



**One Hundred and Thirty Ninth meeting of the NIBTS Agency Board  
Thursday 7 February 2019 at 11.30am  
Venue: Lecture Room, Northern Ireland Blood Transfusion Service**

**Present:** Mr Jim Lennon – Chairman  
Mrs Lorraine Lindsay – Non Executive Board Member  
Mr Philip Cathcart – Non Executive Board Member  
Mr Ian Henderson – Non Executive Board Member

**In attendance:** Dr Kieran Morris – Medical Director  
Mr Glenn Bell – Finance & IM&T Manager  
Ms Angela Macauley – Quality & Regulatory Compliance Manager  
Mrs Alison Geddis – Donor Services & Laboratory Manager  
Mr Ivan Ritchie – Head of HR & Corporate Services

Mrs Alison Carabine – Minutes

**1. Apologies**

Mrs Karin Jackson

**2. Declaration of potential conflict of interests with any business items on the agenda**

There were no declarations of interest.

**3. Minutes of One Hundred and Thirty Eighth meeting held on 6 December 2018 and action list**

There was one correction - Point 7.1 *Platelet Strategy paper and associated Equality Screening Template*.

Dr Morris clarified that approval of the platelet strategy was contingent upon implementation of platelet additive solution for pooled platelets and high titre testing and labelling for pooled platelet components. As of today 7 February 2019 neither of these changes had been implemented.

The minutes were agreed as an accurate account of the meeting on 6 December 2018 and signed off by the Chairman.

The Action (meeting with DoHNI – 11 January 2019) has been completed and will be discussed further under Chairman's Business.

#### **4. Matters arising from minutes of meeting held on 6 December 2018**

There were no matters arising.

#### **5. Chairman's Business**

##### Remuneration Committee

The Remuneration Committee met in November 2018, a number of recommendations were made. Mr Lennon has sent these recommendations to the Deputy Secretary, DoHNI and will inform NIBTS Board when a response is received.

##### Non-Executive Members Tenure

In October 2018, Mr Lennon was advised by DoHNI that the tenure of two of the NEMs was due to expire. Since then both members have received correspondence from DoHNI advising of a one year extension to their tenure. Both members were agreeable to same.

##### Chairman's Tenure

Mr Lennon has not yet received any clarification from DoHNI regarding end date of his tenure which is due to expire March 2019, however, he feels that he will continue to serve on NIBTS Board until April / May 2019. Mr Lennon will keep the Board apprised of any developments.

##### Update on discussions with Department of Health

The Board and SMT met with DoHNI on 11 January 2019 to discuss Pathology Modernisation. Mr Lennon furnished the Board with a minute of the meeting in which the various options were fully discussed. This separate minute was adopted by the Board. DoHNI will discuss the options and recommendations at their TMG meeting, scheduled for March 2019. Outcomes will then be forwarded to NIBTS Board in April for discussion and agreement. Mr Lennon advised of a Regional Pathology Board meeting scheduled for Monday 11 February 2019, DoHNI will be attending. Mr Lennon advised that NIBTS should be represented and will make contact with the Chief Executive to ascertain who should attend.

The separate note of the meeting was adopted by the Board.

##### Boardroom Apprentice

Queens University Belfast (QUB) and Commissioner for Public Appointment for Northern Ireland (CPANI) are running a programme to widen the pool for boardrooms. NIBTS continue to be part of this scheme. Currently there is one QUB PhD student being mentored by the Chairman under this scheme. The student will be attending some of NIBTS meetings in the future, meeting with members of the Board and SMT and partaking in laboratories tours. The Chairman has spoken to the student regarding confidentiality which the Board discussed and were in agreement of the necessity. Mr Lennon will write to the student advising of confidentiality. Mrs Carabine will forward the student's CV and CPANI application to NEMs and SMT for information.

### Mid-Year Accountability Meeting

The Chairman and the Chief Executive attended this meeting with the Deputy Secretary in DoH on 22 January 2019 and advised that the Deputy Secretary was very complimentary on how NIBTS manage finances. The Chairman extended his thanks and congratulations to SMT for continued hard work.

### Visit to Irish Blood Transfusion Service

The Chairman and the Chief Executive visited the Irish Blood Transfusion Service on 28 January 2019 and met with the Chair and Chief Executive. Areas of discussion included Mass Casualty, post Brexit links and opportunities for collaborative work. IBTS were clear that if emergency blood was required they would facilitate and are prepared to include NIBTS as part of their licence. Mr Lennon reported a willingness to work together and all hypothetical issues were discussed. Ms Macauley advised that current BEA licence permits import of blood within European Union. However, in the event of a no deal Brexit our licence will require amendment to include 'Import' as a permission to allow continued importation from Irish Blood Transfusion Service.

## **6. Report from Chief Executive**

### **6.1 Chief Executive's Report**

In the Chief Executive's absence, Mrs Geddis presented the report.

### Review of Pathology Services

Previously discussed at Chairman's Business.

### Donation facilities in the West

Mrs Geddis advised that there still has been no response from WHSCT, but will continue to chase up. The Chairman enquired if there was any impact on our services, Mrs Geddis advised that there was not as it was only stores facility and staff location, blood was not collected at this location. The Board discussed if there were other locations or options that could be used instead of the hospital site.

### PULSE Replacement

The business case for blood production and tracking has commenced. A Project Manager has been appointed and is currently working with stakeholders to develop the project governance structures and invite nominations for relevant organisations including NIBTS. The business case should be concluded by early Autumn 2019.

### Payment to Board Members

A Determination approval by DoFNI has been received and will be processed by Payroll due course.

### Infected Blood Inquiry

Mr Ritchie updated the Board, an e-mail has been received this morning from the Infected Blood Inquiry team requesting more detail on sessions within prisons. Mr Ritchie advised the Board that 1985 was the last prison session held in Northern Ireland, however, currently it is not clear if the sessions were for staff or inmates. This will be all scrutinised before replying to the IBI team. Mr Ritchie further advised that

all relevant documentation held by NIBTS has been identified and is being uploaded on the secure IBI site.

## **7. Audit Committee Update**

Mr Cathcart updated Board on this morning's meeting. Internal Audit presented their Progress report which mainly focused on Whistleblowing. NIBTS received a Satisfactory level of Assurance, there were five findings and recommendations which NIBTS management have accepted and will implement by the end of June 2019.

Internal Audit reported that they had undertaken an audit in Shared Services. The information provided showed a Satisfactory level of Assurance, however, performance against KPIs remain a key issue.

External Audit / ASM advised that they have been awarded the tender for a further five years and gave the timetable for work.

## **8. Report from the Finance & IM&T Manager**

### **8.1 Finance and IM&T report from the period 01/04/2017 – 31/12/2018**

Mr Bell presented the report to provide the Board with the financial position at the end of December / month nine. Mr Bell projected a breakeven position with a small surplus at year end.

#### Revenue

The cumulative revenue position for the 9 months ended 31 December 2018 shows a net surplus of £308k. NIBTS, excluding haemophilia, shows a surplus of £60k. The Pay position shows a surplus of £119k which is due to vacant positions.

#### Capital

Capital Resource Limit (CRL) of £227.6k has been provided to NIBTS in respect of laboratory equipment, vehicles and ICT. The procurement process is on-going all these items and NIBTS expect to spend all of the allocation.

#### Prompt Payment Policy

Compliance with the prompt payment policy for 9 months to 31 December 2018 was 97.0% and is on target.

#### Monitoring

In overall terms, the notional value of blood components issued to hospitals is 6.7% below the Service Level Agreement (SLA) value at the end of December 2018. The Belfast Trust (-9.9%) and South Eastern Trust (-10.3%) are currently outside the SLA tolerance limit. An adjustment will be agreed with each Trust at the year-end as appropriate.

#### Shared Services

NIBTS payment, income and payroll services are all provided by BSO Shared Services Centre (SSC). A monthly activity report is received from BSO on these services and services are being delivered in accordance with the SLA. A number of governance

issues arising from previous internal audits of BSO SSCs are currently being addressed by BSO.

## **8.2 Financial Plan 2019/20**

Mr Bell presented the Financial Plan and advised that the plan sets out plans and budgets for 2019/20. The Cash Release levels are not yet known, however, in December 2018 NIBTS advised DoHNI that a cash release efficiency saving of 2% could be achieved. Further cost reductions were unlikely to be achieved without a detrimental impact on service. The Chairman advised that this topic had come up at the DoHNI Mid-Year Accountability meeting and was advised that the levels should be the same as 2018/19 with perhaps a small increase. Mr Bell went through the Cash Release Plans for 2019/20 and associated risks, the Board were content that any known risk was low. The Board discussed with SMT responding to all queries. The Board approved the Financial Plan 2019/20.

## **8.3 Business Case – Review of Virtual Server Environment**

Mr Bell presented the business case and advised that the NIBTS Windows server needs to be updated. Aspects of the system are no longer capable of being supported and the business case outlines all options but recommends replacement of the Windows server environment and review the opportunity to use cross-platform shared storage environment. This option (Option 4) could also be designed as part of a potential refresh of the environment which supports Pulse. Procurement would be through PaLS with funding coming from NIBTS capital allocation. The Board discussed with all queries being addressed. The Board approved the Business Case.

## **9. Report from Quality & Regulatory Compliance Manager**

### **9.1 Quality Management System Report**

Ms Macauley presented the report

#### Open Incidents

Improvement was noted with regard to conformance with KPI target of 75% incidents closed within 30 days. 75% target was met during November 2018. Compliance with the requirement to use a timeline extension request where investigations or CAPA cannot be delivered within agreed target date also improved. The number of incidents involving donor travel information has decreased.

#### SOPs Beyond Review Date

An improvement was noted with a 1% fall in the number outside their review period. SOPs with the 'beyond review >60 days were discussed at QIR meetings with relevant departments. Progress has been made on policy documents, the small number of policies beyond review has been brought to the attention of the SMT involved.

#### Change Control – Past Due Date

An increase in the number of changes past their target date was observed. This has been as a result of staffing issues, holiday period and UKAS audit deflecting resources. Focus remains on these issues.

#### Audit – Scheduled Audits Completed

Ms Macauley advised that too many audits were scheduled for December 2018 with too few staff trained to conduct the audits. Audit training is being undertaken in March 2019 which will streamline.

There was a discussion regarding staff levels within NIBTS and how this can impact on Incidents, Change Control, Audits etc. Mr Lennon enquired if other blood establishments were facing the same difficulties, Ms Macauley advised from reports she had read, they were. Mr Lennon asked if both he and Mrs Lindsay could be furnished with these reports from a Governance perspective. Ms Macauley said she would forward. Mrs Geddis noted that Donor Services are also not performing well and advised the Board that an additional Band 7 post will be investigating incidents and training other staff. Ms Macauley re-iterated that staffing is an issue although NIBTS are trying to recruit staff, taking part in recruitment fayres etc. Mr Ritchie advised that staffing has been included on the Risk Register and SMT are trying to come up with alternative solutions to deal with various issues.

## **9.2 UKAS Audit Report**

Ms Macauley advised that the UKAS audit report was included for information purposes. The surveillance visit was positive. Responses to findings have been submitted back to UKAS prior to the return date of 5 February 2019. There has been no response from UKAS to date.

## **10. Report from Head of HR & Corporate Services**

### **10.1 HR and Corporate Services Report**

#### Emergency Planning

NIBTS has been engaged in a significant amount of work relating to emergency planning preparedness and participates in a number of related networks with DoHNI, HSC Trusts and other UK and RoI blood establishments. The Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Irish Blood Transfusion Service (IBTS) remains in place. NIBTS also has in place a commitment from NHSBT to supply blood and blood products. A Mass Casualty Plan is due to be tested with UK and IBTS blood services on 22 March 2019.

#### Business Continuity

NIBTS continues to review plans regarding adequate contingencies are in place especially for a 'no deal' UK exit from the EU. The focus has been in the area of continuity of critical supplies and services to NIBTS. NIBTS also continues to co-operate with other UK Blood services and with the regional Procurement services.

#### Brexit

Whilst Business Continuity continue, NIBTS has been assessing any associated risks, e.g. Impact on Critical supplies, Compliance with possible changing regulation and Impact on Continuity of Workforce. Mr Ritchie detailed all risks to Board and advised of possible changes to NIBTS BEA licence.

### Staff Absence

The KPI target remains at 6%. At the end of December 2018 the corporate absence rate was 6.60% which is due to short term absence. The Board discussed staffing in general, new ways of working and ways to encourage, particularly nurses, to apply to work in NIBTS.

### Staff Appraisal

At the end of December 2018 71% of staff had completed their appraisal with their line manager. Mr Ritchie advised that this would continue to be reviewed at each Board meeting and was confident that target would be met by year end.

### Risk Management

The latest Corporate Risk Register was presented and approved at the Governance & Risk Management Committee meeting. Operational risk continue to be considered by the responsible SMT member and where an assessed risk score is greater than 12 it is included on the Corporate Risk Register.

### Investors in People (IiP)

Following a visit to a high performing private sector IiP accredited organisation, the NIBTS IiP team developed an action plan which was forwarded to SMT for discussion and agreement. SMT agreed a considerable number of actions to be implemented throughout 2019/20.

## **10.2 Business Plan 2019/20**

The Business Plan identifies the key corporate objectives for the financial year. The objectives are aligned to strategic objectives considered core to the performance of NIBTS. Target dates are deliberately set as March 2020 as the Business Plan is a year long exercise. Mr Lennon enquired if more detail was need on the pathology objective, the Board discussed and felt it was sufficient. Mrs Lindsay felt that it would be useful to RAG score the business plans as they come to fruition. Mr Ritchie advised that this would happen and be brought to Board at Year-End. The Board discussed the objectives and timescales and approved the plan.

## **10.3 Key Performance Indicators report**

KPIs have been previously discussed throughout the meeting, however, Mrs Lindsay did enquire if Quality targets were going to remain red at year end. Ms Macauley advised targets should be met by year end.

## **10.4 Declaration of Interest proforma**

The historical forms used by NIBTS are very dated and do not capture information that is now expected. The proforma was previously tabled at Governance and Risk Management where it was discussed and agreed. Tabled at Board for formal approval. The content of the form was discussed, agreed and approved.

## **11. Governance & Risk Management Committee Update**

Mrs Lindsay updated Board, the Governance & Risk Management Committee met on 23 January 2019. The Chairman's Award was discussed and will be brought forward

during March 2019. All other business discussed at Governance has been discussed throughout the Board meeting.

## 12. Any Other Business

- i. Code of Conduct for Board Members – Mr Ritchie advised that this document had been circulated to Board members. Mr Lennon advised that this is formally done every year, Board members inform the Chairman that they have received, read and understood the code.
- ii. Donor Information Events for Personal and Public Involvement – Mrs Geddis advised that an e-mail has been sent to Board members inviting attendance. A video has been commissioned to show the journey of blood and will be shown at the events. There are two events scheduled:  
Belfast – 26 February 2019 6.00pm - 7.30pm, Malone House, Belfast  
Omagh – 4 March 2019, 6.00pm – 7.30pm, Silverbirch Hotel, Omagh

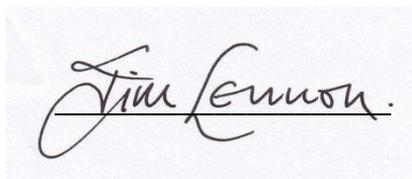
Mr Henderson advised that he thought the donor and recipient stories on Facebook are very uplifting and enlightening. Mr Lennon enquired if NIBTS IT Dept could get analytical statistics regarding likes etc.

## 13. Action list

Action	Responsible Person
Letter to QUB student re: confidentiality	Mr Lennon
Forward QUB student information to Board and SMT <i>Post meeting note - completed</i>	Mrs Carabine
Audit reports from blood establishments for governance purposes <i>Post meeting note - completed</i>	Ms Macauley
RAG score Business Plan by Year-End <i>Post meeting note - completed</i>	Mrs Carabine

14 Dates of next meeting: 21 March 2019, 11.30am, Library, NIBTS HQ

Signed:



Dated: 21 March 2019