

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

16 April 2025, 4.00pm – 5.30pm

Microsoft Teams

**Present:**

| <b>Name</b>          | <b>Details</b> | <b>Initials</b> |
|----------------------|----------------|-----------------|
| Pat O'Mahony         | Chairperson    | POM             |
| Bernadette Costello  | Board Member   | BC              |
| Daniel McConnell     | Board Member   | DMC             |
| James Kiely          | Board Member   | JK              |
| Lynsey Perdisatt     | Board Member   | LP              |
| Marion Meany         | Board Member   | MM              |
| Martin Higgins       | Board Member   | MH              |
| Paula Kilbane        | Board Member   | PK              |
| Clíodhna Foley-Nolan | Board Member   | CFN             |
| Leonie Clarke        | Board Member   | LC              |
| Caroline Spillane    | Board Member   | CS              |
| Martin O'Halloran    | Board Member   | MOH             |

**In Attendance:**

| <b>Name</b>       | <b>Details</b>                | <b>Initials</b> |
|-------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------|
| Angela Fitzgerald | Chief Executive Officer       | AF              |
| Zoe Forde         | Communications Manager        | ZF              |
| Bala Krishnan     | Chief Information Officer     | BK              |
| Shane O'Neill     | Grant Thornton                | SON             |
| Patrick Costello  | Grant Thornton                | PC              |
| Karen Egan        | Board Secretary               | KE              |
| Rachel O'Connor   | Board and Committee Executive | RC              |

\*Joined for part of the meeting

## **1.0 Quorum**

The Chairperson welcomed Board members to the meeting. A quorum was present and the meeting was duly convened.

## **2.0 Conflict of Interest**

No Conflict of Interests were declared.

In relation to the Digital Data Strategy agenda item, DMC advised those present that he is a UK Deloitte Partner working in the area of data & digital transformation, primarily in the UK Public Sector. He did not consider he had a conflict of interest but will recuse himself should any conflicts or perceived conflicts arise

### **3.0 Emerging Issues and Risks**

AF advised that there had been recent media coverage relating to a potential judicial review of a HIQA decision on a Protected Disclosure regarding a healthcare service. AF outlined the background to the matter. In response to queries and comments from the Board, AF advised that a response was being prepared. The Board noted that there is an approved process regarding Protected Disclosures and it had been followed in this instance. The Board asked that a briefing be brought to the Board in due course so that appropriate assurance can be provided to the Board on management of Protected Disclosures.

Separately, AF advised that while HIQA is considered to fully comply with the legal obligations under the Protected Disclosures Act, based on previous discussions at the Board about the volume and nature of Protected Disclosures being received from regulated entities, we have had preliminary discussions with the Director General of the Office of the Ombudsman and Information Commissioner. HIQA intends to review its processes relating to Protected Disclosures in consultation with her office to ensure that we can continue to meet our legal requirements effectively.

### **4.0 Annual Report 2024**

Zoe Forde (ZF), Communications Manager joined the meeting at this point.

POM introduced the Annual Report 2024. He advised that this year the Annual Accounts would not be published alongside the Annual Report. This was because the Office of the Comptroller and Auditor General (C&AG) was undertaking the external audit itself on the accounts, and the timescale for the audit had therefore been pushed out. However, there was a statutory requirement to prepare and adopt the Annual Report by end-April each year and this requirement would be met, with the Annual Accounts to follow post-audit.

AF highlighted the Annual Report captured the depth and breadth of work undertaken during the year across the organisation and commended the staff of HIQA for their work and the Communications team for their role in amplifying our work in the Annual Report. She advised that 2024 marked the final year of the previous Corporate Plan 2022-2024; the next Annual Report would see a move towards an outcomes based approach, in keeping with the overall approach taken in the new Corporate Plan.

ZF outlined the process for approval of the Annual Report prior to publication, including submission to the Minister for Health and laying before the Houses of the Oireachtas. She also advised the following:

- There are a number of reporting requirements that are mandatory for public sector bodies and these are included in the 2024 Annual Report.
- The 2024 Report has a separate chapter on stakeholder engagement.

In response to comments and queries from the Board, the following was clarified by the Executive:

- The 2024 Annual Accounts would be presented for Board approval at a later date and will need to be separately laid before the Houses of the Oireachtas by the Minister for Health.
- There would be a launch event arranged similar to the event held in 2024, and Board members would be invited to attend.

The Board congratulated AF and ZF on the excellent presentation of the Annual Report and noted that it was well written and very informative.

POM proposed approval of the Annual Report 2024 and MH seconded the proposal; **accordingly it was unanimously resolved that the Annual Report 2024 be approved by the Board, subject to minor amendments as outlined.**

ZF left the meeting at this point.

## **5.0 Board Policy: Procedure for Determining application of the 'One Person One Salary Principle' (OPOS) to Board members**

KE introduced the draft Procedure for the application of the 'One Person One Salary Principle' (OPOS) to Board members and outlined the approach taken to preparation of the procedure.

The Board noted that the onus is on the individual who is in receipt of the State Board Membership fee to declare if they are entitled to receive it. The Board requested that additional clarity be sought regarding the payment of fees to external members of Committees.

## **6.0 Digital Data Transformation Strategy (DDTS)**

Bala Krishnan (BK), Chief Information Officer, Shane O'Neill (SON), Grant Thornton, Patrick Costello (PC), Grant Thornton joined the meeting.

AF introduced the Digital and Data Strategy and highlighted the following:

- The Strategy is aligned with the scale of ambition for the organisation and specifically looks at HIQA's scope and remit in the context of the new Corporate Plan.
- The Strategy is intended to move HIQA towards becoming a data driven organisation with integrated IT solutions and systems.
- Aligned to the scale of ambition in terms of key outputs are the resource requirements and the request in terms of capital and human resources.
- The Department of Health is supportive of the move to increase internal capability within the Information Directorate (ID) and reduce reliance on external contractors particularly in the context of our potential new regulatory roles including NIS-2.

BK advised that Strategy would be presented to the Board for approval in May.

PC gave the presentation in which he highlighted the following:

- The draft Strategy had been updated since it has last been reviewed by the Board.
- An overview of the three pillars of the Strategy, the strategic roadmap and the priority programmes.

The Board noted that the Strategy is very comprehensive with much stakeholder engagement evident.

In response to comments and queries from the Board, the following was clarified:

- In order to prepare the organisation for change, existing commitments will need to first be completed. The timing for new regulatory commencements also needs to be taken into account for the prioritisation framework.
- The funding and staffing requirements for the five-year period in the draft Strategy are estimates and will be subject to further review in consultation with the Department.
- The approval by the Department of Health to replace third party arrangements with internal capability in ID was acknowledged by the Department in the recent approvals under the Workforce Strategy. This Strategy seeks to build on that approach further so that we can deepen the expertise and skills within the ID team.
- HIQA has completed a significant number of projects in the last number of years under existing DDTS within scope and within budget. Every CEO report includes a summary of these projects and we have agreed to provide regular reports to the Department.

The Board noted the following:

- The DDTS will support HIQA to take on new regulatory roles including NIS-2 and CER and will also be a key enabler for delivery of our outcomes focus within the new Corporate Plan.
- Fixed price contracts for major projects can present challenges and must be carefully managed. HIQA's track record on this issue was noted and the appropriate use of legal levers within the contract. The importance of having an adequate contingency provision within major contracts was also reinforced.
- The Executive will review the contingency provisions in finalising its costs.
- The costings in the Strategy will be finalised prior to its submission to the Department of Health.

The Board thanked BK and GT for their work and advised that they looked forward to seeing the final Strategy at the May Board meeting.

## **7.0 Any other business**

There being no further business, the meeting concluded at 6.05pm.

### **Signed**



---

**Pat O'Mahony**  
Chairperson



---

**Karen Egan**  
Board Secretary

### **Actions arising from Board meeting – 16 April 2025**

| <b>No</b> | <b>Action</b>  | <b>Person Responsible</b> | <b>Timeframe</b>                            |
|-----------|--|---------------------------|---|
| 1         | A briefing on Protected Disclosures to be brought to the Board providing assurance on management of Protected Disclosures. | SA                        | On draft agenda for September Board meeting |
| 2         | Additional clarity to be sought on the payment of fees to external members of Committees.                                  | SA/KE                     | Following meeting                           |