



**Minutes of Trust Board**  
**Thursday 7 December 2017, 2.00pm**  
**The Lodge Hotel, Coleraine**

**Present:**

Mr P Archer	Chairman
Mr W Abraham	Non-Executive Director
Mr S Devlin	Chief Executive
Mrs S McCue	Director of Finance & ICT
Ms M Lemon	Interim Director of HR & Corporate Services
Dr N Ruddell	Interim Medical Director

**In Attendance:**

Mr J Wright	Assistant Director of Operations, Control & Communications
Ms H Coard	Senior Secretary
Ms M Smith	Senior Secretary

**1.0 Apologies**

The following apologies were noted:

Dr J Livingstone	Non-Executive Director
Mr A Cardwell	Non-Executive Director
Mr B McNeill	Director of Operations

**2.0 Procedure: Declaration of potential Conflict of Interest / Pecuniary Interest / Quorum**

The Chairman made a declaration that he has recently been appointed a Trustee on the Board of St John's Ambulance, he noted that this would only pose a conflict of interest on occasions when matters relating to St John's Ambulance were discussed by the Board. The Board was confirmed as quorate.

**3.0 Minutes of the previous meeting of Trust Board held on 17 August 2017**

The Minutes were approved on the proposal of Mr W Abraham, seconded by Mr T Haslett.

**4.0 Matters Arising**

**4.1 Update on Fixed Wire Testing Exercise**

The Chairman requested an update on the outcome of the fixed wire testing exercise which took place at NIAS HQ on Wednesday 18 October 2017. This exercise afforded NIAS the opportunity to test contingency plans for the control room in the event of a catastrophic failure of electrical systems at HQ as well as fixed wire testing of the Control Room and NIAS HQ.

The exercise proved to be successful and the Board noted that NIAS will be required to perform fixed wire testing again within the next five to ten years.

## **5.0 Chairman's Business**

### **5.1 Chairman's Update**

The Chairman gave an outline of his activities and meetings attended since his last report, highlighting the following:

- Meeting with Chair of Audit Committee
- Visit to Broadway and Bangor Ambulance Stations
- Attended AACE conference with Chief Executive, NIAS
- Attended dinner with former NI Assembly Minister for Finance
- Attended Chairs Forum, CIPFA Conference
- Remuneration Committee
- Regular one to one performance review meetings with NIAS Chief Executive

## **6.0 Chief Executive's Business**

### **6.1 Chief Executive's Update**

Mr S Devlin outlined his activities and meetings attended since the last Trust Board, highlighting the following:

- NIAS hosted the Transformation Implementation Group where a presentation was given in respect of the new Clinical Response Model (CRM) proposed by the recent Demand and Capacity Review, this was followed by a meaningful and useful discussion.
- Meeting with Dalriada Urgent Care to discuss their approach in respect of the provision of an Out of Hours Service.
- Received notification from RQIA that improvement notices on Broadway and Bangor Ambulance Stations had been removed. Notices in respect of governance issues will remain in place to January 2018 This is to allow adequate time for NIAS to develop and implement good governance practices in respect of Infection Prevention & Control (IPC).
- Attended a World Quality Day event. This was a small but informative and useful gathering.
- Association of Ambulance Chief Executives (AACE) Council Meeting This provided important information in respect of the Programme for Improvement in the NHS which will be very valuable to NIAS.

## **7.0 Performance Report as at 30 October 2017**

### **7.1 Highlight Reports by Each Director**

## **Operations Directorate**

Mr J Wright, Assistant Director of Operations, Control, provided an update to Trust Board, highlighting the following:

- Call taking performance continues to meet standards required for NIAS to be recognised by IAED as an Accredited Centre of Excellence.
- Emergency call activity continues to rise with an increase of 3.8% over the same period in 2016
- NIAS continue to maintain their Emergency Medical Dispatcher (EMD) Awards Scheme, with certificates and badges being awarded for high compliance 999 calls and for calls with exemplary customer service. Other awards are for Baby Born, Cardiac Life Saver & Non Cardiac Life Saver. During September and October 2017 a total of 14 awards were received by EMD staff these included 2 Gold Awards for 999 High Compliance, 2 Gold Awards for Exemplary Customer Service and 2 Baby Born Awards.
- EAC Call Taking Contingencies – NIAS EAC currently have a Memorandum of Understanding or buddy system with the Scottish Ambulance Service (SAS) EAC to take each other's call overflows during exceptionally busy periods as part of their contingency planning. The Board noted that NIAS EAC had taken an exceptional amount of SAS EAC calls recently.  
NIAS are also planning a forthcoming meeting with the National Ambulance Service (NAS) in the Republic of Ireland (ROI) to discuss the potential for a similar arrangement to that with the SAS EAC. This would be in addition to agreed joint working arrangements that are already in place in respect of Border areas between Northern Ireland and the ROI.
- Recent increases in hospital turnaround times both in Northern Ireland and across the wider NHS Trusts were highlighted as a current and ongoing issue that is having a significant impact on performance statistics. This is due to unprecedented winter pressures this year. A number of measures have already been put in place to provide relief, and these include increased HALO hours in Belfast, South East, South and North Divisions with a new HALO Service also being introduced in the Western Division.
- Winter Pressures Proposals – NIAS submitted a Winter Pressures proposal paper to the Department for their consideration on 9 November. The Proposals were approved in their entirety, by the Department on 1 December 2017. Actions are currently ongoing to implement these proposals in a timely manner.
- Fleet – Commissioning of PCS Vehicles has experienced some delays due to Mobile Data Terminal (MDT) equipment issues, these issues are expected to be resolved soon.
- Estate – The new Enniskillen Ambulance station was handed over to NIAS 10/11/2017. During the commissioning process staff continued to work out of temporary accommodation unit 04/12/2017 when staff moved to the new facility.

## **Finance & ICT Directorate**

Mrs S McCue, Director of Finance provided an update to Trust Board, highlighting the following:

- Financial Breakeven – The Trust is currently reporting a small surplus of £5k for the seven months ending 31 October 2017, subject to key risks and assumptions. Breakeven at end March 2018.
- Savings have been made as spending has been delayed in some areas; There are expectations by DOH that we will make savings by recurrent means in 2018/19.
- The Trust has received a revised Capital Resource Limit of £8.27 million (previously £7.72 million) The adjustments to the CRL allocation include an increase for

enhancements of Omagh and Strabane ambulance stations. The majority of this budget is allocated to Fleet and Estate. Expenditure at 31 October 2017 was £1.83 million, the majority of this budget allocation is scheduled for expenditure in the last quarter of the 2017-18 financial year.

- Compliance with prompt payment of invoices is currently 94.5%, the target for prompt payment is 95%.
- Information Technology Systems – On 18 October 2017, NIAS conducted fixed wire testing exercise of NIAS HQ Data centre and equipment room. To facilitate this a full decamp of Emergency Ambulance Control (EAC) to the designated short term contingency site at the Resource Management Centre took place. Months of planning took place prior to the exercise which was recorded by the Emergency Planning Team as a full test of the business continuity plan for EAC.
- IT Systems Development – A project to replace the Mobile Data System (MDT) which transmits data from the command and control system to the ambulance is now at the tender evaluation stage.
- A Business Case to implement the Regional Electronic Ambulance Communications Hub (REACH) has been formally approved. A number of stakeholder workshops are ongoing to assist in the development of the user specification and all related procurement documentation.
- Cyber Security – NIAS IT Team are working collaboratively with the other five Trusts in Northern Ireland on an ongoing basis to research and implement a best practice approach in this area.
- Information Governance – An action plan to address outstanding items from the Control Assurance Exercise in 2016/17 is currently being developed. This work continues to be a priority for the Trust.

Information Requests have increased in all areas in comparison to the same period in 2016. The excessive nature of recent information requests has led to some non-compliance with target processing times.

### **Human Resources Directorate**

Ms M Lemon, Acting Director of HR&CS provided an update to Trust Board, highlighting the following:

- Recruitment Activity – The Trust Board noted that BSO Recruitment Shared Services undertake the transactional elements of NIAS Recruitment processes.
- Sickness Absence – The Trust Board were provided an overview of sickness absence by category and Division for the year to date a summary of ongoing work to address high levels of sickness absence was provided. The Board agreed that a further in depth discussion of work in this area would be put on the Agenda for the next Trust Board Workshop which is scheduled for Friday 19 January 2018.
- Flu Vaccine – NIAS have set a target for 40% of frontline staff to be vaccinated against flu this winter. To help facilitate that target, a number of Paramedics were trained to give the flu vaccine and are setting up vaccination clinics at various ambulance stations across Northern Ireland. To date 22% of front line staff have been vaccinated.
- Complaints – NIAS have recently been non-compliant in meeting the required deadlines for responding to complaints due to competing priorities for Area Managers. This was discussed at the Senior Operations Team Meeting on Wednesday 22 November 2017 and the policy and procedures for complaints handling is currently under review.
- The Trust Board discussed a recent complaint in respect of the perceived misuse of NIAS Fleet Vehicles after they have been disposed of by NIAS, they requested

that this issue was discussed further and an update provide at the next Trust Board Meeting on Thursday 1 February 2018.

- Education and Learning – The Trust Board were provided an overview of progress to date on the Paramedic Foundation Degree project. NIAS Training Team are currently working collaboratively with the University of Ulster to draft proposed modules for the program.
- Transformation Improvement Collaborative (TIC) – 14 projects are currently being progressed which largely focus on improvement. One such project was the implementation of the Clinical Support Desk (CSD); the Paramedic CSD went operational on 2 October 2017. The initial results from outcome data for the month of October are encouraging and in line with national averages when compared to other Ambulance Services throughout the UK.
- Following the success of the NIAS inaugural Leadership Conference on 22 September 2017, plans are progressing to host another event in 2018.

**Action:** Sickness absence processes to be tabled for discussion at next Trust Board Workshop on Friday 19 January.

### **Medical Directorate**

Dr N Ruddell, Interim Medical Director provided an update to Trust Board, highlighting the following:

- Emergency Planning and Business Continuity (EP&BC) – The Emergency Planning Team continues to participate in major incident planning and multi-agency exercises. The team attended a course organised by the National Interagency Liaison Officers (NILO) in October 2017.
- Incident Reporting – A review of the Incident Report Procedure is ongoing and is expected to complete in Q4 of 2017/18. The Appointment of a Datix Administrator in September 2017 has relieved some pressure from the Risk Manager. Plans are also underway for the recruitment of an Infection Prevention Control (IPC) Lead and a Health & Safety Lead.
- Clinical Care - Infection Prevention & Control (IPC) – the majority of the RQIA Improvement Notices in relation to Broadway and Bangor Stations have been removed; two notices in relation to Governance will remain in place to end January in order to allow adequate time to implement and review best practice IPC processes. The Board also noted that the Trust are progressing options for vehicle cleaning both in the short and long terms.
- The 2017 "Restart a Heart Day" which was scheduled on 16 October was significantly impacted by Storm Ophelia, which resulted in the closure of schools across Northern Ireland, NIAS was therefore unable to provide planned training.
- Helicopter Emergency Medical Service (HEMS) Activity Report – The HEMS continues to be a success. Statistical data on activity reflects some issues with Key Performance Indicator (KPI) 2 time targets are dependent on how far the incident is from the HEMS base. Data categories will be reviewed. The Board noted that the control desk for HEMS will be moving to the NIAS Control Room in the near future.
- The Board noted the Emergency Planning Report for the period September to October 2017.

## **8 Items for Approval**

There were no items for approval.

## **9 Items for Information/Noting**

## **9.1 Annual Trust Quality Report**

NIAS Annual Quality Report for the year ended 31 March 2017 was published in November 2017. Report highlights included data on cardiac care incidents and the Board noted consistently high quality response times to cardiac incidents. Average time from the initial 999 call being received to the patient receiving treatment at hospital was 108 minutes.

Trust Board agreed this was an excellent report and suggested that the Trust issue a press release regarding the statistics included in the report.

## **9.2 Mid-Year Assurance Statement**

Trust Board noted the Mid-Year Assurance Statement which was approved by the Audit Committee at their meeting on Thursday 12 October 2017. The Chairman discussed an ongoing matter being dealt with by the Remuneration Committee in respect on the paragraph on Succession Planning on the final page of the statement. A letter to the Department of Health is currently being drafted for signature by the Chairman prior to issue.

**Action:** HR Directorate to draft letter to the DOH in relation to Succession Planning in respect of the Mid-Year Assurance Statement for signature and issue by the Chairman.

## **9.3 Financial Memorandum / Management Statement**

Mrs S McCue advised that the Management Statement sets out the broad framework within which the Trust operates. The Financial memorandum sets out in greater detail certain aspects of financial provisions that the Trust must observe. The documents are drawn up by DoH and the revised documents represent a five year review (the last one was signed in 2011). The documents have gone through an extensive round of informal consultation with Trusts and it is now a standard document with very few variations between organisations, for example one such variation for NIAS is the number of Non-Executive Directors on the Board. It represents a significant update and is a foundation document of how the Trust is required to operate. Copies will be provided to Executive and Non-Executive Trust Board members and will also be presented annually at Trust Board thereafter.

The Trust Board acknowledged the usefulness of this document as a reference for members, particularly as part of induction.

## **9.4 Assurance Committee Minutes 31 August 2017**

The Assurance Committee Minutes were noted.

## **9.5 Proposed Trust Board Schedule for 2018**

The Trust Board Schedule of meetings for 2018 was noted.

## **9.6 PPI Film (ML)**

Trust Board watched a short film produced by NIAS in respect of Personal and Public Involvement (PPI). They noted this was used in training to improve NIAS standards for engaging with people.

## 10 **Application of Trust Seal**

10.1 NIAS reported the application of the Trust Seal to the following documents:

- Deed of transfer and conveyance of land at Tyrone County Hospital – signed and sealed 14 September 2017
- Access Road Agreement for land at Tyrone County Hospital – signed and sealed 14 September 2017
- Contract documentation for work at Altnagelvin Communications Room modular building – signed and sealed 20 November 2017
- Contract documentation for the relocation of Enniskillen Station's modular building and garage – signed and sealed 20 November 2017
- Lease (renewal) for Newcastle Ambulance Station – signed and sealed 29 November 2017

## 11 **Forum for Questions**

No questions had been tabled.

## 12 **AOB**


No further items were discussed under AOB.

## 13 **Summary & Forward Agenda**

No items raised.

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

The next scheduled Trust Board meeting will be held on **Thursday 1 February 2018 @2pm in Belfast Area. Location to be confirmed.**

Signed:   
(Chairman)

Dated: 1 Feb 2018

