**Summary of the NIEA Board Meeting**

**4 October 2022**

Members in Attendance:

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| 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:

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| Stephen Norrie\* | NIEA Board Secretariat |
| 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

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|  |  | **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 and Stephen Norrie  |  |
| **2** | **Minutes and Matters Arising from Meeting on 8 September 2022**The Board agreed the minutes of the meeting held on 8 September 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
 | **Richard Crowe****Paul Donnelly / Finance Team****Paul Donnelly / NIEA Directors** |
| **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, recruitment competitions, filling of approved vacancies, temporary promotions, agency staff and absence management. The Board noted the latest position.Jacqui advised that NISRA are not currently providing performance statistics but are looking at provision going forward. A brief discussion was held on sickness absence. Jacqui advised that mental health continues to be an issue with respect to long term sickness absences. The Board expressed appreciation of good progression on the filling of vacant posts. A brief discussion followed on recruitment. While progress was positive Richard Crowe highlighted the need to consider opportunities for promotion in technical grades eg Financial Investigators. These staff undergo specific professional training for three years and it is a big loss to the business if they then take up opportunities outside the business area. Paul Douglas also noted that hybrid working patterns following the pandemic were being adopted more widely in the private sector and this may impact the ability to recruit into the public sector. The Board noted that recruitment challenges will remain going forward and some creative thinking is required to face those challenges. Jacqui Girvan advised that HR are working on a more career path approach going forward. Mark Hammond suggested some representation of Professional and Technical staff would be valuable and that NIEA may need to consider some form of prioritisation when filling posts going forward. The following action points were agreed:Discuss the prioritisation of NIEA vacancies and examine which vacancies should be filled first. | **Paul Donnelly / Directors** |
| **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 submission made in respect of the October Monitoring Round;
* Noted that the January Monitoring Round will be commissioned before the end of September;
* 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 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.Philip Walker advised that budget bilateral meetings were ongoing with business units as we move towards the final Monitoring Round. No concerns expressed at this stage with respect to spend but Philip reiterated the importance of a focus on budget spend, particularly capital, going forward. The Board noted and concurred.Richard Crowe updated the Board on the status of the Mobouy criminal case and expressed his thanks to all staff involved in the case. The Board concurred.Paul Donnelly requested a brief presentation at the December Board meeting with respect to the next steps with respect to Mobuoy. Charlotte Stewart advised that the NIEA Risk Register had been updated, subject to clearance by Directors, and would be presented at the NIEA Risk Management Group meeting on 9th December 2022. Paul Donnelly requested the updated Risk Register is discussed at the November Board meeting.The Board discussed the draft NIEA Balanced Scorecard 2022-23. It was agreed that target one would be designated a NIEA Key Performance Target (KPT) for Natural Environment Division. It was also agreed that Target three should be removed and incorporated into the Foreword narrative. Subject to these two changes the Board agreed to approve the draft NIEA Balanced Scorecard 2023.Charlotte Stewart advised that the Klondyke Premises Team had begun trialling a workstation booking system.Richard Crowe noted that premises staff at both the Klondyke and Water Management Unit Lisburn had done an excellent job throughout the pandemic and in preparing buildings for the return of staff. The Board concurred and expressed thanks to all premises staff at both sites.Charlotte Stewart advised that some outstanding queries were being addressed by the Contractor with respect to the proposed Vehicle Tracking System.Charlotte Stewart gave a brief update on the Covid-19 Inquiry.The following action points were agreed:* Prepare NIEA Risk Register for discussion at November Board meeting.
* Organise a 2023-24 Business Planning Workshop in November
* Agreed changes to be made to the draft NIEA Balanced Scorecard 2022-23 and final version sent to Paul Donnelly.
* Arrange a meeting to discuss 2023-24 Business Planning
* A brief update on next steps at the Mobuoy site to be presented at the December Board meeting.
 | **BST****BST****Charlotte Stewart****Charlotte Stewart****Richard Crowe** |
| **7** | **Consultations**The Board noted the Consultations Master List. Mark Hammond advised a consultation on Wildfires would be added in due course. |  |
| **8** | **Health & Safety (H&S) Monthly Report**Charlotte Stewart advised the monthly H&S report was now supplied by the DAERA H&S Team following Philip Gault’s retirement. As Marcus McAuley had also retired it was agreed the report would be handled by exception at future Board meetings.  |  |
| **9** | **Communications & Staff Engagement**Stevie Norrie provided a brief update on staff communications activities:This included an update on the DAERA Story booklet to describe the varied nature of DAERA’s work, 150,000 copies will be circulated via regional newspapers. A digital marketing campaign will follow the distribution of the leaflet which will allow further opportunities for sharing of key messages. This will run from October 2022 to March 2023. Laura Darragh will be engaging with NIEA business areas in the coming week with respect to NIEA messaging.The EMFG/NIEA staff webinar was held on 27 September 2022 and was attended by 222 staff.The new version of DAERA Team Brief, entitled the DAERA Digest, was issued to DAERA staff on 3 October 2022.  |  |
| **10** | **Papers for Future NIEA Board Meetings**The board agreed the schedule of papers to be tabled at the November Board meeting and discussed potential papers for future meetings.  |  |
| **11** | **AOB**A brief discussion was held on data security and potential cyber attacks. It was agreed that a presentation on this topic should be considered for a future Board meeting. Paul Donnelly noted the sad passing of our esteemed colleague, Helen Anderson, Director of Natural Environment Division and expressed the Board’s condolences to Helen’s family, friends and work colleagues. The Board acknowledged Helen’s service, dedication to her work, the environment and her endless enthusiasm. She will be sadly missed.The Board also noted that Marcus McAuley, acting Director of NIEA Strategic Change Division, has retired. The Board expressed thanks for his service and best wishes for his retirement.The Board agreed the November meeting should take place at Water Management Unit offices at Lisburn and again will be a mixture of in-person and video conference.The following action point was agreed:Consider a presentation on data security / cyber attacks at a future Board meeting. | **Paul Donnelly / Charlotte Stewart** |