

Minutes of NHSCFA Board meeting FCG-BOA-MIN

Meeting – 22.05.20

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Finance and Corporate Governance

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Meeting date: 22.05.20

Meeting time/venue: 11:00-12:30 by conference call

Meeting title: NHSCFA Board Meeting

Members:

- (CS) Professor Carl Stychin (Non Executive Director (Chair for this meeting))
- (MS) Martin Spencer (Non Executive Director)
- (JS) Jayne Scott (Non Executive Director)
- (SF) Susan Frith (Chief Executive, NHSCFA)
- (MJB) Matthew Jordan-Boyd (Director of Finance & Corporate Governance, NHSCFA)

Attendees:

- (PG) Paul Golightly (Deputy Director, DHSC AFU)
- (AS) Ann Sturgess (Corporate Governance Manager and Board Secretary, NHSCFA)
- (KK) Kiranjeet Kaur (Governance & Assurance Assistant, NHSCFA) Minutes

Observers:

- (PW) Peter Watson (Staff Engagement Group, NHSCFA) Observer

Apologies received:

- (TT) Tom Taylor (Chairperson, NHSCFA)
- (RM) Rachel Monaghan (Director of Performance & Improvement, NHSCFA)

1.1 CS welcomed all to the NHSCFA Board meeting and confirmed he would be acting as Chairperson.

2 Apologies

2.1 Apologies were received from TT and RM.

3 Declarations of interest

3.1 CS declared a new interest regarding the Institute of Advanced Legal Studies, of which he is the Director, launching their Centre for Financial Law, Regulation and Compliance. The Centre has begun hosting free online events, including in the area of financial crime. NHSCFA staff are welcome to attend and are invited. Because the Institute's public funding is based in part on its stakeholder engagement, it is an interest which is best declared.

3.2 No other new declarations of interest were made.

4 Minutes of Board Meeting 22.04.20

4.1 The Board agreed the previous minutes as a true record subject to minor corrections and alteration to paragraph 7.1 (2nd & 3rd bullet points) and 7.3 to provide greater clarity.

5 Action log

5.1 The Board reviewed the action log and all actions were closed. It was agreed that an action would be added to the next meeting's agenda for an update on Covid-19 handling across NHSCFA and any additional external support requests from the wider health group. **Action Point 89 – AS to add NHSCFA Covid 19 response to next Board agenda for a verbal update.**

6 General updates from NEDs

6.1 As mentioned above at 3.1. CS confirmed that online events on aspects of financial crime - including in relation to Covid 19 - were being organised as webinars at the Institute of Advanced Legal Studies. All are welcome to attend but advance registration on the website is essential.

6.2 JS updated on the work undertaken across the organisations she is involved with during the pandemic, and how the approach is moving from a crisis response to the 'new normal'. Of particular importance is support for those who are working from home, the health and safety aspects of home working including the provision of equipment, and how to build a systematic approach through this transition.

6.3 CS, JS and MS offered their full support to NHSCFA in dealing with any of the complicated and sensitive matters arising in relation to the workforce in the current situation.

6.4 MS explained that his work with the Department of Education has shown an increased level of fraud taking place during these unprecedented times. MS confirmed that organisations are now looking at phased approaches to return to normal operation while adhering to all government advice.

6.5 It was noted that CS would provide the Board 'Blog' following the meeting, at which acknowledgement of these challenges would be recognised. It was further agreed that an open letter to the workforce indicating Board support at this time would be a positive action. The Committee agreed this should be issued by TT.

Action Point 90 - AS to liaise with TT and issue an open letter to the workforce indicating support during the Covid-19 pandemic.

6.6 Following this it was agreed to hold an informal Board Q&A session with the workforce once the Microsoft Teams platform is operational. SF confirmed the Senior Management Team (SMT) would be holding their first Teams meeting on Wednesday and is hopeful this platform will be rolled out to the organisation soon.

Action Point 91 - AS to set up informal Q&A sessions for the workforce to engage with the Board once Teams is available.

7 Update from Remco

7.1 MS provided an update from the earlier Remco meeting (held directly before the Board meeting):

- Conversation was had regarding workforce planning.
- Updates were provided around the performance management framework.
- OPD developments and processes to achieve effective outcomes were noted.
- Staff survey planning and scheduling was discussed.
- An update on leadership training was provided. It was noted that this had been positive and the organisation is looking to roll this out on a wider scale.
- An update was given on the progress of the annual report, and the draft Remuneration Report was noted.

8 Update from ARAC

8.1 JS provided a verbal update on the previous ARAC meeting:

- An update on the 19/20 accounts and external audits was provided. NHSCFA is awaiting dates from the NAO for final audit.
- The GIAA internal audit plan was reviewed.
- The assurance mapping analysis was provided, which the ARAC noted showed the organisation is maturing in its approach to overall governance.
- The committee noted the change of focus in the internal Governance & Assurance work plan and the need to identify revised target dates in respect of outstanding recommendations.

9. Business Plan – Covid 19 response (papers 2, 2a, 2b)

9.1 SF provided an overview of the amended business planning required as a result of the Covid 19 situation. SF explained the focus of papers 2, 2A & 2B was on the financial targets and objectives and how they have been RAG rated with supporting mitigations. All the targets have a supporting rationale on whether aspects are achievable or not. Further consideration is still to be given to the activities required. SF opened the discussion to the Board for any comments and feedback:

- JS commented on the overall tone of the paper; it was clear and helpful. She noted that several areas may be unachievable and therefore there is a need to ensure the right messages are sent to stakeholders in order to reset expectations. Consideration should be given to targets that may need to be revised if necessary.
- SF confirmed an accountability meeting with the DHSC is scheduled for next week and these targets will be reviewed as part of this.

9.2 SF proposed to the Board that, whilst the business plan is a key piece of work underpinning the organisation, it will not be published externally at this time. This is due to the fact that the business plan is being further developed to outline NHSCFA's response to the pandemic. SF proposed that the draft business plan nevertheless should be published internally to the workforce.

9.3 The Board supported the above proposal and noted the need to maintain a clear audit trail on Covid-19 responses for future performance reporting to show how the plan has been adjusted.

10. Finance report

10.1 MJB provided a verbal update on the financial report and accounts:

- All account submissions have been made. A further deadline for next week to resubmit any further information on balances will also be met by NHSCFA.
- A response is awaited from NAO regarding the audit timetable. However, NHSCFA is ready to go ahead as planned.
- The new financial year is underway, all budgets were uploaded to the ledger in March and monitoring is in progress.
- A capital programme has been developed although there is no confirmed figure yet. By the next Board meeting there will be a report on this as well as the revenue position for month two.

11. Risk Register

11.1 MJB advised the Board that the strategic risks were reviewed on 18.5.20 and the revised risks and mitigations will be shared by 31.5.20. The risk appetite is also under review.

11.2 AS provided assurance that the revised risks would be circulated by 31.5.20 and, once finalised, the revised risk appetite statement would follow to allow the two to align. Both will be included in the next Board papers.

12. Corporate Improvement Plan (papers 3 to 3a)

12.1 NB explained paper 3 & 3A, regarding the staff survey analysis and the actions mapped in response to this. The Board noted areas of improvement have been discussed by the SMT, including progress against activities carried over from the previous year.

12.2 The Board requested this year's survey be timetabled comprehensively, including dates for publication of the survey, analysis of the findings and production of the action plan. The Board highlighted the need to ensure the action plan published to the workforce is clear and concise. NB confirmed the final format for this is being discussed and it is due for internal publication in early June.

13. Operations Report (paper 4)

13.1 The Board noted that certain elements of current operational activities have ceased due to the impact of the Covid 19 situation. Work to prepare cases for submission to the CPS is continuing, however, and there remains no capacity to take on new investigations at the current time.

13.2 RR summarised the process followed to identify and accept potential investigations. The Board noted the future planning in progress to identify the impact of the Covid 19 situation on existing investigations and future capacity.

14. ESR Registration Annual Review to note (paper 5)

14.1 Paper 5 was noted. AS confirmed the ESR registration is in place and auditing requirements will be delivered later in the year by the internal Governance & Assurance team.

15. Review of Forward Planner (paper 6)

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15.1 All agreed that the meeting had been effective, with all agenda items being covered appropriately. Thanks were extended to CS for chairing the meeting.

Date of next Meeting: 17.7.20