



Minutes of Board Meeting

Held on Friday 24 January 2014

At 10.30pm in NTA Offices on Harcourt Lane

Present: Mr John Fitzgerald (Chairperson), Mr Gerry Murphy (CEO), Mr Hugh Creegan (Director of Transport Investment and Taxi Regulation), Mr Owen Keegan (Dublin City Manager), Mr Frank King, Ms Linda Saunders, Mr James Deegan, Ms Margaret O'Shaughnessy, Dr Berna Grist, Ms Valerie O'Reilly, Mr Damian Usher.

Apologies: Mr Daithí Alcorn.

Staff in attendance: Ms Anne Graham (Items 4 to 7), Mr Clive Ahern (Item 6) and Mr Karl Seeber (Minutes).

* * * * *

1. Minutes of previous meeting

The draft minutes of the meeting held on 13 December 2013 were agreed subject to the following two amendments:

- (a) the deletion of the third sentence under Item 3; and
- (b) the replacement of the first line under Item 8 with "*The Board asked the Chief Executive to convey their appreciation to all NTA staff members for their work in 2013, in particular those who made excellent presentations at Board meetings.*".

2. CEO Report

The Chief Executive updated the Board on developments since the last meeting. He noted that –

- (a) The Authority fully expended its capital grants allocation in 2013;
- (b) The Authority and the Railway Procurement Agency have finalised a funding agreement for Luas Cross City Contract;
- (c) The Authority's draft Integrated Implementation Plan for the Greater Dublin Area has been approved by the Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport.
- (d) The public consultation process on draft consolidated taxi regulations commenced in December and will end on 31 January;
- (e) The CEO and two Directors attended a meeting of the Joint Committee on Transport earlier in the week to discuss a number of issues including the Authority's recent decisions on the procurement of subvented bus services when the current contracts expire later this year.
- (f) The Authority met with representatives of the National Bus and Rail Union to discuss the implications for staff of Dublin Bus and Bus Éireann of the decisions referred to at (e).

The Chief Executive responded to points raised by Board members concerning the Sustainable Transport Measures Grant Programme, the availability of rail services over the Christmas period and the provision of improved waiting facilities for bus users.

3. Update on meeting with Minister Varadkar

The Chairperson and Chief Executive reported on the outcome of their recent meeting with the Minister. The Chief Executive outlined the presentation given to the Minister concerning the Authority's achievements in 2013 and planned developments and initiatives in 2014. It was noted that the Minister's priorities for 2014 include a 2% target for growth in public transport passenger numbers and that there will be regular meetings with the Department to monitor progress on meeting the target. The Minister was advised of the Board's concern about the continuing delay in finalising the Authority's staff pension scheme.

4. Rural Transport restructuring

Ms Graham outlined the outcome of the Authority's recent evaluation of applications for the formation of 18 Transport Coordination Units under the Rural Transport Programme. All of the Rural Transport Groups who submitted proposals have now been advised of the outcome and unsuccessful Groups will be given feedback. Ms Graham noted that some Units will in a position to start operations soon. The Board welcomed the successful conclusion of this process.

5. Bus Rapid Transit (BRT)

Mr Creegan gave a presentation in which he outlined the preparatory work undertaken by the Authority to date on the development of a BRT network in Dublin over the medium term. At this stage the Authority had examined possible route options for three proposed BRT corridors, undertaken preliminary analysis on all of the options and identified an indicative "Emerging Preferred Option" for each corridor. As a result the Authority will initiate a public consultation process on the proposed BRT network next month. Following that the Authority will finalise details of the preferred route options at which point a further public consultation will be undertaken prior to commencement of the necessary statutory approval process for the Swords route later in 2014.

During the discussion that followed, a number of issues were covered including the interaction between BRT and conventional bus services and between the proposed Swords/Airport BRT line and the Metro North project, the choice of operator, the necessity for some land acquisition and construction costs.

6. Commercial bus statistics

Mr Ahern presented the Board with the outcome of an initiative that started in 2013 to collect and publish statistics in respect of *licenced* commercial bus services in accordance with the Authority's statutory remit. Statistics are already collected and published in respect of *subvented* bus and rail services including rural transport services.

During 2013 the Authority collected statistics for licenced services operating to, from or through the Greater Dublin Area. However, from 2014 the Authority will collect statistics for bus services throughout the State. The Board welcomed this work.

7. Irish Rail capacity and crowding

Ms Graham noted that during 2013 Iarnród Éireann had submitted a proposal to the Authority for an amendment to its PSO contract in order to optimise train capacity deployed to match passenger demand on DART and Intercity rail services as part of the Company's overall cost reduction strategy. This reconfiguration of train capacity does not involve any reduction in overall service frequency levels. The Authority had approved the Iarnród Éireann proposals subject to a number of conditions.

The Authority subsequently sought specialist technical advice in relation to appropriate crowding standards on trains taking account of experience in the UK and elsewhere. In light of the advice obtained the Authority has developed more detailed measurement parameters and will be meeting with Irish Rail shortly to address these issues.

8. Any other business

The Board noted that the Authority was among a number of bodies selected by the Office of the Comptroller and Auditor General (C&AG) to participate in a review being conducted by that Office into the effectiveness of Audit Committees. The Chair of the Audit Committee and officials of the Authority met with representatives of the Office of the C&AG.

The Board noted the need to monitor the use of railway reservations for greenway cycle routes.

The Chief Executive reminded Board members that the deadline for receipt of completed Statements of Interests under the Ethics Acts is 31 January next.

Next Meeting: Friday 14 February 2013 @ 10.30am in NTA Offices.

Signed: _____
John Fitzgerald, Chairperson

Dated: _____