

**MINUTES OF DEPARTMENTAL BOARD (DB) MEETING
WEDNESDAY 28 NOVEMBER 2018
F3, KLONDYKE BUILDING**

Members:

Denis McMahon	Permanent Secretary
Robert Huey	Deputy Secretary, Veterinary Service and Animal Health Group
David Small	Deputy Secretary, Environment, Marine and Fisheries Group
David Reid	Director of Finance
Brian Doherty	Director of Corporate Services
Gail Downey	Strategic Business Partner, NICS HR
Sharon McCue	Non-Executive Member (NEM)
Bernie Stuart	Non-Executive Member (NEM)

Apologies:

Fiona McCandless	Deputy Secretary; Corporate Services, Rural Affairs & Forest Service
Norman Fulton	Deputy Secretary; Food and Farming Group
Sean McGrade	Central Management Branch

In Attendance:

Alison Caldwell	Director of Estates Transformation
Rosemary Agnew	Brexit Programme (Item 5)
Keith Bradley	Industrial Pollution and Radio Chemical Inspectorate (Item 6)
Gillian Wasson	Industrial Pollution and Radio Chemical Inspectorate (Item 6)

Secretariat:

Kathryn Clarke and Ashley Davidson

Item	Description	Action Owner
Opening		
1	Secretary's Opening Remarks	
	<p>Secretary welcomed everyone to the meeting.</p> <p>Secretary provided an update on:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. NICS Awards Ceremony highlighting that the Digital Award was won by the Entitlement Agile Scrum Team from DAERA. <p>The Board recorded their gratitude to everybody who was nominated for a NICS Award and to those that submitted nominations.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Visit from David Sterling to NIEA Water Management Unit. 	

1 (i)	Declaration Of interests	
	No interests which relate to today's agenda declared.	
1 (ii)	Previous Minutes	
	<p>The Board discussed the proposed changes to the draft minutes of the meeting held on 31 October.</p> <p>These draft minutes are to be revised to reflect comments put forward at today's meeting and then presented to Members for agreement.</p>	Secretariat
1 (iii)	Matters Arising & Action Points	
	<p>Action points have been updated to reflect Members comments.</p> <p>Following discussion of action points the Board:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Agreed to see how well DAERA is represented on the next NICSHR DP mentoring programme before giving further consideration to running an in-house programme; 2. Noted that ARAC would be focusing on all recommendations from limited assurance reports and Priority 1 recommendations from satisfactory reports. Business Areas will focus on priority 2 and 3 recommendations from satisfactory reports through Stewardship Reports. 	
Strategic Governance		
2	People	
2 (i)	Monthly Staffing Update	
	<p>Gail Downey presented the paper to the Board which focused on:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. EMFG being the most compliant business area with regard to sickness absence certification; 2. A proposal put forward by HRC to impose a monthly quota on competitions and elective transfers because of internal resourcing issues; and 3. The resourcing position across DAERA with regard to Brexit and other priority posts. <p>The Board noted the paper and discussed:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The background to the number of long-term TPs within the Department and the work on-going to address this issue; 2. The information necessary and the process to be followed by DAERA to enable NICS HR to fill priority posts at pace (both Brexit and non-Brexit) and the urgency of this piece of work; 3. The impending NICSHR review of fixed-rate allowances. 4. It was agreed that a schedule would be presented to TMT on Monday week analysing the number of vacancies in the Department – Brexit/ Non-Brexit, 	Brian Doherty

	<p>funded/un-funded. A paper will subsequently be drafted for December Board.</p> <p>Secretary acknowledged the work the Department had undertaken in completion of In-year Reviews.</p>	
2(ii)	H&S Quarterly Update (Q2)	
	<p>David Small presented the update to DB highlighting some key points within the report, ie</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 23 out of 28 actions in the H&S Programme of Work remain on target or are completed; 2. H&S articles have been included in the DAERA Team Brief; 3. 80% of staff have completed the mandatory H&S e-learning course; 4. H&S training has been organised for Premises Officers; 5. Three new H&S Policy papers are being issued between October and December, three more papers are with the Policy Committee for approval; 6. 30 incidents/accidents were reported in this quarter with 7 identified as 'near misses'; and 7. 8 RIDDOR incidents were reported in the quarter. <p>The Board noted the paper and discussed the Health & Safety Advisor vacancy for FFG/ CSRAFS and the recently arisen gap in Health & Safety co-ordination and agreed:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. These vacancies were top priority; 2. By the beginning of the second week of December arrangements must be put in place to fill these posts in the interim; and 3. A pool of Health & Safety staff should be developed for the Department to ensure this situation doesn't arise in the future. <p>The Board commended the hard work of Stephen Emerson in bringing the Department's Health & Safety Programme of work to this stage.</p>	<p>David Small (with assistance from all other Grade 3's)</p>
3	Resources	
3(i)	Budget Position	
	<p>David Reid provided an update on expenditure, covering:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. January monitoring round which has just been commissioned by DoF however the Department has significantly progressed this exercise internally; 2. Until the monitoring round is completed, there is the potential for further adjustments to the Department's resource and capital; and 3. A meeting between NIO, DoF, Departmental Permanent Secretaries and Finance Directors scheduled for 11 December to discuss the 2019 Budget exercise. <p>The Board noted the paper and discussed the position with AFBI spend and the general requirement for an improvement plan to ensure that a system is developed which meets the</p>	

	needs of AFBI and DAERA and to give consideration as to how best the remaining PAC recommendations can be addressed.	
4	DB Governance	
4 (i)	Strategy Committee Terms of Reference	
	<p>David Small presented the paper to the Board.</p> <p>The Board noted the paper and asked for the following additions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Paragraph 2 to be amended to reflect that officials from other Departments could be asked to attend certain Committee meetings given the cross-cutting nature of certain strategies; and 2. Highlight that all Strategies will be linked to the Living Working Active vision of the Department. <p>The Board was advised that the NEMs would review the Terms of Reference for all the DB Committees.</p> <p>As part of DB Governance, Sharon McCue also provided a verbal update on the most recent ARAC meeting. An update paper will be present to DB in December.</p>	
Strategic Issues		
5	Brexit	
	<p>Rosemary Agnew provided an update since the paper, highlighting:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. European Council of Ministers agreement to the Draft Withdrawal Agreement; 2. Work of the Programme Board - Day 1 Readiness, 43 DEFRA led projects 12 of which are high priority for DAERA; 3. Secondary Legislation – predominately being laid in Whitehall by DEFRA; 4. Primary Legislation – Agriculture Bill, Environment Bill & Fisheries Bill; 5. Appointment of 2 Grade 5s for Brexit Contingency Planning; 6. A paper, which will ultimately be put to Treasury, on justification as to why DAREA want to maintain their current funding level after exiting the EU; 7. UK Shared Prosperity Fund; 8. Resources – 89 out of 204 Brexit posts are currently filled; 9. Gateway Review scheduled for 29-30 January; and 10. Communication with staff on the potential impact of Brexit on the Department. <p>The Board noted the update and Secretary commended the Project Team on the excellent papers for the recent Brexit Programme Board.</p> <p>Secretary highlighted that the Brexit Continuity Plans for Food Security and Agri-Environment form part of the MERP.</p>	

	Following discussion it was agreed to simulate an exercise at January Board requiring the MERP to be implemented.	
6	Nuclear Monitoring Capability	
	<p>Keith Bradley and Gillian Wasson presented the paper to the Board highlighting the options available to DAERA to ensure the Department was capable of carrying out monitoring and analysis in the event of a nuclear incident impacting Northern Ireland.</p> <p>The Board considered the paper and agreed as recommended, the business case should be developed with further analysis of the options for consideration by the Board at a later meeting.</p> <p>The Board thanked Keith and Gillian for the presentation of a very clear paper.</p>	
7	NIFAIS Update	
	<p>Robert Huey provided an update to the Board since the last DB meeting highlighting:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The planned way forward in light of the performance of the Contractor; and 2. Gateway Review scheduled for 29-31 January. <p>The Board noted the paper and the contingency plans that had been developed and agreed that the Review of Options should be presented to the Board for 30 January meeting.</p>	
8	TB Eradication Business Case	
	<p>Robert Huey presented the paper to the Board, giving an update on:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Departmental single science paper on potential wildlife interventions; 2. Outline Business Case to be with Director of Finance by the end of January 2019 and then presented to the Casework Committee in February; and 3. DAC for slaughter and haulage. <p>The Board noted the paper.</p>	
9	Presentation on Marine Map Viewer	
	<p>Aoibheann Rooney and Nuala McQuaid from Marine Conservation and Reporting made a short presentation on the online Marine Mapviewer facility.</p> <p>The Marine Mapviewer displays a comprehensive set of mapped data, including economic, environmental and social data relating to the Northern Ireland marine area and guides and informs proposers and public authorities about the most suitable locations for different uses and activities.</p>	

	Closing Items	
10	DB December Forward Agenda	
	<p>The Agenda for December was agreed with the following amendments:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Annex to be provided to the Staffing paper with an analysis of priority posts in the Department; 2. Board Operating Framework to be moved to January; 3. ARAC Update to be included; 4. The removal of the paper on CAFRE HE Tuition Fees – Stakeholder Engagement Exercise. 	
11	Internal Communication Messages for Team Brief	
	<p>Items for inclusion in the next available Team Brief were:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Health & Safety Quarterly Report; 2. TB Update; 3. Brexit; 4. Presentation on Marine Mapviewer; and 5. Launch of the DAERA Awards. 	
10	AOB	
	<p>It was agreed that NEMs be given the opportunity to challenge those areas of work listed as being able to postpone.</p> <p>Brian Doherty to liaise with NEMs when this list is available for consideration.</p>	Brian Doherty
	Close	
	Secretary thanked everyone for their participation and closed the meeting.	

**Date of next meeting: Wednesday 19 December 2018
Conference Room, Molesworth Place, Cookstown**