

**MINUTES OF THE BOARD MEETING OF THE  
HEALTH INFORMATION AND QUALITY AUTHORITY**

22 April 2020, 4.30pm – 6.30pm  
Video conference

**Present:**

| <b>Name</b>         | <b>Details</b> | <b>Initials</b> |
|---------------------|----------------|-----------------|
| Pat O'Mahony        | Chairperson    | POM             |
| Paula Kilbane       | Board Member   | PK              |
| Martin Sisk         | Board Member   | MS              |
| Tony McNamara       | Board Member   | TMcN            |
| Jim Kiely           | Board Member   | JK              |
| Molly Buckley       | Board Member   | MB              |
| Bernadette Costello | Board Member   | BC              |
| Caroline Spillane   | Board Member   | CS              |
| Stephen O'Flaherty  | Board Member   | SOF             |
| Lynsey Perdisatt    | Board Member   | LP              |
| Michael Rigby       | Board Member   | MJR             |

**In Attendance:**

|                  |  |    |
|------------------|--|----|
| Phelim Quinn     | CEO                                    | PQ |
| Kathleen Lombard | Board Secretary and Chief Risk Officer | KL |

**Apologies:**

|               |              |    |
|---------------|--------------|----|
| Enda Connolly | Board Member | EC |
|---------------|--------------|----|

**1. Quorum**

It was noted that a quorum was present and the Board meeting was duly convened.

**2. Conflict of Interest**

No conflicts were declared.

**3. Draft Annual Financial Statements 2019**

Eleanor Noonan (EN) Finance Manager and Sean Angland (SA) Head of Corporate Services, joined the meeting for this item.

SA advised the Board that following approval by the Board in February of the draft

financial statements for 2019, they were submitted to the Comptroller and Auditor General (C&AG) for audit. SA confirmed that there were no substantive issues identified by the C&AG and that there are no changes to the figures reviewed by the Board in February. The C&AG has requested a number of minor changes to one of the notes but these are not of a substantive nature. Formal clearance for the accounts was provided from the C&AG earlier this month and together with the letter of representation, these were reviewed by the Audit Risk and Governance Committee (ARGC) at their meeting on 16 April.

The Chair of the ARGC confirmed that the committee had reviewed the statements on 16 February and is happy to recommend them to the Board for approval.

In response to the Board's queries, SA confirmed that the statements included in the letter of representation are appropriate. He advised that, subject to approval by the Board, the signed accounts will be submitted to the C&AG who will then issue an audit certificate to HIQA.

The Board expressed its appreciation for the rapid production and processing of the end of year accounts.

BC proposed approval of the draft financial statements for 2019 and MS seconded the proposal; **accordingly, it was resolved that the 2019 financial statements are approved by the Board.**

SA and EN left the meeting at this point.

#### **4. Annual Report 2019**

Zoe Forde (ZF) Communications Coordinator joined the meeting for this item.

PQ advised the Board that the format of the annual report had changed this year to illustrate a more corporate view of the 2019 delivery of objectives. The Board reviewed the annual report and it was agreed that when the report is published that it is clarified that the operational context for 2020 will be different, given the responses necessary to address factors and impacts relating to the COVID-19 outbreak. In addition, it was noted that no guidance had issued from the C&AG relating to annual reporting.

The Board complimented the Executive on the format and content of the report. Subject to a minor change to the foreword, it was agreed to approve the report. MS proposed approval of the 2019 annual report and MB seconded the proposal; **accordingly, it was resolved that the 2019 annual report be approved by the Board.**

ZF left the meeting at this point.

#### **5. Covid-19 outbreak update**

PQ provided a detailed update on HIQA's contribution to the COVID-19 crisis and included a number of actions taken;

- daily escalation of actual and potential risks in COVID-19 confirmed and suspected centres
- weekly quality assurance checks with registered providers by case holding inspectors
- the early establishment of the Infection Prevention and Control Hub which provides ongoing advice and support to social care services
- ongoing communication with the sector through a range of regulatory notices from the Chief Inspector of Social Services
- ongoing risk assessment of designated centres through receipt of notifications and unsolicited information, remote monitoring and regular proactive contact with providers by case-holders
- information and data flows on the long term residential care sector provided on a daily basis to the National Public Health Emergency Team (NPHE), HSE and HPSC is used to inform discussions and decisions taken by NPHE
- a programme of testing by the HSE of all nursing home staff and residents (Centres confirmed as having one or more cases of COVID-19) commenced last weekend which will enable more immediate management of COVID-19
- the regulatory assessment framework announced last weekend by the Minister will assist providers of COVID-19 negative centres in assessing preparedness for managing COVID-19 within their centres and
- the reorientation of areas of HIQA's work including the work done by the HTA and HIS teams who are conducting and publishing a number of evidence reviews.

The Board discussed the current emergency in detail, including the initiatives being undertaken by HIQA. There was a considered discussion on the regulatory assessment framework, including associated risks and protocols and how it will work at a practical level. It was agreed that this work is primarily supportive in nature.

It was noted that HIQA's position needs to remain clear and distinct from other stakeholders to ensure that there is an understanding of HIQA's independent role and remit in protecting service users with a focus on their rights. In addition, the individual responsibilities of other organisations involved in the national response needs to be clear also.

In this regard, it was agreed that the Chairperson and one or two other members of the Board will meet with members of the Executive management on this matter before the weekend. The Chairperson agreed to provide a short update to the Board following this meeting.

The Chairperson thanked PQ for the update.

## **6. Any other Business**

There was no other business and the meeting was closed.

**Signed**



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Pat O'Mahony  
Chairperson



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Kathleen Lombard  
Board Secretary

## **Actions arising from Board meeting on 22 April 2020**

| <b>No</b> | <b>Action</b>  | <b>Person Responsible</b> | <b>Time-frame</b> |
|-----------|--|---------------------------|-------------------|
| 1         | Minor change to be made to the foreword in the annual report                             | ZF                        | immediate         |
| 2         | Meeting between chairperson and Executive to consider HIQA's role in current environment | PQ/POM                    | immediate         |