



An Ghníomhaireacht um  
Leanaí agus an Teaghlach  
Child and Family Agency

**CHILD AND FAMILY AGENCY**

**MINUTES OF BOARD MEETING  
FRIDAY, 18 DECEMBER 2020**

**Via Video Conference**

<b>Attendance</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Initials</b>	<b>Role</b>
<b>Apologies</b>	<b>Pat Rabbitte</b>	<b>Chair / PR</b>	Chairperson
<b>Present</b>	<b>Anne O’Gara</b>	<b>AOG</b>	Deputy Chair
<b>Present</b>	<b>Charles Watchorn</b>	<b>CW</b>	Board Member/ Chair of ARC
<b>Present</b>	<b>Liam Irwin</b>	<b>LI</b>	Board Member
<b>Apologies</b>	<b>Deirdre Kiely</b>	<b>DK</b>	Board Member
<b>Present</b>	<b>Avril McDermott</b>	<b>AMcD</b>	Board Member
<b>Present</b>	<b>Paul White</b>	<b>PW</b>	Board Member/Chair of ODC
<b>Present</b>	<b>Sean Holland</b>	<b>SH</b>	Board Member/ Chair of SQC
<b>Present</b>	<b>Patricia Doherty</b>	<b>PD</b>	Board Member

<b>In Attendance</b>	Bernard Gloster Kate Duggan Pat Smyth Donal McCormack Kim Hayes Cormac Quinlan Anita Comerford Emma Dodrill Kay Keilthy	Chief Executive Director of Services and Integration(Interim) Director of Finance Director of Residential Services Director of HR (Interim) Director of Transformation & Policy Head of Strategy and Business Planning Board Administrator Board Secretary
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SIGNED: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE: 29th January 2021

CHAIRPERSON

Start 10:30

It was noted that a quorum was present and the Board meeting was duly convened. In the absence of the Chair of the Board the Deputy Chair of the Board chaired the meeting.

1. **Apologies**

P. Rabbitte, D. Kiely

1.2 **Declarations of Interest**

None

1.3 **Minutes of 27 November 2020**

The Board considered and approved the minutes of the Board meeting held on 27 November 2020. ***Proposed by C. Watchorn; Seconded P. White.***

1.4 **Matters Arising**

The Board reviewed the Action Log and requested a report on GDPR spend to come to the January Board meeting.

2. **Private Session**

The Board was updated on the quarterly meeting with the Minister held on 14 December 2020. The meeting included discussion in relation to progressing the Structure Reform Programme. The Board collectively reiterated its support of the restructuring plan and the preparation of both the Corporate Plan and the Business Plan on the presumption of approval of the reform structure. The Board agreed to discuss the matter further with the CEO as part of his CEO report.

2.1 At the quarterly meeting the Board sought by way of update a formal report from the Social Work Education Group.

2.2 The Minister confirmed his expectation that the legislative amendment required to increase the complement of the Tusla Board by two ordinary Board members would be ratified in April 2021.

2.3 The Board approved the proposed Board meeting schedule for 2021 subject to the adjustment of the date of the April and May meeting from the Friday to Thursday. ***Proposed by L. Irwin; Seconded by A. McDermott.***

2.4 Board members were requested to complete and return the annual board effectiveness review questionnaires. The Chair will contact individual Board members as part of the Board's year-end review in the coming weeks.

B. Gloster, CEO and K Duggan, Director of Services and Integration (Interim) joined the meeting

3. **Sub-Committee Reports –**

3.1 **ARC Meeting 10 December 2020**

3.2 The Chair of the ARC reported on the work of the ARC at its meeting held on 10 December 2020. The Board noted the ARC report.

- 3.3 The Chair of the ARC updated the Board on the ongoing work of the IPA and the Executive in relation to the review of the effectiveness of internal control. The review will form the basis of the SIC for 2020. The Board discussed the internal audit process and the challenges faced in assessing the effectiveness of the control environment in the context of service delivery. A full compendium of assurances incorporating Finance, Operations and Governance will be reviewed by the Board as part of its review of the effectiveness of internal controls at the March Board meeting. The Board raised concerns in relation to the auditing of external service providers and requested a detailed paper on commissioning to come to the Board in early 2021.
- 3.4 The Board's Risk Appetite Statement was considered by the ARC, however, the ARC was of the view that it was not in a position to fully consider the paper due to the lateness of its submission to the Committee. The Board agreed to schedule a special session on Risk Appetite at its January Board meeting.
- 3.5 The Board approved the revised ARC terms of references as recommended by the ARC. **Proposed by L. Irwin; seconded by P. White.**

#### 4 **CEO Report**

- 4.1 The CEO reported on activity and significant items of note since the last Board meeting which included:
- Finance
  - HR
  - Data Protection
  - Director of Quality Assurance
  - Covid 19 Response
  - Mother & Baby Home Commission Records
  - Performance Activity
  - Service User Engagement
  - Staff Engagement

The Board noted the CEO report.

- 4.2 The CEO updated the Board on the targeted funded workforce and advised that the Agency's retention figure was better than what had been previously reported to the Board due to an anomaly in relation to the reporting of staff on career break.
- 4.3 The Board noted the appointment of Dr. Caroline Cullen as Director of Quality Services (Interim). Dr Cullen will take up her role on 4 January 2021.
- 4.4 The CEO informed the Board of his decision to write to Sean Holland in his capacity as Chief Social Services Officer with the Department of Health in Northern Ireland with an offer of assistance and support in relation to the current Covid 19 situation in the North.
- 4.5 The CEO advised the Board that Tusla had won two State Claim Agency Awards. The awards related to the successful Work Positive Project and the NIMS Increasing Incident Reporting project. The Board congratulated the Executive and all involved in both projects.

4.6 Following the quarterly meeting with the Minister the CEO advised that a meeting with D/Per had been scheduled for Monday, 21 December in relation to the Structure Reform Programme. The CEO agreed to revert to the Board following the meeting.

4.7 The Board noted that the CEO was scheduled to do a profile interview with the Sunday Business Post on Monday 21 December.

4.8 The CEO thanked the Board for its support during the year.

*P. Smyth, Director of Finance; K. Hayes, Director of HR (Interim); D. McCormack, Director of Residential Service; C. Quinlan, Director of Transformation & Policy and A. Comerford Head of Strategy and Planning joined the meeting.*

4.8 The Board deferred consideration on the procurement for private residential services until the January Board meeting. The Board was of the view that due to the late submission of the paper it did not have sufficient time to review same.

*D. McCormack, Director of Residential Services left the meeting.*

## 5. **Corporate Plan 2021-2023**

5.1 The Director of Transformation and Policy presented on the Agency's current and proposed Vision, Mission, Values and Behaviours and outlined the Goals and Objectives and format of the Corporate Plan 2021 – 2023. The Board, subject to some minor changes, approved the proposed revised Vision, Mission, Values and Behaviours and welcomed the new format outlining the Agency's 4 key objectives linked to practice, culture and structure. The Board approved the Corporate Plan 2021 – 2023, following finalisation of targets, for submission to the Department as a draft document and approved the conclusion of the final submission to the Minister by the Chair and the Executive provided there is no substantive changes to the Plan. A copy of the draft Corporate Plan 2021-2023, will be submitted to the Department and will be circulated to Board members on 22 December. **Proposed by A. McDermott; Seconded by P. Doherty.**

## 6 **Business Plan 2021**

6.1 The Director of Finance updated the Board on the additional budget allocation for 2021.

6.2 The National Director of Services and Integration gave a presentation on Resource Planning 2021 outlining the approach taken to allocate resources. The Board approved in principle to the methodology being used to allocate resources and welcomed the evidenced methodology.

6.3 The Director of Policy & Transformation presented on the 2021 Business Plan actions and related actions. The Board noted that the Business Plan actions will be linked to the target/activity measures outlined in the Corporate Plan 2021 – 2023. The CEO advised that the draft Business Plan 2021 was currently in an advanced draft stage. A copy of the draft Business Plan 2021 will be circulated to the Board on 22 December. The Board approved the submission of the draft Business Plan 2021 to the Department on 22 December and approved the conclusion of the final submission to the Minister by the Chair and the Executive provided there was no substantive change to the direction of the Plan. The Board acknowledged the particular challenges faced by the

Executive in 2020 which would likely impact on the timeline for submission of the Business Plan 2021 to the Minister.

- 6.4 The CEO formally thanked the Business Planning Unit for their work in relation to the Corporate Plan 2021 – 2023 and the Business Plan 2021.
- 6.5 The final drafts of both the Corporate Plan and the Business Plan will be accompanied by a supporting document outlining alignment to the Performance Framework for the Corporate Plan and the Performance Statement for the Business Plan.

**7. AOB**

- 7.1 Board members provided feedback on the Board's digital platform which is scheduled to be formally rolled out in January 2021.