

Minutes of Management Board Meeting held on 24th April, 2017

Attendance: Secretary General (Fergal Lynch), Michelle Shannon, Éimear Fisher, Bernie McNally and Dermot Ryan. Alan Savage reporting.

1. Minutes of Last Two Meetings

The minutes of the meeting of 10th April, 2017 were agreed.

2. Matters Arising

No matters arising.

3. Brief Updates

MS provided updates on (i) Commission of Investigation [Mother and Baby Homes], (ii) Adoption (Amendment) Bill, (iii) Adoption (Information and Tracing) Bill, (iv) AAI Haiti visit, and (v) Oberstown [Operational Review].

- AAI Haiti visit – MS has requested AAI report in advance of meeting with DFA.

BM provided updates on (i) Early Years [Affordable Childcare Scheme, Early Years Forum, Project Team], (ii) NI Event [Policy Making], (iii) Youth Affairs [VFM and Evaluation], (iv) EU Procurement, (v) Research, and (vi) Participation.

- Affordable Childcare Scheme – BM to provide note to Minister re: legislation.

DR gave updates on (i) HR developments, (ii) DCYA Risk Policy, (iii) Cabinet Committee, (iv) Finance [C&AG Audit], (v) Mespil Road Accommodation, (vi) Agency Performance, and (vii) Protected Disclosure.

- DCYA Risk Policy – to be finalised and presented to MB during May.

EF gave updates on (i) Children First, (ii) Special Rapporteur [2016 Report], (iii) Guardian *ad litem*, (iv) National Review Panel, (v) Child Care Law Reporting Project, (vi) ABC Programme, (vii) QCBI, and (viii) Child Poverty.

- National Review Panel – EF to submit a paper to the MB re: governance.
- Child Poverty – BM to have a Divisional rep liaison with C. Rowley.

4. Psychological Services

Conor Rowley joined the meeting for this item, and spoke to the papers circulated in advance. The DCYA view is that the term “psychological services” extends into services supporting psychological welfare as defined in the Act, e.g. family support, but there is a need to agree definitions or pathways. There is a lack of clarity also on the roles of DCYA and Tusla, and the difficulty getting a line of sight on what services are available for children for the funding being provided by Tusla to the HSE was noted. This includes services provided by the non-statutory sector. It was noted that the HSE is developing 140 Assistant Psychology grades.

It was agreed that the DCYA lead on this issue would be on EF’s side. FL will arrange to meet the Tusla CEO and seek to establish a working group (with reps from DR and EF’s sides). Terms of Reference will be drafted and circulated to MB members in advance for obs.

5. Review of the Centre for Effective Service

Conor Rowley remained for this item. An external review of the CES has been conducted and the MB considered options for the future now that the original funding agreement has expired. The MB discussed retention of the current services of the CES in light of procurement requirements, the development of in-house capacity and the scope to source services from other providers. It was noted that while CES doesn't do primary research, it responds quickly on rapid evidence and desk-top reviews, and has the capacity to dedicate resources as required.

It was agreed that the core emphasis must be on procurement and value for money. In this context the Department will write to the CES to indicate that the current arrangement has come to an end. Procurement requirements have previously been flagged to the CES, and under these arrangements the CES can continue to apply for projects arising.

6. For Noting

- (i) Submissions – Chart to be updated to remove final item.
- (ii) FOI – Appeal [considered by EF] to be noted re: Aine Doyle.
- (iii) Communications – FL has requested to see Tusla's Child Protection and Welfare Strategy in advance of launch.
- (iv) Government Memos – Changes to be recorded on memos for BM and MS.

7. AOB

Head of Internal Audit post

Interviews for the post have taken place. J. Lohan participated on the Interview Panel. A result is awaited from the Public Appointments Service.

Reports

Over the coming weeks BM will discuss with colleagues how best to promote good quality in reports commissioned by the Department.

New Legal Advisor

The new Legal Advisor is due to commence on Tuesday, 25th April.

Miesian Plaza

The quality of the emailed newsletter update on Miesian Plaza developments was welcomed by FL.

8. Next Meeting

The next meeting will take place on Tuesday 2nd May, 2017 at 10.30 a.m.