

Northern Ireland Fishery Harbour Authority

237th Board Meeting of the Authority

At the Downpatrick Office

on

Wednesday 13th March 2024 at 10.00am

Present:	Kevin Quigley (KQ)– Chief Executive Stephen Welch (SW) – Chair Maynard Mawhinney (MM) – Board Member Siobhan McCauley (SMcC) – Board Member David Hill (DH) – Board Member Harry Wick (HW) – Board Member Kate Burns (KB) – Board Member Lynn Gilmore (LG) – Board Member
In attendance:	Belinda McCaughey (BMcC)– Accounts Administrator David Lindsay (DL) – Project Manager (for item 11 only)

	Action
1. Chair's Opening remarks	
<p><u>Welcome and Apologies</u></p> <p>SW welcomed all to the meeting. Apologies received from David Knott (DK) and Robert Ryans.</p> <p><u>Declaration of Interest</u></p> <p>DH declared potential interest as a vessel owner.</p> <p>KB declared her appointment to the Board of the Marine Institute in the South of Ireland.</p>	
2. Chairs Business	
SW confirmed that KQ is to review the Board Operating Framework – any updates required will be made through correspondence.	KQ
3. Minutes of the 235th and 236th Board Meetings	
<p><u>235th Board Meeting - 15 December 2023</u></p> <p>Minutes were approved. All matters arising have been actioned with exception of the Stakeholder Engagement Plan which will be discussed at today's meeting.</p> <p><u>236th Board Meeting – 26 February 2024</u></p> <p>This was an extraordinary meeting to discuss Partnership Agreement and the Corporate Plan. Partnership meeting with DAERA was very positive.</p>	

	Action
<p>It was noted that David Simpson and Joanne McClements from DAERA sponsorship are leaving. Paul Donnelly has been appointed as the permanent replacement for David.</p> <p>Both sets of minutes were approved.</p>	
4. DAERA Briefing FSDP & Industry Review	
<p>There was a mix up over dates and no representative from DAERA attended the meeting. This will be rescheduled for a later date.</p>	KQ
5. Executive Report	
<p><u>CEO Report</u></p> <p>Staff issues in Kilkeel are severe with the Harbour Master under extreme pressure. Recruitment to take place to appoint a temporary staff member with a view to the post becoming permanent.</p> <p>KQ took questions on report provided.</p> <p>Marine Licencing – LG asked if dredge material could be dumped inshore? KQ noted that whilst this is a definite option in the real world it is unlikely to happen.</p> <p>KB asked could a research project be undertaken to determine the effect on potters? KQ will speak to DAERA re dumping inshore.</p> <p><u>Balanced Scorecard – February 2024</u></p> <p>KQ pointed out the significant level of improvement and spoke to the Oranges and Reds.</p> <p>In particular:</p> <p>1F – Administration Function performs competently and efficiently with excellent digital support. Resource issues are impacting several of the KPI deliverables. The Admin vacancy will not be filled by year end. This will likely stay red at year end.</p> <p>2B – Manage Capital Projects. Whilst there has been a project overrun on the Quay Repair in Portavogie this should turn green by year end.</p> <p>3A – Annually deliver plans to support delivery of the Environmental Action Plan. Fundamentals have been completed. Review will be carried out next month. Environmental Officer is due back in May.</p> <p>3D – Annually deliver an education programme for fishermen and their communities. This will not happen this year and is unlikely that resources will be available to run in the future.</p> <p>4B – Supporting our people. IIP review was carried out and we were put on notice that another review would be required. This is now due. Staff were unhappy previously due to pay and lack of communication with CEO. This was discussed in more detail and agreement was given to KQ to engage again with IIP.</p>	KQ

	Action
<p>4E – NIFHA maintains and develops its community links. KQ discussed ways in which we actively work with Community Groups and Councils.</p> <p><u>KPI's</u></p> <p>There has been a marked improvement in the KPI's but KQ advised they do not tell the whole story.</p> <p>The meeting discussed these and SW advised the Board of the need to not move into operational matters. The Board is to concentrate on Governance.</p> <p>A need to just provide summary information was discussed in detail. Going forward Summary document will appear in the main pack with the backing information being provided in an Appendix.</p>	BMcC
<p>6. Safety and Personnel</p>	
<p><u>Health and Safety / Port Marine Safety</u></p> <p>Papers were taken as read and KQ asked for questions.</p> <p>Re-coding has finally completed for the dredger after a prolonged and expensive process. The dredger has been issued with a 1 year load line exemption certificate.</p> <p>MCA have now revised the Workboat code which would allow the dredger to be included. Currently we have declined the offer to change back to the workboat code due to expensive additional inspection being required.</p> <p>In the future we may switch as this would mean we could use our own staff as the level of certification required to skipper the boat would be lower.</p> <p>KQ confirmed there is no dredging taking place at the moment. The Board had a full discussion on reasons behind this and the need to be able to afford to carry out more dredging in 2024/25. KQ confirmed that additional costs for dredging has been included in the 2024/25 budget. SW instructed the Board to leave the operational issues to KQ who will provide updates during the year.</p> <p><u>Section 75, Personnel and Training</u></p> <p>The replacement Admin Officer has resigned and we are working to recruit a replacement.</p> <p>Long term staff illnesses and reasonable adjustments remain a significant operational challenge.</p>	
<p>7. Finance and General Purposes Committee Update</p>	
<p><u>Report Presentation (including Finance Pack)</u></p> <p>SW covered the report from the Finance Meeting.</p> <p>Management Accounts for 9 months ended 31 December 2023 were accepted by the Board.</p>	

	Action
<p>The Board discussed the shortfalls and the way forward with the 2024/25 Budget. Board Approval for the Budget was given.</p> <p>Estate Management</p> <p>KQ brought the following matters to the Board for Approval:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Right of Way for Development Site. This will need to be independently valued. KQ will action. - A request has been received from a company wishing to produce electricity through the use of a digester and growing fuel for it within a current factory premise in Kilkeel. The Board discussed this in great detail and the conclusion was to request further information before moving forward. KQ will approach company for answers to the questions. - A small unit in Portavogie has been sold and the new buyer wishes to use it to initially store furniture but ultimately store fishing gear. Agreement given to proceed with this. 	<p>KQ</p> <p>KQ</p> <p>KQ</p>
<p>8. Audit Risk and Assurance Committee Update</p>	
<p><u>Report Presentation (including Risk Register)</u></p> <p>KB gave an update on the ARAC meeting and brought the following to the Board for approval.</p> <p>Raising Concern Policy – Original document stated we would go immediately to external help but after taking legal advice this is not required. KQ explained the background regarding the creation of this policy. DAERA will have oversight of it but not ownership. Approval of the policy was given.</p> <p>MM was confirmed as the new Chair of the ARAC Committee.</p> <p>Under H&S SW asked if we have access to DAERA H&S. KQ confirmed no need as our harbour masters are all NEBOSH trained.</p> <p>Risk Register – February 2024</p> <p>Risk Register – quite a lot of movement both up and down in this months Register. KQ confirmed that this Register is set at operational level. Previously reviewed and changed by the Board but can be revised again.</p> <p>SW noted we could potentially decide to split into a Corporate and Operational Risk Register. There is a need to focus on the Corporate Risk Register, but operational may need to be addressed. This will be reviewed at the next ARAC meeting to determine if changes are required.</p> <p>The Risk Register was approved.</p>	<p>ARAC</p>

	Action
9. Environmental Management	
<p>KQ informed the Board that our Environmental Officer will be returning from maternity leave in May 2024.</p> <p>No questions were asked on papers provided.</p>	
10. Business Plan 2024/25	
<p>KQ confirmed this is a holding business plan.</p> <p>The Board discussed the Business Plan in detail. Some of the information contained therein should be shorted and DAERA advised a shorter version should be available for public consumption.</p> <p>KQ will make the changes discussed and submit to DAERA.</p>	KQ
11. Capital Projects	
<p>DL joined the meeting for this Agenda item.</p> <p>DL confirmed papers provided would be taken as read and noted the overall picture of the long term horizon.</p> <p>DL updated the Board on the issues around the Fish Pass in Kilkeel. Ownership is still uncertain. £80k project is underway to make secure the training piles – this will be complete by year end.</p> <p>In conclusion SW noted we need a letter from DAERA with their strategic direction on the work to be undertaken. We do not have the resources in house to do this. KQ will action.</p> <p>In light of this the Board requested that Risk 14 on the Risk Register be moved to worsening. KQ will amend.</p> <p>KQ discussed planned projects which are subject to consultation and the final list will be brought to the June Board Meeting.</p> <p>Potential Projects and Schedule of Works was discussed and approval to proceed was given.</p> <p>KQ reminded the Board that we will have issues with State Funding rules because of the way we are funded.</p>	<p>KQ</p> <p>KQ</p> <p>KQ</p>
12. Quinquennial Review	
<p>KQ confirmed we still have not received the Terms of Reference for this Review.</p> <p>The Board would like to see the Terms of Reference and have time to review this before the review takes place. KQ will send letter to DAERA requesting this. There is currently no indication of a timetable yet.</p>	KQ

	Action
13. Partnership Planning Meeting	
<p>The Workshop went extremely well. All arguments and comments were listened to and taken on board.</p> <p>Result was that DAERA will not attend every Board Meeting. They will attend on a time slot with an agreed topic of conversation.</p>	
14. Pay and Grading Business Case	
<p>Document was taken as read.</p> <p>KQ updated the Board on events which have overtaken the base figures.</p> <p>The Board covered the information provided and approval was given to KQ to proceed as requested.</p>	KQ
15. Stakeholder Engagement Plan	
<p>KQ has updated the Engagement Plan in light of previous requested changes.</p> <p>Board approved the Engagement Plan.</p>	
16. Committee Structure and Membership	
<p>Finance and General Purposes Committee – this will no longer meet but a report will be prepared by CEO for presentation at all Board Meetings.</p> <p>ARAC Committee – MM will become the new Chair of this committee from the next meeting in June 2024. Members will be LG, HW and RR.</p>	
17. Schedule of Meetings	
<p>Dates were reviewed and approved. No changes made.</p>	
18. ANY OTHER BUSINESS	
<p>Both SW and KQ thanked KB and DH for their contributions to the Board over the last 8 years and wished them both all the best going forward.</p> <p>Meeting ended at 3.30pm.</p>	