

# NORTHERN IRELAND AMBULANCE SERVICE

***Minutes of a Meeting of Trust Board held at 1.30pm on Thursday,  
3 May 2007 in Boardroom, Northern Ireland Ambulance Service,  
Trust Headquarters, Site 30, Knockbracken Healthcare Park,  
Saintfield Road, Belfast, BT8 8SG***

<b>Present:</b>	Mr D Smyth OBE	Chairman
	Mr L McIvor	Chief Executive
	Mr B McNeill	Director of Operations
	Dr D McManus	Medical Director
	Mrs S McCue	Director of Finance
	Ms R O'Hara	Director of Human Resources
	Mr F Hughes	Non Executive Director
	Mrs L Gillespie	Non Executive Director
	Mrs M Greer	Non Executive Director
	Professor R Perrott	Non Executive Director
<b>In Attendance:</b>	Miss A Vitty	Corporate Manager
	Mrs M Crawford	PA to Chief Executive

## **1.0 Apologies**

Mr Seamus Mullan, Non Executive Director.

## **2.0 Welcome and Format of the Meeting**

The Chairman opened the meeting by welcoming members of the public and Trust Board members. He also explained the arrangements for receiving questions from the public attending.

## **3.0 Minutes of Previous Meeting of the Trust Board held on 15 March 2007**

Trust Board members accepted the minutes as a true and accurate record of proceedings.

## **4.0 Matters Arising**

**4.1** No matters arising.

## **5.0 Chairman's Business**

### **5.1 Visit to Ardoyne Ambulance Station**

Members stated that they had a productive visit to Ardoyne Ambulance Station earlier today and found the facilities/vehicles to be extremely well cared for. Location was noted as excellent. Particularly beneficial was a lively exchange with staff who appeared very knowledgeable about the organisation.

The station is well run and congratulations were extended to Mr Andrew Cooper, Divisional Officer and Mrs Fiona McGarey, Station Officer.

### **5.2 Freedom of the City – Armagh City Council**

The Chairman informed members that correspondence has been received from Armagh City Council offering to confer the Freedom of the City to NIAS. A short extract from the correspondence read that – "Council formally passed a resolution to grant the Freedom of the City and District of Armagh to the Northern Ireland Ambulance Service, St John Ambulance and the Order of Malta to acknowledge the services delivered by these organisations throughout the Armagh City and District in providing rapid emergency response and a high standard of patient care to all sections of the community".

Members considered that it was wonderful for the organisation to be recognised in this way and were happy to accept. The date of the event has yet to be determined.

## **6.0 Trust Delivery Plan Monitoring as at 31 March 2007**

The Chief Executive advised that a Performance and Accountability meeting took place with the Service Delivery Unit and Commissioners regarding performance and they were broadly content with progress against the targets set. They acknowledged that objectives set were being met with a number of A1 targets being achieved in both short and long term objectives. Slippage was noted however regarding deployment points development.

Members welcomed the positive nature of the report particularly given the in-year difficulties faced by the Trust.

They also considered that if resources were made available for NIAS's proposals such as alternative care pathways, this would provide a more efficient service. A pilot scheme is running in the West for Paramedic-Administered Thrombolysis and it was reported that staff are very enthusiastic about the scheme.

Further discussions for roll out in paramedic-administered thrombolysis in Northern and Southern Divisions are due to take place with the Department and the ultimate goal for NIAS would be that this is available throughout Northern Ireland.

Hoax calls were discussed and it was noted that there has been 6568 calls this year. It was advised that technology currently in use allows NIAS to identify some hoax calls. Some discussion ensued around whether it would be useful to use the media to highlight this matter but after some deliberation it was agreed that current methods of communicating this problem to the general public were sufficient.

## **7.0 Performance Reporting as at 31 March 2007**

The Chief Executive advised that the Trust were aiming to move towards consolidated reporting with the report provided representing the first stage of the change.

### **Finance**

Director of Finance reported as follows:

Income and Expenditure – Forecasting surplus of £20k.  
Capital Expenditure – Under spend of £30k.

Funding is currently being negotiated for the following:

Delivering Ministerial Priorities 2007/08  
Impact of Acute Services Review  
Pharmacy Review  
Agenda for Change

Final tests for Digital Trunk Radio (DTR) were carried out on 27 March 2007 with the roll-out to A&E fleet scheduled for completion by 31 May 2007. This will allow NIAS to use DTR for both A&E and PCS by the end of August 2007.

An ALERT C3 Patient Care Service (PSC) System will replace the existing PCS system with a fully functional modern hardware system due to go live in June 2007. It is hoped that this IT development will assist with more effective allocation, management and records of activity. Information management monitoring will be carried out against Ministerial priorities and will be presented to Trust Board at future meetings. It was noted that IT staff play a key role in cross-disciplinary project teams and relevant staff are trained in PRINCE methodology.

Risks presenting include the continuing challenge to 'break-even', the difficulty in securing full funds for the Pharmacy review and the recent premature termination of some 999 calls. The latter has been investigated with BT and no patient care has been compromised.

### **Human Resources**

The Director of Human Resources updated members on Human Resource issues and advised that Training Plan is on target. She further advised that a substantial amount of additional training had been carried out including:

Clinical Training – On target except for Paramedic training with a shortfall in the recruitment of Paramedics. Target set was 36 with only 10 trained.

Thrombolysis training has been carried out to compliment pilot scheme in West.

Following restructure of Hospital A&E in the Western Board area, a paediatric refresher course has been provided to all Paramedics and EMT in the Omagh Station to reflect current practices provided by JRCALC guidelines.

Good Relations Training has been provided to all Managers, Trust Board Members and A&E staff.

Service developments and organisational change has also caused additional pressures eg Shared Services Project, Training Plan, Tertiary Level Education, Agenda for Change implementation, Service modernisation and realisation, Good Relations Audit.

## **Operations**

A&E activity up by 11% with a significant increase in the Southern area. It is believed that Out of Hours activity is generating this increase with a lot of patients believing that they will be seen more quickly if they arrive at hospital in an ambulance. This figure is increasing year on year

Chart 1 – A slight improvement noted in response times from April; however members were reminded that a target of 65% (average) is to be achieved by March 2008.

Chart 2 – The western division shows a decrease of 2% which is due to a lot of out of hours transfers and cover must be provided from another area.

Members were further updated on the following items.

Category A Performance – 65% average is the overall target with 70% by year-end. Creating change in how we do business is ongoing and Divisional and Senior Managers are supportive in what is required. Key measures include: Appointment of new staff ie Ambulance Service Area Managers (3). Development in use of information. Sharing good practice with local solutions for local problems. Using Officers in marked cars for First Responders. PCS being used more efficiently with staff being trained in AED (defibrillation) for transportation of cardiac patients. Goal for NIAS is to have a paramedic in every A&E vehicle.

Members commented that the changes in A&E services are resulting in longer journey times, which impacts on the prioritisation of urgent cases. It was considered that Alternative Care Pathways would be useful in delivering a more effective service.

## **Emergency Planning**

No major incidents reported.

## **Airport Alerts**

Two incidents reported at Belfast International Airport. Both flights landed safely.

## **Training**

A multi-disciplinary Major Incident Medical Management Support course took place in March 2007 in which all students passed successfully.

## **Control Issues**

Members were advised that Digital Trunk Radio (DTR) is live in East, South and West. It is reported to be working well and staff are delighted. Director of Operations paid tribute to IT and Control staff and noted excellent co-operation between Operations and Training.

## **Fleet**

NIAS is awaiting delivery of 2 A&E Vehicles, which are due to arrive early May 2007. Six Vauxhall Astra Vehicles are being converted for RRV duties.

## **Estate Issues**

It was reported that there have been delays in some re-deployment points, due to outside parties, beyond NIAS control ie legal issues. Derriaghy and M1 deployment points should be ready for mid May 2007.

Members duly noted.

## **8.0 Summary of Complaints as at 31 March 2007**

The Director of Human Resources directed members to Complaints Report advising that there are 3 complaints ongoing with 8 compliments received. It was advised that compliments are shared with staff, which is a valuable reinforcement of good practice.

Members duly noted.

## **9.0 Minutes of the Risk Management Committee held on 22 February 2007**

The Chief Executive directed members to the minutes highlighting the following areas.

Age of fleet - new vehicles are being dispersed throughout the service. Local steps are being taken with low mileage vehicles being directed to high mileage areas. It was noted that stringent maintenance is in place which meets manufacturers requirements.

It was further added that the Risk Register is comprehensive in outlining key actions to resolve or minimise risk. It was reported that RQIA have carried out an audit and the report is due in June 2007. An information leaflet on risk was sent out to all staff in March 2007.

Members duly adopted the minutes.

#### **10.0 Application of Trust Seal**

The Trust Seal was used on one occasion for the 10 year lease of M1 Business Park.

#### **11.0 Forum for Questions**

Mr Leslie Ferran provided written comment which he asked to be read to the meeting indicating that no questions are necessary because of the comprehensive way in which Board members presented information, providing further clarification and answering questions in the course of debate.

#### **12.0 Any Other Business**

##### **12.1 Mrs Linda Gillespie**

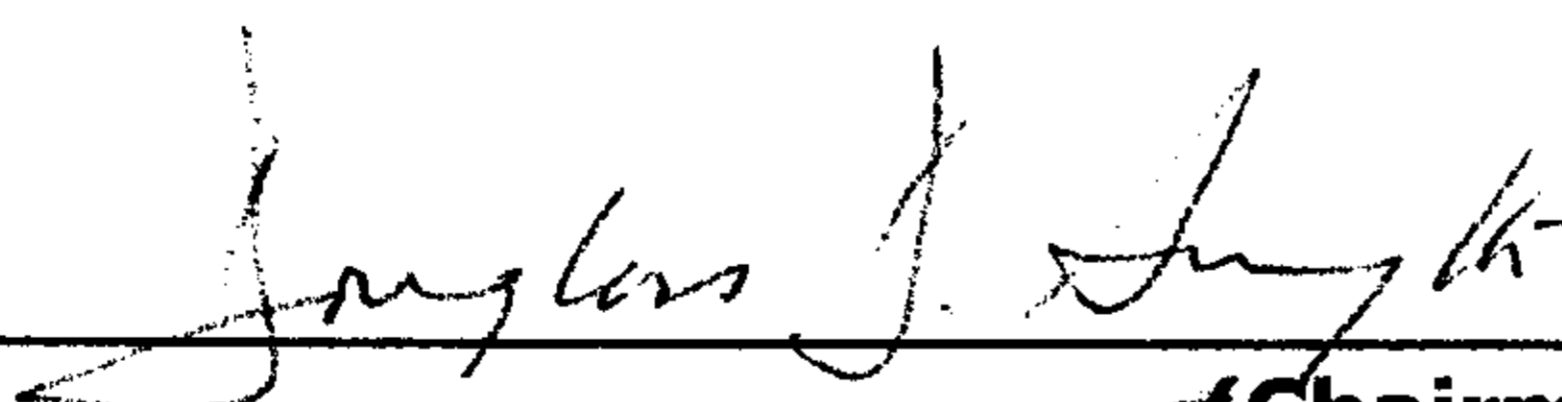
It was with regret that members said goodbye to Mrs Gillespie who has reached the end of her tenure as a Board member after 6 years. The Chairman thanked her on behalf of members for her contribution to the Board's work and presented her with a small memento to mark the occasion.

#### **13.0 Date, Time and Venue of Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the Trust Board will be held on the 28 June 2007. Venue to be confirmed.

The Chairman thanked those present for attending and called proceedings to a close.

Signed

  
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(Chairman)

Date

29/6/07