serve on both the ARAC and Finance &amp; Personnel Committees; however, there is a need to determine whether Standing Orders allows a Board member to serve on both committees.</p> <p>The Chair advised Board members of the appointment of a Boardroom Apprentice for 2019/20. The Chair will be meeting with Gráinne Ni Cheallaigh in advance of her attendance at the September Board meeting. Grainne has already availed of the opportunity to attend the joint meeting with WRC.</p> <p>The Chair then highlighted the key issues for discussion at today's meeting.</p>	<p><b>Secretary</b> <b>CEO/DCS</b></p> <p><b>Chair</b></p> <p><b>DCS</b></p> <p><b>Chair/DCS</b></p> <p><b>Chair</b></p>
<p><b>5. Minutes of 9 May 2019 Board Meeting (Paper BP01-06/19)</b></p> <p>The minutes of the meeting held on 9 May 2019 agreed as a true and accurate record of the meeting.</p>	<p><b>Secretary</b></p>
<p><b>6. Matters arising from the Minutes of 9 May 2019 Board meeting (Paper BP02-06/19)</b></p> <p>The DCS introduced the Board Actions Progress Report.</p> <p>The Board noted the paper.</p>	
<p><b>7. Chief Executive's Update</b></p> <p>The CEO highlighted the following issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interviews for the ERO internal competition will be held w/c 1 July 2019;</li> </ul>	<p><b>DCS</b></p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A member of the Business Support Team retiring at the end of July;</li> <li>• Paul Lowe, Head of HR, transferring to the frontline services in August. Paul will be replaced by Claire Kilpatrick and the next successful candidate on the ERM reserve list on a job-share basis;</li> <li>• The CEO attended an event in the House of Commons on 15 May, hosted by the Carnegie Trust. CEO visiting Carnegie Trust along with the DERS on 27 August 2019;</li> <li>• The Chair and CEO also meeting Aideen McGinley, Carnegie Trustee, on 23 August;</li> <li>• The CEO reported on the very positive feedback from staff participating in the Leadership Development Programme delivered by the Clinton Institute;</li> <li>• Staff Conference will take place on Wednesday, 9 October 2019. The theme will be 'Celebrating Success'. Judith Gillespie has agreed to speak at the conference and the CEO is meeting Gordon Parkes to discuss his availability;</li> <li>• The 2018-19 pay award will be processed in the July salaries;</li> <li>• The CEO and DCS attended a very positive oversight meeting with DfE. The meeting was attended by Colin Lewis (new Grade 3);</li> <li>• Joint LRA/WRC meeting – Michelle McGinley reported that the meeting provided helpful pointers for sharing and learning between the two Boards; the meeting was ably chaired by Alison Millar. The CEO reported that a number of themes (enhanced use of technology, measuring impact of service delivery and managing change) identified as suitable for joint working. The CEO will follow up with Acas and WRC;</li> <li>• Charities Commission decision by the Court of Appeal – the CEO reported that the Agency's current decision making processes are robust, however, DfE is considering the need for legislation;</li> <li>• Holiday Pay Cases – the Agency is reviewing its internal processes for dealing with bulk claims;</li> </ul>	<p>CEO</p> <p>Chair/CEO</p> <p>CEO</p> <p>DCS</p> <p>CEO</p> <p>DERS</p>
<p><b>8. Audit &amp; Risk Assurance Committee</b></p> <p> <b>Annual Report to the Board for 2018-19 (Paper BP03-06/19)</b></p> <p>The Chair of ARAC presented the Committee's Annual Report and provided feedback on the 19 June 2019 meeting. The Chair of ARAC confirmed that the Agency had received satisfactory assurance from both Internal and External Audit and thanked the SMT, the LRA Finance team, Committee members and all others who have contributed to the work of the committee over the reporting period.</p> <p>The Chair thanked the ARAC for their work throughout the year.</p>	

<p><b>9. Annual Report &amp; Accounts for 2018-19, including the draft Report to Those Charged with Governance (Paper BP05-06/19)</b></p> <p>The DCS presented the NIAO'S Report to Those Charged with Governance and the draft 2018-19 Annual Report and Accounts, confirming that ARAC had reviewed both documents.</p> <p>The Board noted the Report to Those Charged with Governance and approved the draft 2018-19 Annual Report and Accounts. Agreed that the DCS should now liaise with DfE about the laying of the Agency's Annual Report and Accounts.</p> <p>The Chair, on behalf of the Board, thanked all of the staff involved in the preparation of the Annual Report &amp; Accounts.</p>	<p><b>DCS</b></p>
<p><b>10. Corporate Risk Register for 2019-20 (Paper BP06-06/19)</b></p> <p>The DCS highlighted the key changes to the Corporate Risk Register, reviewed by the ARAC at a separate workshop on 1 May 2019 and signed off at the 19 June 2019 ARAC meeting.</p> <p>The Board approved the Corporate Risk Register and thanked the ARAC for their work.</p>	
<p><b>11. Finance &amp; Personnel Committee - Feedback from meeting held on 4 June 2019 (Paper BP07-06/19)</b></p> <p>Albert Mills, Chair of the F&amp;P, presented the Committee's report of the 4 June 2019 meeting. Substantive presentations provided on Finance, HR, Information Systems, Communications Plan and the work of the Business Support team. The Regional Office now moved to new premises in Richmond Chambers; work on staff engagement progressing; a presentation on CSE will be made to a future Board meeting; and the new website now live.</p> <p>The Chair of F&amp;P thanked Jill Minne for her contribution to the work of the Committee; and acknowledged the very considerable efforts of all Agency staff.</p> <p>The Board noted the report.</p> <p>The Chair thanked the members of the F&amp;P Committee for their hard work.</p>	<p><b>DCS</b></p>
<p><b>12. Any Other Business</b></p> <p>Board members were reminded that the liP Assessor, Eddie Salmon, attending the September Board meeting.</p> <p>A session on Board governance will be organised for November. The Board agreed to an external facilitator.</p>	<p><b>BMs</b></p> <p><b>Chair/DCS</b></p>

**13. Date of Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the **Agency Board** will take place on **Thursday, 29 August 2019** at **10.30 am** in the **Agency's Regional Office, Richmond Chambers, The Diamond, Derry/Londonderry (tbc)**.

As a number of Board members tendered apologies for the August meeting; it was agreed to provide options for an alternative date.

**Secretary**

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