



Minutes of Board Meeting

Held on Friday 21 June 2019

At 10.30am in NTA Offices

Present: Mr Fred Barry (Chairperson), Ms Anne Graham (CEO), Mr Hugh Creegan (Deputy CEO), Mr Pat Mangan, Ms Sineád Walsh, Dr Berna Grist, Ms Ann Fitzgerald, Mr Owen Keegan (CEO, Dublin City Council); Mr Frank O'Connor, Mr Kevin Kelly.

Apologies: None.

Staff in attendance: Mr Tim Gaston, Director, Public Transport Services; Dr Declan Sheehan, Chief Information Officer; Mr Stephen Gallagher, Head of Finance, Mr David O'Flynn, Senior Finance Manager, Mr Noel Beecher, Head of Corporate Governance, (Item 5); Mr David King, Head of Public Transport Investment (Item 6); Mr Karl Seeber (Minutes).

Others in attendance:

Ms Michelle Connolly, Partner, KPMG Ireland and Ms Derval Cummins, Director, Strategic Planning & Advisory, Aecom (Item 6).

Mr Niall Cussen, CEO, Office of the Planning Regulator, Ms Joanna McBride, Director of Planning, Research, Training and Public Awareness, Mr Gary Ryan, Director of Reviews and Examinations (Item 9)

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1. Declarations of Interest

None.

2. Minutes of previous meeting

The draft minutes of the Board meeting on 17 May 2019 were approved subject to the addition of the following new paragraph at the end of Item 8 (2019 Direct Award Contracts key contract terms): -

This approval is subject to (a) the provision of more detail on a cross-section of the principal performance standards and penalty / bonus payments to be applied in the new contracts and (b) consideration by the Executive of suggestions made by Board members relating to the content of the contracts.

3. Matters Arising

The Board agreed to hold an information meeting on 11 July 2019 concerning the next phase of the development of proposals for the redesign of the bus network in the Dublin Area.

The Chairperson noted that the Public Appointments Service has sent a shortlist of candidates for appointment to the NTA Board to the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport. The Department will now arrange to interview the candidates before a final decision is made by the Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport.

The Chairperson congratulated Dr Declan Sheehan on his appointment as the NTA's Chief Information Officer. He noted that his appointment brings the Executive team to 5 members including the CEO.

4. CEO Report

The Chief Executive outlined developments since the last meeting and responded to issues raised by Board members. The principal matters covered included: -

- Implications for NTA of the Government's Climate Action Plan;
- NTA action in response to recent cancellation of sailings by Brittany Ferries;
- Developments arising from decision by the Eastern and Midland Regional Assembly to insert amendments into the Regional and Spatial and Economic Strategy 2019 – 2031 (RSES);
- Start of tender process for new NTA Cycling Office to drive delivery of cycling schemes;
- Commencement of review of approx. 10,000 submissions received in response to initial proposals for Core Bus Corridors;
- Commencement of review of approx. 2,000 submissions received in response to second MetroLink public consultation;
- Update on Local Link developments;
- Confirmation that Luas Operation & Maintenance contract has been signed;
- Update on tender process for bus stops at Dublin Airport;
- Progress on pilot initiative for the introduction of subsidised local area hackney services;
- Trend in Leap Card sales;
- Delivery of new low-floor coaches which will be used on some regional routes.

5. Finance & Corporate Governance

- a. Mr Gallagher outlined the main points of the Management Accounts for May and responded to questions from Board members.
- b. Mr Beecher outlined the main developments in relation to risk management since the last Board meeting. He noted that a review of the Operational Risk Registers is on-going. He advised that a meeting on risk management involving NTA management, members of the Audit & Risk Committee and the NTA's internal auditors had taken place earlier this month and follow-up actions were now in progress. He outlined changes made to the Corporate Risk Register. Mr O'Connor then outlined the main issues discussed at the Audit & Risk Committee meeting which preceded the Board meeting. Those issues included NTA VAT arrangements, a suspected fraud in a Local Link office as well as the outcome of the recent workshop on risk management and plans for a Board workshop on risk management in early 2020.
- c. Mr Gallagher outlined the changes which have been made to the draft 2018 Financial Statements approved by the Board last February. He indicated that the Office of the Comptroller and Auditor General expect to issue their management letter shortly. Finally, he outlined the contents of the draft letter of representation and the draft letter from the Chairperson to the Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport. Following discussion, the Board approved the amendments to the draft 2018 Financial Statements and the draft letters subject to a change to the draft letter to the Minister to draw attention to the suspected fraud issue referred to by Mr O'Connor.

- d. The Chief Executive updated the Board on the NTA's plans for succession planning in key areas across the organisation.
- e. Mr Beecher outlined proposed changes to the Board's Standing Orders with regard to the distribution of documentation. Following discussion, the Board approved the proposals subject to some revisions and agreed that the updated Standing Orders should be circulated to Board members.

6. BusConnects Preliminary Business Case presentation

Mr Creegan noted that the BusConnects Dublin Programme comprises a number of distinct elements including the redesign of the bus network, the implementation of continuous bus and cycle lanes, park & ride facilities, high-quality bus stops, next generation ticketing as well as a low emission bus fleet. Accordingly, it had been determined in consultation with the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport and the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform that the BusConnects Programme should be the subject of a programme appraisal rather than the more conventional project appraisal.

Ms Connolly and Ms Cummins noted that programme appraisals are permitted under the Public Spending Code. They advised that a programme appraisal was appropriate in this instance due to inter-linked nature of some of the key components of BusConnects with benefits of the total programme contingent on all components being delivered. Furthermore, it was challenging to include individual programme complements appropriately under conventional benefit quantification.

They then outlined the approach and options considered in the preparation of the preliminary business case and the preliminary appraisal results as well as the steps to completion of the process.

They noted that the programme appraisal approach would have to be reconfirmed with Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport and the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform in advance of developing the detailed business case.

During the discussion that followed Ms Connolly, Ms Cummins and Mr King responded to questions from Board members. The Chairperson noted that the detailed business case is expected to be presented to the Board for consideration towards the end of 2019.

7. Board Effectiveness Review

The Chairperson noted that the Board's annual review of its effectiveness, which is a requirement of the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies, would be undertaken at its next meeting. In preparation for that meeting he asked Board members to consider whether there are any areas they consider could further improve the effectiveness of the Board, and also where existing practices are working well and which should be maintained or developed further.

8. Any other business

It was agreed that a presentation on public transport accessibility will be made to the Board in the autumn.

A Board member outlined proposals for additional key performance indicators for inclusion in the NTA's contracts with public transport operators for the delivery of services. The Chief Executive explained that mystery shopping is used to monitor the performance of operators in the delivery of services ranging from the use of ramps to the cleanliness of vehicles. She undertook to review the suggestions made with regard to accessibility and customer care.

The Board discussed a suggestion by a Board member that the NTA set aside some funding to facilitate public transport research and innovation projects. It was agreed that this suggestion should be taken into consideration in the development of business plans for 2020.

9. Meeting with Planning Regulator

The Chairperson congratulated Mr Cussen on his appointment as Planning Regulator and welcomed his colleagues to the NTA Offices.

Mr Cussen outlined the nature and extent of planning system in Ireland and the functions of the Office of the Planning Regulator, whose purpose is to oversee the effective delivery of planning services to the public by local authorities and An Bord Pleanála ensuring quality outcomes in relation to proper planning and sustainable development. He also indicated a number of areas where his office would welcome the input and assistance of the NTA including transport-related assessments of plans.

The Chairperson thanked Mr Cussen for his presentation. He noted that Office of the Planning Regulator and the NTA share common interests in the area of planning and he indicated that the NTA would do all that it could to assist his Office in the discharge of its functions.

Next Meeting: Friday 12 July 2019 @ 10.30am in the NTA Offices.

Signed: _____
Chairperson

Dated: _____