

# NORTHERN IRELAND AMBULANCE SERVICE

*Minutes of a Meeting of Trust Board held on Tuesday 16 September 2008 at 3.00pm in the Boardroom, Northern Ireland Ambulance Service, Trust Headquarters, Site 30, Knockbracken Healthcare Park, Saintfield Road, Belfast, BT8 8SG*

**Present:**

|                          |                               |
|--------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Mr D Smyth OBE           | Chairman                      |
| Mr L McIvor              | Chief Executive               |
| Mr B McNeill             | Director of Operations        |
| Dr D McManus             | Medical Director              |
| Mr P Nicholson           | Assistant Director of Finance |
| Ms R O'Hara              | Director of Human Resources   |
| Mr S Mullan              | Non Executive Director        |
| Mr F Hughes              | Non Executive Director        |
| Mrs M Greer              | Non Executive Director        |
| Professor M Hanratty CBE | Non Executive Director        |

**In attendance:**

|                  |                             |
|------------------|-----------------------------|
| Miss A Vitty     | Corporate Manager           |
| Mrs P McAllister | Personal Assistant (Acting) |

## **1.0 Apologies**

Mrs S McCue, Director of Finance

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

Mr Smyth opened the meeting by welcoming members of the public and Trust Board members and explained the arrangements for receiving questions from the public attending.

## **3.0 Minutes of Previous Meeting of the Trust Board held on 26 June 2008**

The Trust Board members unanimously accepted the minutes as a true and accurate record of proceedings. The minutes were adopted on the proposal of Professor Hanratty, seconded by Mrs Greer.

## **4.0 Matters Arising**

### **4.1 Regulation Quality and Improvement Authority 2008**

Mr McIvor updated Members on the Regulation Quality and Improvement Authority 2008 report. He advised that previously expressed concerns on the content of the initial feedback to NIAS had not materialised in the draft report. He stated that he looked forward to receiving the final report from which an action plan can be drawn up.

Members noted the Mr McIvor's comments.

#### **4.2 Emergency Services Investment Programme (ESIP)**

Mr McIvor updated members on the progress of the NIAS Business Case proposals which are currently with the Department for approval. He stated that capital development proposals include fleet and medical equipment replacement, updating IT equipment and estate development. During discussion it was noted that approval is required by the end of September 2008 to facilitate purchase of fleet. Mr Nicholson advised members that supplier capacity, particularly in respect of accident and emergency vehicles, is limited and that delays in approval may impact on the ability of the Trust to incur the necessary expenditure in year. Mr McIvor stressed that he would continue to contact the Department, as frequently as necessary, for conclusion to the issue.

Members duly noted.

#### **4.3 Trust Delivery Plan 2008-2011**

Members were informed by Mr McIvor that the Trust Delivery Plan remains with the Department and NIAS is still awaiting approval.

Members noted the update.

### **5.0 Chairman's Business**

#### **5.1 Freedom of the City – Armagh City & District Council**

Mr Smyth expressed, on behalf of Members and Staff, gratitude and thanks to Armagh City Council for organising the Freedom of the City event. It was agreed that Mr McIvor write to the Council to express thanks on behalf of NIAS.

#### **5.2 Board Chairman Vacancy**

Mr Smyth expressed regret that he was unable to advise members on his replacement at this time. He stated that a public announcement was awaited. However he stated that if he could be of assistance to the new Chairman he would be happy to facilitate.

#### **5.3 Annual General Meeting, 16 September 2008**

Mr Smyth informed members that the Annual General Meeting will take place this evening at 6.30pm.

Members noted.

#### **5.4 Operation Banner**

Mr Smyth informed Members that both he and Mr McIvor had attended an excellent Service of Thanksgiving for Operation Banner at St Paul's Cathedral, London.

Members duly noted.

#### **6.0 Performance Reporting as at 31 July 2008**

Mr McIvor explained the reporting format and advised that each Director will report on their management areas.

##### **OPERATIONS**

Mr McNeill gave a report and made reference to the first table on Ministerial Priorities for Action: Principal Standards and Targets highlighting that the Cumulative Category A Performance remains static at 69.3% for the months of June and July 2008. Trust target is to respond to an average of 70% of Category A (life-threatening) calls within eight minutes. It was noted that the North and South Divisions were still struggling to reach this target but it is hoped these figures will improve with further work between the Divisions and the Area Managers.

With regard to Target OP04: For 2007-08 the NIAS will seek to respond to 95% of Urgent Calls within 15 minutes of the time specified by the clinician requesting transport it was noted that the target was not achieved. There were 2700 calls of which 1741 were on time. Mr McNeill stated that one of the main reasons for not reaching the target was that most GPs make their patients visits around mid-day when competing demands for A&E resources become an issue.

Referring to OP05:NIAS will seek to secure recurring investment for rolling fleet replacement to replace vehicles within five years of purchase Mr McNeill stated that NIAS was anticipating approval by the end of September which would allow new vehicles to be purchased by end of March 2009.

Mr McNeill reported that the Target OP06: NIAS will seek to introduce additional deployment locations during 2008-09 is on track for achievement. He stated that NIAS has been waiting for an ambulance deployment site in Ballynahinch.

##### **FINANCE**

Mr Nicholson updated members on the financial position of the Trust as follows:-

Financial position at 31 July 2008 (Month 4) shows a deficit of £57k. The accounts had been updated to reflect the DHSSPS changes to the Trust's finance regime. The deficit was largely due to delays in implementing the required cash releasing efficiency savings of £1.236m in 2008/09. Informed members that NIAS has received provisional notification of an £4,000 to support increased energy costs particularly around fuel. NIAS will monitor with the view to breaking even by the end of the year.

Energy Savings: Outline plans have been developed to achieve the saving in 2008/09. Further details are being developed for consideration by members.

## **RECTORATE**

Thus updated members on a number of issues including the following:

Infection Control: Members were advised that the NIAS Infection Control Group has been established which reports to the Clinical Governance Committee. The group have undertaken an audit of current infection control activity, training and audit guidelines for infection prevention and control for UK Ambulance services have been produced and are currently being reviewed. It was noted that no significant infections arising with the Trust have been reported within the period.

Inspection: Dr McManus advised members that following the RQIA inspection undertaken in March 2008 a draft report had only just been received. The report was submitted to the Risk Management Committee where it was agreed that an Action Plan will be developed from the report. Further progress will be discussed at the next Trust Board meeting.

Members were pleased to note that work has started to progress with Pharmacy services.

Members were advised of the draft report from Dr McManus.

## **SOURCES DIRECTORATE**

Barbara updated members on the Human Resources Directorate. She drew attention to the report and highlighted the following areas.

Turnover continues to be monitored and is currently on target.

The Trust is currently at a ratio of 5% of administrative and clerical to all staff. This is low in comparison to other Trusts.

Turnover targets achieved to date.

HR05 - Training targets have been substantially achieved and are within target.

HR06 - Complaints within the Trust continue to be managed in line with complaints policy.

Report was noted.

## **7.0 Efficiency Savings**

Mr McIvor presented his report on Efficiency Savings drawing members' attention to the letter of approval for 2008/09 Efficiency Savings received from DHSSPS and the document (attached) to which it refers. He identified a possible risk around delays in transporting people to hospital following assessment as the paramedic rapid response vehicles do not generally transport patients and outlined the measures to be introduced and monitored to mitigate this risk. Mr McIvor concluded by stating that there is still some work which will be progressed as quickly as possible. He informed members that proposal for 2009/10 and 2010/11 are still being considered by the Department.

The contents of the report were noted.

## **8.0 Agenda for Change**

Ms O'Hara referred to a letter received from the Minister, Mr Michael McGimpsey, acknowledging efforts of staff to achieve his target for implementation of Agenda for Change. Ms O'Hara advised members that work was progressing on Agenda for Change and would continue to progress.

The response was noted.

## **9.0 Press Releases**

### **9.1 No Cuts to Ambulance Service – McGimpsey**

Members welcomed and noted the contents of the Press Release from the Minister.

### **9.2 McGimpsey Commends Emergency Services for Response to Flooding**

Members noted the contents of the Press Release.

## **10.0 Minutes of the Risk Management Committee held on 29 May 2008 (for approval)**

Mr McIvor presented the minutes. He advised that the quorum for Committee will be addressed through the Terms of Reference which will be presented to a future meeting to the Trust Board stating that the Committee now consists only of Board members. Mr McIvor clarified a query with regard to corporate manslaughter.

Mr McIvor clarified for Mrs Greer that the Audit Committee should secure assurances regarding the transportation of patients with infections through the Clinical Governance Committee.

The contents of the minutes were noted.

## **11.0 Minutes of the Clinical Governance Meeting held on 2 July 2008**

Dr McManus presented the minutes highlighting that a range of clinical areas have been identified which could be audited and monitored to enhance the clinical audit process. These require timely data collection and analysis and he suggested the use of digital technology to improve timely data collection for audit and clinical supervision.

The contents of the minutes were noted.

## **12.0 Minutes of the Audit Committee held on 19 May 2008**

Mr Mullan presented the minutes, highlighting the Committee's appreciation of the contribution of Professor Ron Perrot during his term as Non Executive Director and Chair of the Audit Committee.

The contents of the minutes were noted.

## **13.0 Policies**

### **13.1 Terms of Reference of Audit Committee**

It was agreed that these should be revisited with Mr McIvor to report back to Trust Board.

### **13.2 Fraud Policy**

The Fraud Policy was adopted on the proposal of Mr S Mullan, seconded by Mrs Greer.

### **13.3 Gifts and Hospitality Policy**

The Gifts and Hospitality Policy was adopted, subject to benchmarking maximum expenditure limits with other HSC Trusts.

### **11.0 Application of Trust Seal**

None made.

### **12.0 Forum for Questions**

**12.1** No questions were tabled for the Board.

### **14.0 Any Other Business**

#### **14.1 Self Assessments**

Mr Smyth thanked members for completing their Assessments and informed them these have been forwarded to the Department.

#### **14.2 Retirement of Chairman**

Mr Liam McIvor, on behalf of members, thanked Mr Smyth who was leaving the Trust Board after eight years of service to NIAS. He stated that during a time of great change both staff and members have gained much under his direction. He offered personal appreciation for the encouragement and positive support given by Mr Smyth stating that the Ambulance Service could not have been better served or wished for a better chairman. Mr McIvor reiterated his, and members, thanks wishing Mr Smyth well for the future.

Mr Smyth thanked members and staff stating that he felt it an honour to work with NIAS and he was sorry to be leaving. He expressed regret at not being able to welcome the new Chairman but wished him/her well. Mr Smyth wished all staff and members well.

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

**The next meeting of the Trust Board will be held on Thursday, 27 November 2008. Venue to be confirmed.**

Mr Smyth thanked those present for attending and called proceedings to a close.

Signed 

(Chairman)

Date 27.11.08.