

<b>Title of Meeting</b>	60 <sup>th</sup> Confidential Meeting of the Public Health Agency Board
<b>Date</b>	15 October 2020 at 3.35pm
<b>Venue</b>	Fifth Floor Meeting Room, 12/22 Linenhall Street

**Present**

Mr Andrew Dougal	- Chair
Mrs Olive MacLeod	- Interim Chief Executive
Mr Rodney Morton	- Director of Nursing and Allied Health Professionals
Professor Hugo van Woerden	- Director of Public Health
Alderman William Ashe	- Non-Executive Director
Mr John-Patrick Clayton	- Non-Executive Director ( <i>via video link</i> )
Ms Deepa Mann-Kler	- Non-Executive Director
Alderman Paul Porter	- Non-Executive Director
Professor Nichola Rooney	- Non-Executive Director
Mr Joseph Stewart	- Non-Executive Director

**In Attendance**

Ms Christine Frazer	- Assistant Director of Finance, HSCB ( <i>via video link</i> )
Dr Aideen Keaney	- Director of Quality Improvement ( <i>via video link</i> )
Miss <b>Name Redacted</b>	- Assistant Director, Planning and Operational Services ( <i>via video link</i> )
Mr <b>Name Redacted</b>	- Secretariat

**Apologies**

Ms Marie Roulston	- Director of Social Care and Children, HSCB
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**C32/20 Item 1 – Welcome and Apologies**

C32/20.1	The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were noted from Ms Marie Roulston
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**C33/20 Item 2 – Declaration of Interests**

C33/20.1	The Chair asked if anyone had interests to declare relevant to any items on the agenda. No interests were declared.
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<b>C34/20</b>	<b>Item 3 – Minutes of Previous Meeting held on 17 September 2020</b>
C34/20.1	The minutes of the meeting held on 17 September 2020 were approved as an accurate record of that meeting.
<b>C35/20</b>	<b>Item 4 – Matters Arising</b>
C35/20.1	There were no matters arising.
<b>C36/20</b>	<b>Item 5 – Epidemiology / Bradley Report</b>
C36/20.1	The Chair said that there had been concerns about the development of the Report based on the original terms of reference and issues regarding inaccuracies within it. He was pleased to note that the Report has not been shared with anyone outside the Agency Board and management team, but he felt that it contained some good recommendations and these should be given consideration.
C36/20.2	The Interim Chief Executive said that this Report represented a position at a point in time, but given that there is due to be a review of PHA, she suggested that this Report could form part of the evidence for that review. Mr Morton added that reviewing the Report, there are three key messages in that PHA needs to strengthen its informatics function, its communications function and its surveillance reporting, and so going forward this Report should be set in the context of the future planned review which would possibly address some more controversial aspects. Professor van Woerden agreed that the report was at a point in time and could form part of a larger review, but added that there are elements which could be taken forward.
C36/20.3	Alderman Porter expressed concern that in any look-back exercise the Report could still be discoverable and there is a need to protect the staff. Professor van Woerden said that the minutes of the Agency Management Team meetings recorded that there were discussions about the Report, and the minutes of the Board meetings will also show that there were elements of the Report that were concerned Board members, and these minutes are available. The Interim Chief Executive said that the Report did contain some useful information. Mr Clayton agreed with Professor van Woerden's assessment that there is the written record of both the AMT and Board meetings which will be considered by the review, but he also agreed with Alderman Porter's point. The Interim Chief Executive said that there was further discussion on the Report at this week's Agency Management Team meeting and it will be further discussed and she will share the minutes with members. Mr Morton said that the Report represented a perspective provided at a point in time. Professor Rooney reiterated her previous view that the report should focus solely on its remit re epidemiology and should not comment on the extraordinary board meeting business and other irrelevant issues.

- C37/20.3 Mr Stewart said that he was confused as to the status of the recommendations in the Report, and which of these will be implemented and which will not. The Interim Chief Executive said that this will be finalised at the next meeting of the Agency Management Team and she will share the outcome with members **[Action – Interim Chief Executive]**
- C37/20.4 In relation to the review, the Interim Chief Executive advised that she and the Chair had met with the Permanent Secretary and the Chief Medical Officer in September. She said that the meeting was supportive and both were complimentary about the work that PHA is doing during this challenging pandemic. She added that terms of reference had been prepared and she had shared these with the Chair. The Chair agreed to send these to members **[Action – Chair]**.
- C37/20.5 Professor van Woerden said that PHA needs to be able to respond to this current crisis and that as part of any review, it would be useful to have an external “critical friend” to support the PHA. Ms Mann-Kler asked about the timeline, but it was noted that this was not yet known. Mr Stewart asked if an external reviewer has been identified. Professor van Woerden said that a previous Chief Medical Officer from Wales has been identified as a possible reviewer.
- C37/20.6 Mr Clayton thought that the terms of reference needed to be signed off by the Department, but it was noted that Board members will have an input. The Interim Chief Executive said that after the meeting with the Permanent Secretary and the Chief Medical Officer, it was agreed that it would be a review of PHA’s resilience. Mr Stewart said that there had been discussion about an Advisory Board. The Chair said that the Department is keen to have a speedy report. He had requested a second reviewer but the Department felt this would only cause delay and had offered a critical friend for the PHA in the process.
- C37/20 Item 6 - Staff Engagement Session of Friday 2nd October**
- C37/20.1 The Chair said that the recent staff engagement event had been very useful and he welcomed the fact that the Permanent Secretary had taken time to also participate. He noted that from the Permanent Secretary’s comments, PHA may have its own head of finance and that the functions of the HSCB social care and children’s directorate will not be transferring to PHA. The Interim Chief Executive added that the Permanent Secretary had also asked about procurement so PHA needs to put focus into this area of work.
- C37/20.2 Mr Stewart asked whether there was good engagement with the staff and if there would be any follow up to find out if staff felt the events to be useful. The Interim Chief Executive said that over 120 members of staff had participated and that Mr Stephen Wilson had received a lot of questions. She felt that the sessions are welcomed by staff and she has been impressed by the work of staff.

- C37/20.3 The Chair advised that in April 2020 the Permanent Secretary had sought to ensure that as part of the criteria for the new PHA Chief Executive, the individual should have previous health and social care experience, and have worked at Chief Executive level. The Chair said that the recruitment needed to commence as soon as possible, but Mr Stewart pointed out that this requires approval from the Permanent Secretary. He added that if PHA is submitting bids for additional funding then this changes the financial scope of the role. The Chair added that even if PHA were to recruit a Chief Executive the final decision still requires to be signed off by the Department. Mr Stewart advised that it would now be the Minister **[Action – Chair to write to the Department of Health to secure agreement to advertise the post of Chief Executive]**.
- C37/20.4 Professor Rooney asked about the social care and children's directorate and the decision that these functions would not transfer to PHA. The Chair asked if there had been any reaction from directorate staff to the update that they would be remaining within HSCB. Mr Morton felt that at the time the announcement was made that the functions were transferring, it was welcomed by the staff. However, he said that following a review of Delegated Statutory Functions, it was felt that the function should remain within the new organisation. He suggested that it may be more appropriate to gain a view of Ms Roulston, but in his view he would have welcomed social care becoming a part of PHA.
- C37/20.5 Alderman Porter suggested that following the Health Committee meeting this morning and the criticism levelled at PHA, a message of support should be sent to the staff. Alderman Ashe asked whether it would be appropriate for the Chair of PHA to write a letter to the Chair of the Health Committee expressing concern at the inappropriate remarks that were made. Ms Mann-Kler indicated that she would like to view the Health Committee meeting before discussing any course of action. It was agreed to wait until members had viewed the session at the Health Committee before any action was taken.
- C37/20.6 Professor Rooney asked what PHA's relationship will be with the new organisation or the Group. Mr Clayton noted that this was the first occasion that he had heard this term for the new organisation. The Interim Chief Executive advised that she had so far attended one meeting relating to the oversight of the closure of HSCB, but said that there are many workstreams and that a lot of work is required to be completed in the next 15/16 months. She advised that an Interim Chief Executive has been appointed, Ms Sharon Gallagher, a Deputy Secretary at the Department of Health.
- C37/20.7 Ms Mann-Kler asked about an update on the SAI process. Mr Morton advised that it is the intention to do a presentation on this at the next meeting as a similar presentation will be taking place at the HSCB Board meeting **[Action – Mr Morton]**.

- C37/20.8 Professor Rooney said that at the recent Board workshop on the Corporate Strategy she had welcomed the opportunity to work with colleagues in the social care directorate. She noted that one of the nursing staff had commented that they were not trained in public health. The Interim Chief Executive advised that nurses within the public health team are public health trained, but the nurses within the nursing directorate were recruited because of their speciality background. Mr Morton said that nurses are expected to adopt a public health approach and added that as part of the Nursing and Midwifery Taskforce there is a commitment to develop a public health model for nursing so that nurses can develop a particular set of skills, for example population health nursing. He added that the Minister will shortly be signing off on a population health nursing framework and that he anticipated that he will be asked to take this forward. Professor van Woerden advised that within public health it was normal for public health consultants had to have a medical background and that there would have been Faculty of Public Health representation on any recruitment panel, but when public health was moved to become wider than solely medical professionals another body was set up. Professor Rooney said that she had assumed that all professional staff had a degree of public health knowledge, but she welcomed that there are plans being taken forward to look at this.
- C37/20.9 The Interim Chief Executive informed members that following the huge increase in the number of positive cases last weekend, she had contacted by the Chief Medical Officer who was seeking an assurance that PHA had in place a contact tracing service that could flex. She advised that she had then met with Ms Patricia Donnelly and Dr Liz Mitchell to look at reviewing a diagnostic model about contact tracing and that Ms Donnelly and Dr Mitchell had also met with contact tracing centre staff. She said that she now has a further meeting to attend tomorrow with the Chief Medical Officer. She agreed to share the diagnostic model with members **[Action – Interim Chief Executive]**.
- C37/20.10 Mr Morton noted that Directors of Nursing have been expressing concern about the number of nurses wishing to undertake contact tracing. The Chair added that there were also concerns expressed by HSC Chairs about the number of nurses who are self-isolating.
- C38/20 Item 7 – Senior appointments for posts vacant or due to become vacant within six months**
- C38/20.1 The Chair advised that there had been a discussion about senior appointments at a private meeting held with the Interim Chief Executive prior to the commencement of the main Board meeting. He advised that he will be writing again to the Department of Health to seek approval for the recruitment of a new Director of Public Health **[Action – Chair]**.
- C38/20.2 The Chair noted that the recruitment process for a permanent Chief

	Executive will need to commence as soon as possible because the Interim Chief Executive has indicated that she will not be remaining in post beyond August 2021 but is likely to finish before this date due to unused annual leave.
C38/20.3	It was agreed that the Chair would be write to the Chief Medical Officer to outline the concerns of the Board regarding the vacant posts at senior level within the PHA, and to note that this is now on the PHA's Corporate Risk Register <b>[Action – Chair]</b> .
C38/20.4	It was agreed at the earlier private meeting with the Interim Chief Executive that the post of Director of Operations would be circulated internally with a view to a temporary appointment and that the job description would be agreed in the near future for a permanent appointment and that work should commence on the job description and person specification for the senior finance post within the PHA.
C38/20.5	The Interim Chief Executive reported that the three senior posts In Health Improvement had been advertised publicly and that selection interviews will be held shortly. The Chair asked about the Assistant Director (Health Improvement) post and it was agreed that he should discuss the matter with the Director of Public Health.
<b>C39/20</b>	<b>Item 8 – Any Other Business</b>
C39/20.1	Ms Mann-Kler said that as PHA is entering another critical phase of the pandemic, consideration should be given to whether additional Board meetings are required. The Chair noted that previously the Board had begun to meet fortnightly and proposed that there could be updates to members determined by events <b>[Action – Chair]</b> .
C39/20.2	Professor van Woerden informed members that from next week, the Department of Health will be running a new Command Group, of which PHA is a member, together with a number of subgroups. Professor Rooney said that it was reassuring that PHA will be part of the Command Group.
<b>C40/20</b>	<b>Item 9 – Details of Next Meeting</b>
	<i>To be confirmed.</i>
	Signed by Chair:
	  Date: