



**Minutes of Board Meeting No. 44 held on Monday 9 March 2015
at 10:00 hrs, 257 Lough Road, Lurgan.**

Present:

Tom McGrath, Chief Commissioner
Walter Rader, Deputy Chief Commissioner
Rosemary Connolly, Commissioner (Legal)
Geraldine Donaghy, Commissioner
Brenda Maitland, Commissioner
Philip McDonagh, Commissioner

In Attendance:

Frances McCandless, Chief Executive
Aubrey McCrory, Head of Corporate Services
Myles McKeown, Head of Compliance and Enquiries
Punam McGookin, Head of Charity Services
Kathryn Jennett, Administrative Officer, CCNI

Apologies

Norman Bennett, Commissioner

1. Minutes of Meeting 26 January 2015

Following discussion of the minutes of the meeting held on 26 January 2015, they were proposed by Geraldine Donaghy and seconded by Rosemary Connolly, and agreed as a true and correct record subject to a minor amendment.

AP 1: Board minutes to be published on CCNI website

2. Conflicts of Interest

The Chair reminded Commissioners of the Freedom of Information protocol and the need to declare any conflicts of interest prior to the meeting.

3. Chair's Business, Correspondence and Meetings

The Chair updated the Board on the heightened interest in the Commission's work from MLAs and that he had written to the Minister to request a meeting to discuss implementation of the Charities Act and regulatory action. The Chair and the Chief Executive are to attend a meeting on 2 April with the Charities Regulatory Authority (CRA) in the Republic of Ireland.

4. Chief Executive's report

The Chief Executive introduced her report to the Board and highlighted some points for information. The Commission continues to receive complaints from a small number of affected individuals regarding publication of the Statutory Inquiry Report into Lough Neagh Rescue. It was noted that correspondence had been received from the Attorney General in relation to another case. The Chief Executive updated the Board that 1,158 charities had been registered as of 9 March 2015, and a recognition agreement had been reached with the Trade Union.

5. A&RA Issues

5a The minutes of the Audit & Risk Assurance (A&RA) Committee meeting on 18 November 2014 were agreed as a true and accurate record as proposed by Walter Rader and seconded by Rosemary Connolly.

AP2: Minutes of A&RA Committee to be published on CCNI website

5b. Risk Appetite for new business plan

The Head of Corporate Services introduced the paper to the board setting out a series of points. It was noted that the Department have been provided with draft 2015-18 Corporate and 2015-16 Business Plans at this time, though a budget was not finalised in light of uncertainties regarding the Departmental budgetary situation. The Board considered raising the threshold to medium for compliance monitoring and reducing the threshold to low for information services. Following proposal by Walter Rader and seconded by Rosemary Connolly the risk appetite was approved subject to amendment.

5c. Bribery risk Assessment

The Head of Corporate Services introduced the paper to the board, highlighting a series of additions and amendments reflecting the commencement of increased Commission powers, and asked the Board to agree the approach identified with the organisation. The assessment was approved following proposal by Walter Rader and seconded by Rosemary Connolly.

5d. Risk Policy

The Head of Corporate Services highlighted a series of minor amendments to the policy, including updating the role of Audit & Risk Assurance Committee and the development of top down and bottom up mechanisms to ensure risk ownership. Following discussion and proposal by Walter Rader and seconded by Rosemary Connolly the Board agreed to adopt the revised policy.

5e. Risk Register

The Head of Corporate Services introduced the risk register and amendments following work by the Task & Finish group. Following discussion the Board

were content with the number of risks being reduced from the previous register to enable a better focus on governance, as proposed by Walter Rader and seconded by Rosemary Connolly.

5f. Finance procedures

The Head of Corporate Services introduced the paper and asked the Board to consider the tracked changes in the finance procedures, which followed internal audit field work and staff initiatives. The changes reflect further differentiation in roles, minor amendments to update circulars and other internal audit recommendations, which were discussed by the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee. The procedures were adopted following proposal by Walter Rader and seconded by Rosemary Connolly.

5g. Committee Terms of Reference

The Head of Corporate Services introduced the paper to the Board and asked the Board to consider amendments. Following discussion the Board agreed to adopt the revised Terms of Reference as proposed by Walter Rader and seconded by Rosemary Connolly.

5h. Internal Audit half year report

The Head of Corporate Services introduced Internal Audit's report following their first assignment, which returned an overall satisfactory assurance opinion. The Board noted the outcome.

6. HR&R Issues

6a. Minutes from meeting 15 October 2015

The minutes of the HR&R Committee meeting on 15 October 2014 were agreed as a true and accurate record as proposed by Brenda Maitland and seconded by Philip McDonagh.

AP3: Minutes of HR&R Committee meeting to be published on CCNI website

6b. Amended HR policies

The chair of the HR&R Committee reported to the Board that, following engagement with HR Connect, the first tranche of the prioritised policies have been considered along with the addition of a new Uniform Appeals policy, which introduces a single stage appeal process for staff. Following adoption of these policies manager training and development sessions will be held to ensure staff understand the policies and the implementation requirements. Following recommendation to the Board the revised policies were accepted as proposed by Brenda Maitland and Philip McDonagh.

7. Business and Corporate plans (final)

The Head of Corporate Services introduced the plans to the Board and the budget within the Business plan which was reduced in line with the light touch review as no further guidance was available from the Department.

The Chair commented that looking back on what the Commission has achieved was substantial and the board noted the reduction in budget and associated impacts.

Following discussion it was agreed to amend figures on key milestones & performance targets within the Corporate plan to process 2,500 applications by the end of the year and add further assumptions to explain the figures. A minor change to the internal organisational value was also discussed, along with a proposal to increase the capital budget by a further £20k. Following discussion it was agreed to accept the plans subject to minor amendment as proposed by Geraldine Donaghy and seconded by Philip McDonagh.

8. Communications Plan 2015-16

The Communications Officer joined the meeting and introduced the plan to the Board, highlighting the key messages coming from the Commission and the move from a quantitative to a qualitative approach to measuring impacts and success. Following discussion the Board agreed that a message needs to be developed to inform the public and charities that not all complaints/concerns should be dealt with by the Commission and they should be dealt with initially within the charity prior to bringing the matter to the Commission. It was agreed to adopt the plan following proposal by Rosemary Connolly and seconded by Brenda Maitland.

9. MOU with Fundraising Standards Board and OSCR

The Head of Charity Services introduced the paper to the Board detailing the key objective about sharing information and collaboration with the Fundraising Standards Board. The Board agreed to accept the MOU following proposal by Walter Rader and seconded by Philip McDonagh.

The Head of Charity Services introduced the paper to the Board which sets out the operational activities for the Commission to work with OSCR. The Board agreed to accept the MOU following proposal by Brenda Maitland and seconded by Geraldine Donaghy.

10. Casework Update

The Head of Charity Services introduced the update to the board and advised that 1,158 charities had been registered at that point in the business year. Current arrangements to allocate additional resources to casework handling and risk assessments were noted. Following discussion it was agreed that the main reputational risk to the Commission is the length of time taken to process applications. The chair requested an update on the situation with the Presbyterian Church, and the Chief Executive advised that they could be ready to start registration following adoption of amended governance arrangements at their General Assembly meeting in June 2015. The Board endorsed the plan to commence calling forward Presbyterian Churches from the summer.

11. Investigation and Compliance Report

The Head of Compliance and Enquiries introduced the report to the Board, which highlighted new concerns, outlined cases closed and information on organisations currently under statutory inquiry. Commissioners noted the report and asked for future reports to differentiate between concerns into deemed and registered charities.

12. Budget Report

The Head of Corporate Services introduced the Budget; the board noted the three areas of variance and a small projected revenue and capital under spend.

13. Report on Board self assessment exercise

The Chief Executive asked the Board to note the summary report which records the comments of Commissioners and average scores, following the exercise. The Board noted the comments and agreed to include a walkthrough of the on line registration at the May meeting and further discuss the report's next steps at the June board meeting.

14. MSFM

The Chief Executive introduced the report to the Board as Accounting Officer and reported no breaches of Compliance. The Chief Executive also advised that the MSFM text has been reviewed and updated, however, the new text has not yet been formally adopted by CCNI and the Department. The Board noted the review and that the organisation is currently in compliance with its MSFM.

15. IT Monitoring

The Head of Corporate Services introduced the paper to the Board and asked the Board to note the planned establishment of an ICT project board, which will enhance governance and directly report to the board on a six monthly basis. The Board agreed the approach once the current InITs project board is dissolved.

16. Hospitality Register

Noted.

17. Press Clippings

The Board noted the coverage.

19. Review of Meeting

It was agreed to host an annual public meeting following the September Board meeting.

20. Issues for next meeting 18 May 2015

Walk through of the online application system.

19. AOB

It was agreed to invite the Independent member of Audit & Risk Assurance Committee to observe a future Board meeting.

The meeting concluded at 12:10

Register of Outstanding Action Points					
Board Meeting and Action Point Number	Date Raised	Agenda Item	Action	Owners	Status
34 (10)	11/11/2013	Press Clippings	MOU with RQIA to be developed	HCE	Underway
40 (3)	22/9/14	Chief Executive's Report	Legally qualified commissioner to engage with colleagues in the legal profession	Rosemary Connolly	Underway
40 (6)	22/9/14	Amendment to Legal Manual	Legal officers to Draft a template letter for use when instructing counsel.	Legal Advisors	Underway
40 (10)	22/9/14	Casework Update	Commission to seek definite timetable for registration from the Presbyterian and the Methodist churches.	CEx	Underway
41 (3)	10/11/2014	Issues from HR&R; First Steps towards a HR Strategy	Progress steps towards a HR strategy	HCorpS	Underway
42 (7)	15/12/2014	Investigation Manual	Counsel opinion to be sought on proposed waiver timescales	HCE	Underway
42 (9)	15/12/2014	Plan for development of and consultation on next corporate plan	Key milestones to be incorporated into relevant Board and SMT agenda during 2015-16	HCorpS	Underway
42 (10)	15/12/2014	Corporate governance framework	Governance framework to be finalised and published on the website.	HCorpS	Underway
42 (12)	15/12/2014	Budget Report	Business Case of accommodation needs to be produced	HCorpS	Underway
43 (5)	26/01/2015	Budget Report	Further breakdown of charges to be identified	HCorpS	Complete

44 (1)	9/03/2015	Minutes of Meeting 26 January 2015	Board minutes to be published on CCNI website	Kathryn	Complete
44 (2)	09/03/2015	A&R Issues	Minutes of A&R Assurance committee to be published on CCNI website	Kathryn	Complete
44(3)	09/03/2015	HR&R Issues Minutes from meeting 15 October 2015	Minutes of HR&R Committee meeting to be published on CCNI website	Kathryn	Complete