**Summary of the NIEA Board Meeting**

**16 November 2022**

Members in Attendance:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Paul Donnelly | Acting Chief Executive, NIEA (Chair) |
| Richard Crowe | Director of Resource Efficiency Division, NIEA |
| Mark Hammond | Acting Director of Natural Environment Division, NIEA |
| Paul Douglas | Non-Executive Board Member |

Other Attendees:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Stephen Norrie | NIEA Board Secretariat |
| Charles Barnett | Head of Finance, Business Support Team, NIEA |
| Philip Walker | Accountant, Business Support Team, NIEA |
| Charlotte Stewart | Head of Governance, Business Support Team, NIEA |
| Jacqui Girvan\* | NICS HR – DAERA Business Partner, DoF |
| Benjamin Robson | NIEA Board Secretariat |

\*Attended via WebEx video conference

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  |  | **Action** |
| **1** | **Apologies and Conflicts of Interest**  No apologies. No new conflicts of interest were recorded.  Paul Donnelly welcomed all those able to attend in person and those via video conference, Jacqui Girvan. |  |
| **2** | **Minutes and Matters Arising from Meeting on 4 October 2022**  The Board agreed the minutes of the meeting held on 4 October 2022. Matters arising were discussed.  The following action points were carried forward:   * Possible future presentation to the Board on the work of the Environmental Crime Unit to be discussed with Amanda Logan   Given current resource and work pressures within ECU it was agreed this action point would be deferred to a future date.   * Examine the potential use of Carrier Bag Levy (CBL) income going forward * Arrange a meeting to discuss NIEA Framework Document to include discussion on resourcing options for NIEA * Discuss the prioritisation of NIEA vacancies and examine which vacancies should be filled first. * Prepare final version of NIEA Risk Register for discussion at NIEA Risk Management meeting on 9 December 2022. * A brief update on next steps at the Mobuoy site to be presented at the December Board meeting. * Consider a presentation on data security / cyber attacks at a future Board meeting. | **Richard Crowe**    **Paul Donnelly / Finance Team**  **Paul Donnelly / NIEA Directors**  **Paul Donnelly / NIEA Directors**  **BST**  **Richard Crowe**  **Paul Donnelly / Charlotte Stewart** |
| **3** | **HR Monthly Report**  Jacqui Girvan presented the R HR Update paper to the Board. She updated the board on the latest position in relation to staff in post, temporary promotions, agency staff, filling of approved vacancies, recruitment competitions, performance management and absence management. The Board noted the latest position.  Jacqui advised of restructuring within NICSHR and that two new Director posts have been created.  Jacqui also advised that absences due to Covid-19 are now recorded as sickness and not as special leave. This change in NICS Covid-19 Sick absence policies and procedures was communicated to staff on 7 October 2022.  A brief discussion was held on supply and Paul Donnelly advised that given affordability could impact the filling of vacancies, all managers are advised to fill posts from supply as early as possible.  The following action points were agreed:   * Breakdown of NIEA staff age bands by ten year grouping to be supplied to Paul Donnelly. * Paul Donnelly to write to NICSHR with respect to the prioritisation of filling fee paying posts. | **Jacqui Girvan**  **Paul Donnelly** |
| **4** | **Finance and Corporate Governance**  The board discussed the various issues arising from the finance and corporate governance paper and the board:   * Noted the in-year spend for both Resource DEL and Capital DEL for 2022-23; * Noted the outcome in respect of the October Monitoring Round; * Noted the January Monitoring Round submission; * Noted the current position relating to the relevant risk registers; * Notedthe update on the Klondyke Building Premises and Klondyke Daily Attendance; * Notedthe update on Training, update on fleet management and the Environmental Economists; * Noted the update on Workforce Planning and update on New Ways of Working (NWoW); * Noted the update on the Covid-19 Inquiry preparation; * Noted the purpose of the Board and that it is proposed to begin a review of the Terms of Reference subject to other prevailing priorities and circumstances.   Philip Walker advised that year to date spend was broadly on track against profile given normal trends on spend by the Agency.  While no concerns expressed at this stage, Philip reiterated the importance of a focus on budget spend, particularly capital, as we move towards year-end. The Board noted and concurred.  Paul Donnelly thanked all finance staff for continued excellent engagement with NIEA staff on all matters financial and for provision of finance training. Philip Walker confirmed good engagement with staff with respect to the financial training currently being delivered. Directors concurred with very positive engagement.  Richard Crowe provided the Board with a brief update on the Mobuoy court case.  Mark Hammond advised the Board that the strategy strand of the Environment is now closed and that fifty applications were currently being considered. An indication of the required financial support should be available in December.  Charlotte Stewart advised that the NIEA Risk would be discussed at the NIEA Risk Management Group meeting on 9th December 2022 and requested any final amendments be made in preparation for that meeting.  Charlotte also advised that the draft NIEA 2022-23 Balanced Scorecard had been approved by the former DAERA Minister. It was agreed this should be communicated to staff and shared with Paul Douglas.  Charlotte Stewart advised that Dundonald House had reopened.  Charlotte confirmed that the workstation booking system was up and running and actively being used by staff in Klondyke building. Feedback to date is positive but Charlotte requested she be made aware of any issues that may arise going forward. Parking remains a limiting factor with the return of staff to the Klondyke. Paul Donnelly advised he had raised this with Estate Transformation Division and would be seeking other potential solutions going forward.  Charlotte reminded the Board that the deadline for having Workstyle Agreements agreed was 5 December 2022.  Charlotte provided a brief update on the Covid-19 Inquiry.  Charlotte advised that the Fleet Management contract discussions were still progressing but there had been some delay with responses from the contractor. Paul Donnelly requested the reasons for delay chased up.  The following action points were agreed:   * Staff communication to be prepared for Paul Donnelly with respect to NIEA Balanced Scorecard 2022-23 * NIEA Balanced Scorecard 2022-23 to be shared with Paul Douglas * Business Support Team to check on reasons for delay with responses in relation to Fleet Management contract. | **Charlotte Stewart**  **Board Secretariat**  **Charlotte Stewart** |
| **7** | **Consultations**  The Board noted the Consultations Master List. Mark Hammond advised a consultation on Wildfires was now likely to issue in the New Year. |  |
| **8** | **Health & Safety (H&S) Monthly Report**  The Board considered and no issues were raised with respect to the Monthly Report.  Richard Crowe raised the issue of how H&S will be handled going forward.  The following action point was agreed:  The DAERA Health & Safety Adviser is to be invited to NIEA Senior Management Team Meeting. |  |
| **9** | **Communications & Staff Engagement**  Stevie Norrie provided a brief update on staff communications activities:  This included reference to articles contained in the EMFG / NIEA Staff newsletter which was issued on 28 October 2022.The next EMFG / NIEA staff webinar will be held on 21 November 2022 and will feature updates by Directors.  There was a general discussion on communications. The Board acknowledged the importance of both internal and external messaging going forward and appreciated it is subject to available resource. The Business Support Team will be bringing forward proposals with respect to the management of communications in due course. |  |
| **10** | **Papers for Future NIEA Board Meetings**  The board agreed the schedule of papers to be tabled at the December Board meeting and discussed potential papers for future meetings. |  |
| **11** | **AOB**  A brief discussion was held on representation on both Audit and Risk Assurance Committee ( ARAC ) and the NIEA Board.  Paul Donnelly proposed to move on the appointment of an additional non-executive member to the NIEA Board. The Board approved.  The Board discussed the issue of press releases and specifically a recent case of communications being issued when a press embargo remained in place. The Board acknowledged lessons learned with respect to the managing of press releases going forward.  Paul Donnelly proposed to move on the filling of the vacancy left following the departure of Marcus McAuley and thanked the Business Support Team for their continued support. The Board approved.  The following action point was agreed:  Business Support Team to contact DAERA Finance Team with respect to appointing new members to ARAC. | **Paul Donnelly / Charlotte Stewart** |