

Minutes of Management Board Meeting held on 18th April 2016

Attendance: Secretary General (Fergal Lynch), Liz Canavan, Michelle Shannon, Bernie McNally and Dermot Ryan. Clare Rudden reporting.

1. Minutes of Last Meeting

The minutes of the meeting of 11th April 2016 were agreed.

2. Matters Arising

MS advised she spoke to the GRO regarding birth certificates for adopted persons as discussed at the MB meeting of 11 April, and would revert to FL as soon as she had further information.

FL gave a brief update on the most recent Secretary General Group meeting including the Ceann Comhairle's statement on Dáil Reform which was circulated to MB members.

3. Brief Updates

MS gave updates on: (i) Adoption [Information and Tracing] Bill (ii) Adoption [Amendment] Bill, (iii) Oberstown [Staffing], (iv) Remission Practice Case, (v) Oberstown 'Bed' Phone for admissions and (vi) Commission of Investigation [Mother and Baby Homes].

- Oberstown [Staffing] – MS will provide figures to FL.
- Remission Practice Case – MS will provide a note and papers to FL.

DR gave updates on: (i) Foster Care Case [Galway], (ii) DCYA Relocation [AGM AHCPs], (iii) DCYA Recruitment, (iv) Internal Audit Committee's Annual Report, (v) Audit Report [Tusla Governance] and, (vi) DCYA Governance Framework.

BM gave updates on: (i) Programme for Government [Costings], (ii) IDG [Special Needs], (iii) Overtime [Expressions of Interest], (iv) Early Childhood Ireland Conference, (v) Director of Educational Welfare, (vi) Goal Proposal [CES] and, (vii) Comhairle na nÓg [Annual Information and Networking Event].

LC gave updates on: (i) Young Ballymun [ABC], (ii) Children First, (iii) Nepalese Surrogacy case, (iv) National Review Panel, (v) Local and Community Development Programme [Meeting with Dept Environment], (vi) Homelessness [BOBF], (vii) CES Work Plan and, (viii) Dormant Account Funding.

- Homelessness [BOBF] – LC will draft note for MB on this.

4. GAL Proposals

Colm Keenan attended the meeting for this item. The MB considered a detailed discussion paper, which noted the very unsatisfactory nature of the current GAL system and set out proposals for developing a nationally organised, managed and delivered service. The paper set out options for delivering a national service, the circumstances in which a GAL would be appointed, possible criteria for determining the circumstances in which a GAL would require legal representation, and a range of other matters including the role and powers of GALs and the qualifications and experience that should be required for appointment.

MB members complimented Mr. Keenan on the quality of the papers, and agreed that the next step would be to create an indicative timeframe for this process once further advice is received

from the Legal Advisors. Policy proposals would then be prepared for the incoming Minister and Government.

5. Agency Performance Reporting

Denis O'Sullivan, Gerard Hughes, Sinead McEvoy and Michele Clarke attended the meeting for this item. The February and April 2016 Performance Reports were circulated prior to the meeting for discussion. The Governance and Performance Division have ongoing engagement with Tusla through monthly meetings with the Tusla Executive management team. The most recent of these took place on 7 April. Some of the major issues emerging from the reports are as follows:

- Recruitment is progressing within Tusla and the CEO has confirmed that they will continue to recruit until all posts are filled. It was noted that any additional 2017 full year funding will not affect the recruitment plan.
- The Department has received Tusla's 2016 Capital Plan and expenditure is on track.
- There has been a significant drop in the number of unallocated cases and the number of high priority cases has also dropped by 43 since December 2015.

The importance of maintaining communications between the Department and Tusla was noted, as well as the communications protocol which should be followed to ensure that the Department is aware of any issues arising.

There was a wider discussion about the type of information that the Department should receive from Tusla in relation to performance. It was noted that the Minister had previously sought integrated performance management reports and a performance commentary from the CEO. In addition, there was a clear need for fuller oversight and progress on key policy and service areas across the Department, to build on the useful information now available from Tusla's monthly and quarterly performance reports. DR advised he would draft a letter to the CEO for FL signature.

6. Sean Denyer Business Plan

Dr Sean Denyer attended the meeting for this item. LC advised that Mr Denyer acts as a shared Child Health Specialist between the DCYA and the DoH and an attempt is being made to achieve more clarity on the specific role for Mr Denyer within this Department. It was agreed that the position is an important link for the DCYA with the Office of the CMO. Mr Denyer presented on the four main elements of his Business Plan which included the Gender Recognition Bill, the Child Injury Protection Action Plan, the Ethics Committee and the upcoming Heathy Preschools Policy. LC advised that an EO is due to be assigned to Dr Denyer's team.

7. AOB

Briefing material for the incoming Minister will be finalised this week.

As previously advised, the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform has requested that DCYA host a town hall meeting on Civil Service Renewal. This meeting has been scheduled for 5 May and an invitation has been circulated throughout Government Departments.

8. Next Meeting

The next meeting will take place on Monday 25th April at 10:30am.

