



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Minutes of the Board Meeting, 24 June 2016

Present:

Permanent Secretary (Chair)
Gillian Baranski
Chris Dawson
Gawain Evans
Owen Evans
Sioned Evans
Jeff Godfrey
Andrew Goodall
Peter Kennedy
Natalie Pearson (Items 1 – 5)
James Price
David Richards
Elan Closs Stephens
James Turner
Adrian Webb

Secretariat:

Emma Alexander
Sarita Marshall

In attendance:

Catherine Ashford (Referendum discussion)
Laura Harrison (Referendum discussion)
Caren Fullerton (Item 2)
Martin Britton (Item 2)
Helen Morris (Items 4 & 5)
Dylan Hughes (Item 1)
Bethan Griffiths (Item 1)

Apologies:

Ann Keane
Toby Mason

Initial Reflections on the Outcome of the EU Referendum

Prior to the commencement of the Board meeting, the Permanent Secretary invited Board members to give initial reflections on the result of the EU Referendum. These included potential impacts on the economy and inward investment, agricultural payments, the impact of EU Directives and Regulations on domestic law, staff related issues, the devolution settlement and financial implications.

The Board meeting broke at 8.50 a.m. for the First Minister's press conference and reconvened at 10 a.m.

The Permanent Secretary reported on the First Minister's press conference and requested that communications with staff draw their attention to the statement.

Introduction to BoardPad

The Board received a demonstration of the BoardPad app and agreed to use it from July.

Corporate

1. Update on Implementing the Welsh Language Standards [Board(16)041]

- 1.1 Dylan Hughes, First Legislative Counsel, and Bethan Griffiths, Chief Compliance Officer with Welsh Language Standards, introduced a paper outlining the position regarding the two Standards that Welsh Government had challenged. Dylan reported that although the Welsh Language Commissioner had broadly accepted the appeal regarding the publication of documents, he had written to her again on some issues.
- 1.2 It was noted that six complaints on compliance had been received but that the issues concerned should be relatively easy to resolve.
- 1.3 The First Minister's target of 1 million Welsh speakers by 2050 was noted, as were the objectives of the report commissioned by the previous Minister for Public Services on the use of Welsh in local government.
- 1.4 Comments raised in the subsequent discussion included:
 - confirmation that, following the UK's exit from the European Union, the Welsh Government might continue to be a part of the Network to Promote Linguistic Diversity (NPLD) as the NPLD already included non-EU members but that the nature of participation would change;
 - a strategy to work towards the target of 1 million Welsh speakers by 2050 would be developed shortly;
 - the internal use of Welsh policy needed to be managed sensitively;
 - a new round of Welsh courses had been launched recently;
 - it would be important to be clear on what was meant in reality by 'bilingual organisation' and how this could be measured.
- 1.5 On behalf of the Board, the Permanent Secretary congratulated the officials on the work undertaken and noted the organisation's responsibility to protect the language.
- 1.6 The Board acknowledged the importance of managing the policy sensitively and agreed that a high-level task and finish group, including BME and Trade Union representation as well as a wide range of views and backgrounds, should be established to consider the policy.

Governance & Performance

2. Monitoring Delivery Progress

- 2.1 Caren Fullerton, Chief Digital Officer, and Martin Britton, Interim Chief Information Officer, gave a presentation on the Future of IT for the Welsh Government.
- 2.2 David Richards, Director of Governance, requested that current costs and costs to implement the proposal be benchmarked.
- 2.3 Owen Evans noted that a Strategic Business Case would be prepared over the coming months and he would be content to include external scrutiny of the proposal and to bring a discussion back to the Board. He also noted the need to consider how internal expertise could best be developed.
- 2.4 The Board agreed that the Audit and Risk Committee (ARC) should undertake a deep dive on the issue and that a paper on assurance should be brought to a future meeting.

3. Supplementary Budget and Update on In-year Pressures [Board(16)038]

- 3.1 Gawain Evans, Director of Finance, introduced a paper outlining the First Supplementary Budget, based on the changes to Cabinet portfolios; an assessment of budget commitments made by the previous administration; and updates on the reserves position and budgetary pressures. He noted that an interim Finance Committee meeting would be held shortly, with a vote following in July.
- 3.2 Gawain highlighted changes to pressures since the last Board meeting and reported that the Cabinet Secretary was keen that he challenged pressures. He had also asked that the reserves position be considered.
- 3.3 The Permanent Secretary noted the need to ensure that the money was spent appropriately.
- 3.4 Andrew Goodall, Director General for Health and Social Services and NHS Wales Chief Executive, updated the Board on the HSS position. He had requested letters from the Accountable Officers of the 10 health bodies. Improvements had already been seen in some organisations and waiting times had stabilised.

4. Draft Governance Statement [Board(16)039]

- 4.1 Helen Morris, Deputy Director of Corporate Governance and Assurance, introduced the proposed Governance Statement for inclusion in the 2015-16 Accounts. She reported that the statement would be submitted to the ARC in July.

- 4.2 Elan Closs Stephens requested that the statement include reference to the improved relationship between the Board's ARC and the Group ARCs as well as to the work undertaken to contribute to meeting the organisation's diversity objective. She also requested that the information governance data be given greater context. Adrian Webb requested that the item on concessionary bus passes include reference to both identification and prevention of fraud.
- 4.3 The Permanent Secretary thanked Helen for the statement and requested that the foreword in the Accounts made reference to the EU Referendum outcome.
- 5. Corporate Risk Register [Board(16)040]**
- 5.1 Helen Morris introduced the paper, which set out proposals for the Corporate Risk Register (CRR) structure going forward.
- 5.2 The Board thanked Helen for her work and agreed that it would focus on the register's content in future meetings.

Regular Items

6. Draft Minutes of 27 May and Matters Arising [Board(16)042]

- 6.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 27 May were agreed as an accurate record.

7. Permanent Secretary's Items and Committee Updates[Oral]

- **Exception reports [Oral]**

Exception Reports

- 7.1 The Permanent Secretary invited Board members to share key issues from within their areas as well as Committee updates. The discussion included updates on:
- Equalities Week, with Gillian Baranski noting her thanks to the staff networks, Natalie Pearson, Gemma Booth, and the Equalities team;
 - the inspection of regional education consortia;
 - the Wales Bill;
 - the nomination for Counsel General;
 - the new NHS Strategy;
 - the performance of health organisations;
 - an inquiry into M4 relief road projects; and
 - the continuing reduction in sickness absence and staff numbers.
- 7.2 Sioned Evans updated the Board on discussions in the last two Operations Committee meetings, which included records management, data protection, and Public Accounts Committee recommendations. The Committee had also visited Wylfa Power Station and held a Q&A session with staff in Llandudno Junction.

- 7.3 It was agreed that the informal note of Operations Committee meetings would be shared with the Board in future.

Permanent Secretary's Items

- 7.4 The Permanent Secretary reminded Board members that the next meeting would be on a paperless basis.
- 7.5 The Permanent Secretary reported briefly on his meetings with the new Cabinet. He also noted that a change to the National Assembly's name would be debated in the coming week.

8. Any Other Business

- 8.1 No other items of business were raised.

Board Secretariat, 28 June 2016