

Board Meeting
9:30 am Friday, 24 November 2023
L4.03, Brunel Building, Dublin 8.

Name	Title	Attendance
Board Members		
Pat Rabbitte	Chairperson	Present
Anne O’Gara	Deputy Chairperson	Present
Paul White*	Ordinary Board Member	Present
Patricia Doherty	Ordinary Board Member	Present
Charles Watchorn	Ordinary Board Member	Present
Liam Irwin	Ordinary Board Member	Present
Avril McDermott	Ordinary Board Member	Present
Sean Holland	Ordinary Board Member	Present
Sean Quigley	Ordinary Board Member	Present
Susan Bowman	Ordinary Board Member	Present
Teresa McDonnell*	Ordinary Board Member	Present
Board Office:		
Kay Keilthy	Board Secretary	Present
Emma Dodrill	Board Administrator	Present
In Attendance:		
Kate Duggan	I/Chief Executive Officer	In Part
Clare Murphy	I/National Director of Services & Integration	In Part
Rosarii Mannion*	National Director People & Change	In Part
Anthony O’Leary	National Director Quality & Regulation	In Part
Pat Smyth	National Director Finance & Corporate Services	In Part
Fergus Ó Cuanchain	Chief Information Officer	In Part
Anita Comerford	Head of Strategy and Business Planning	In Part

*Attended via Video Link

Signed: 

Date: 20 December 2023

1. Opening Remarks

- 1.1 The Chair welcomed Board members to the meeting.
- 1.2 The Chair noted the presence of a quorum and duly convened meeting.

2. Apologies

- 2.1 Apologies were noted from S. Holland and T. McDonnell.

3. Declarations of Interest

- 3.1 There was no declaration of interest made in relation to the agenda items before the meeting for consideration.

4. Risk Management

- 4.1 The Board considered risk management as comprehended in the reports submitted to the Board for consideration at the meeting.

5. Board Private Session

- 5.1 The Chair confirmed the following dates with the Board:
11 December 2023 - Quarterly Meeting with the Minister
06 February 2024 - Tusla's 10th year anniversary celebration, Dublin Castle
- 5.2 The Board noted that the SIC established by the Board for an appointed task had discharged its remit and was now formally dissolved. The Board thanked the members of the Committee and the Board Secretary for their work in relation to the matter.
- 5.3 The Board noted that the Director of Finance and Corporate Services, P. Smyth, will act as Chief Executive Officer in the absence of the CEO on the 4th and on the 8th of December in accordance with the panel established by the Board to act up in the absence of the CEO.
- 5.4 The Board was provided with and update in relation to the CEO's Annual Performance Review. Board members were invited to forward specific headline objectives for consideration as part of the CEO's 2024 Performance Review.
- 5.5 The Chair of the ARC advised the Board that the Committee was considering the appointment of a new external member to the Audit and Risk Committee. The Board approved in principle the appointment of a new additional external member for an initial period of 12 months. The Chair of ARC will propose candidate for formal approval by the Board in due course.

6. Consent Agenda

- 6.1 No items were asked to be moved from the consent agenda.

7. Minutes of Previous Meeting (03/11/2023) - Consent Agenda

- 7.1 The Board approved the minutes of the Board meeting held on 3 November 2023 as part of the Board's consent agenda. Approval was Proposed by L. Irwin; Seconded by A. O'Gara and approved by the Board.

8. ODC Terms of Reference - Consent Agenda

- 8.1 The Board approved the ODC's revised TOR's as part of the consent agenda. Proposed by A. McDermott; Seconded by P. Doherty and approved by Board.

9. Action Log / Matters Arising

S. Bowman joined the meeting.

- 9.1 The Board noted the action log as of 22 November 2023.
- 9.2 The Board Office agreed to follow up on the action requesting a briefing note on the provision of special care in other jurisdictions requested by the Chair at the last Board meeting.

10. ODC Chair Report on Committee Meeting of (09/11/2023)

- 10.1 The ODC Chair reported on the work of the ODC committee undertaken on 9 November 2023. The ODC discussed the inclusion of internal/external communications as part of the Committee's remit and incorporated same in its revised TOR's. The ODC's TOR's was approved by the Board under agenda item 7.1.
- 10.2 The Board noted the ODC Chair's report.

11. CEO Report

The Chief Executive joined the meeting.

- 11.1 The CEO's report as of November 2023 was taken as read. The Board requested the inclusion of high-level information in relation to FOI requests be included in the CEO's report going forward.
- 11.2 The CEO advised the Board that an audit of the evaluation of the Joint Protocol 2021 with the HSE was complete and a report was being finalised for submission to the HSE and DECDIY. The report shows that progress has been made in joint working at a local and regional level, but further progress is required on the scope of the protocol.
- 11.3 The Children Rights Alliance, CEO will lead out on the final stakeholder engagement in relation to separated children seeking international protection on 7 December. Following this a report will be submitted on the policy and service changes recommended to meet the increasing demand on this service.
- 11.4 The CEO updated the Board in relation to the use of close protection security in a CRS unit following a VHA incident. The CEO advised that the use of close protection security may not be seen as in line with the Agency's purpose and function by HIQA.
- 11.5 The CEO updated the Board in relation to the instigation of industrial action by FORSA on 25 October. Tusla remains in open dialogue with the Union to seek to resolve the current dispute.
- 11.6 The Board noted the costing mode for Private Providers of SEA's has been completed and has the potential to deliver significant savings based on current numbers in SEA's. It is intended to implement the new cost model as of 1 December 2023.
- 11.7 The CEO made reference to recent media coverage that Tusla had reduced funding to CARI and as a result, the organisation may need to cease operating. The Board was given assurance that Tusla had not reduced its core budget or local funding to CARI in 2023.

12. Reform Programme (Update)

- 12.1 The CEO reported on the progress to date in relation to the Reform Programme identifying the critical deliverables in the coming weeks as the final design on structures, the network operating model and the implementation plan. The Board noted that the integrated reform programme was progressing well and largely on track.
- 12.1 The Board considered the draft Corporate Plan 2024 -2026 and noted the additional changes proposed in relation to priorities in particular with regard to education. A final draft of the Corporate Plan will be submitted to the Board on 20 December 2023 for further consideration and approval.

13. Performance Statement (2024)

The National Director for Finance & Corporate Services; National Director for Quality & Risk; National Director for People & Change; I/National Director for Services & Integration; Chief Information Officer and the Head of Strategy and Business Planning joined the meeting.

- 13.1 The Board noted that the DECDIY had not issued the Performance Statement for 2024, however, a draft working document had issued allowing work to commence on the draft Business Plan 2024.

14. Business Plan (Draft 2024)

- 14.1 An initial draft Business Plan for 2024 will be available next week and will issue to the Board as soon as it is available. A draft Business Plan will be submitted to the Board for consideration on 20 December 2023.

The Head of Strategy and Business Planning left the meeting.

15. Financial Performance Report (YTD)

- 15.1 The Board noted the Financial Performance Report year to date highlighting areas of cost pressure and forecast overspends for 2023. The lack of available residential placements from Statutory, Private and Community & Voluntary sector means that there is a huge reliance on the costly Special Emergency Arrangements (SEA's) to provide accommodation and staff to care for high risk and emergency placements. The Agency continues to experience significant growth in service demand, particularly in the area of Separated Children Seeking International Protection (SCSIP). The Director of Finance and Corporate Services updated the Board on discussions with the DCEDIY on addressing the forecast deficit for 2023 on a one-off basis.

16. HR Employment Data Report (YTD)

- 16.1 The Board noted the HR Employment Data Report year to date showing positive trends, in particular the increase WTE in Social Work. The Board welcomed the Social Work Apprentice Programme noting that it will be two years before intake can commence.

17. Cyber Security Review

- 17.1 The CIO presented on Tusla's Cyber /Information Security readiness and improvement plans and Tusla's Incident Management readiness in the event of a major ICT Disaster or Information Security Incident. The Board noted the significant progress under the programme to enhance Tusla's Cyber/Information Security and welcomed the goal to achieve Information Security Accreditation (ISO/IEC 27001) by the end of 2024.

18. Incident Management Plan Review

18.1 This item was dealt with under agenda item 17.

19. AOB

19.1 The Board discussed the outline of the plans for Tusla's 10th Anniversary Celebration scheduled for 6 February 2024. The Board was asked to revert to the Board Office with any further comments/feedback in relation to same.

End.