



Minutes of Board Meeting

Held on Friday 15 November 2019

At 10.30am in NTA Offices

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

Apologies: None.

Staff in attendance: Mr Philip L'Estrange, Director, Finance & Corporate Services / Board Secretary; 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, Mr Gerard McBrien, Risk Manager, Ms Freda Quinlan, Strategic Finance Manager, Mr Mark O'Sullivan, Head of PSO & Ticketing Finance (Item 5); Mr Barry Dorgan, Head of Ticketing Systems, Mr Fran Kehoe, Procurement Officer (Item 6); Mr Barry Colleary, Head of Transport Modelling (Item 10); Mr Karl Seeber (Minutes).

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1. Declarations of Interest

None.

2. Minutes of previous meeting

The draft minutes of the Board meeting on 18 October 2019 were approved subject to the following changes: -

- In Item 3 (CEO Report) insertion of additional bullet point as follows *“Approval of the Authority’s Integrated Implementation Plan by the Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport subject to some amendments;”*
- Substitution of the second sentence of Item 5(c) (Finance & Corporate Governance) with *“Following discussion, the Board authorised the Authority to conduct business with Bank of Ireland and the National Treasury Management Agency in accordance with their standard customer mandate and approved the list of authorised signatories on the new accounts as presented to the Board.”*

3. Matters Arising & Board Schedule

The Chairperson welcomed Mr Gray to the Board.

The Board reviewed the schedule of matters for consideration at future Board meetings.

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: -

- Discussion by Public Accounts Committee of the Authority's use of outsourced placements;
- Developments arising from the decision by the Eastern and Midland Regional Assembly to insert amendments into the Regional and Spatial and Economic Strategy 2019 – 2031;
- Update on the BusConnects Programme including current public consultation on proposals for the revised bus network and developments regarding core bus corridors;
- Update on rural transport matters;
- The introduction of 24 hour services on two routes in Dublin and the impending transfer of a number of commuter routes from Bus Éireann to Go Ahead Ireland;
- Update on public consultation of Draft Code of Practice in respect of vehicle clamping.
- Request by Taxi Advisory Committee for a short deferral of decision on the Taxi Fares Scheme;
- Results of recent exercise which assessed customer experience of the Leap and TFI brands.

5. Finance & Corporate Governance

- a. Mr Gallagher outlined the main points of the Management Accounts for October and responded to questions from Board members.
- b. Mr Beecher outlined the main developments in relation to risk management since the last Board meeting. During the discussion that followed the Board noted the growing gap between the cost of providing public transport services to free travel passes holders and the payment received by operators from the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection (DEASP) for doing so. Mr Gaston explained that the NTA is engaging directly with DEASP in the matter. The Board expressed concern that the funding gap is currently being met from the PSO budget, which was limiting the scope for development and expansion of public transport services generally. It noted that this position was not sustainable over the longer term.
- c. Mr L'Estrange noted that a progress report on the Authority's Statement of Strategy had been circulated to the Board and would be considered at the next Board meeting. Mr L'Estrange noted that overall progress had been good. Mr L'Estrange responded to questions from Board members.
- d. Following a presentation by Ms Quinlan and discussion, the Board approved the capital budget as presented to it.
- e. Mr O'Sullivan gave a presentation on the emerging position concerning the proposed 2020 budget for the provision of subsidised (PSO) public transport services. The Board noted that the emerging picture is quite stark and is likely to impact on the Authority's capacity to maintain existing services and deliver planned new services. It was noted that operators are already incentivised to achieve efficiencies in the delivery of services under their contracts with the Authority. The Chairperson indicated that the Board would reconsider the matter once the Authority's 2020 Exchequer allocation has been confirmed.
- f. The CEO presented the draft 2020 Business Plan. She noted that the Authority's administrative budget for 2020 has yet to be finalised. The Chairperson indicated that the draft Plan would be presented to the Board for approval in due course.
- g. The Board approved a draft Treasury Policy subject to an amendment to the document.

6. Procurement

Mr Dorgan explained that a review had been undertaken by the NTA of the current method of operation of the Tax Saver scheme as a whole. This review highlighted a number of issues with the way in which Tax Saver is operated and highlighted a number of areas where the customer experience for both the employer and employee could be improved.

In response, the Authority aims to provide an accessible single point for employers to order Tax Saver tickets, offering a user-friendly system for employers and employees alike, with the aim of increasing the use of public transportation by making it easier for employers to participate in the Tax Saver scheme, thus increasing the number of Tax Saver tickets being purchased by commuters.

Following discussion, the Board approved the award of the contract for the provision of tax saver website and operations services to DXC Technology, for a period of 5 years from the operational services start date. The contract will include an option for the Authority to extend the term for a further period or periods of up to 5 years in total, in accordance with the provisions of the contract.

7. Direct Award Contracts

The Chief Executive noted that the Authority has now finalised the drafting of new direct award contracts with Bus Éireann, Dublin Bus and Iarnród Éireann for the provision of PSO bus and rail services. She outlined details of a number of changes to the key contractual terms since they were originally presented to the Board in May 2019.

Following discussion, the Board approved the changes to the main contract terms for the Direct Award Contracts to Bus Éireann, Dublin Bus and Iarnród Éireann and authorised the CEO to finalise the contracts on the approved terms by 30 November 2019.

8. Park & Ride Strategy

Mr Creegan noted that Action 89 of the Government's Climate Action Plan requires the establishment of a park and ride development office by the Authority as well as the development of a five-year strategy and implementation plan. In response the Authority had developed an initial outline strategy and high level implementation plan, which will be updated and revised following establishment of the park and ride development office. Mr Creegan noted that a tender process is currently underway to procure the necessary resources for that purpose.

Following discussion, the Board approved the initial outline strategy subject to the development of the detailed strategy during 2020 and inclusion of the work programme in the Authority's 2020 business plan.

9. Roadmap to Bus Fleet Strategy

Mr Creegan noted that Action 85 of the Government's Climate Action Plan requires the "Adoption of Medium Term Fleet Technology Pathway for the Public Bus Fleet" by the end of 2019. He noted that a decision had been taken earlier this year to purchase diesel-electric hybrid buses as an interim solution pending developments in relation to double deck electric fleet and other technologies.

He explained that the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport have recently advised that the action set out in the Climate Action Plan requires the identification, before the end of 2019, of the technology to be used subsequent to the current interim hybrid approach. Given various recent technology developments, it does not appear prudent to make decisions until some of those technologies have advanced further.

Accordingly, in adherence to Action 85 above, it is proposed to set out the “Pathway” for the technology decision in relation to the public bus fleet, rather than determine at this point in time the final technology solution.

The Board noted the proposed technology pathway as outlined by Mr Creegan.

10. Transport Modelling presentation

Mr Colleary outlined the main features of the Authority’s regional modelling system, which is widely used in assessing the transport impacts of public and private projects ranging from the preparation of regional transport strategies to analysis of the transport impact of local shopping and housing developments. He outlined the travel behaviours which need to be represented, the factors which influence travel choices and the available data sources and how this is brought together in the regional modelling system. Mr Colleary then responded to questions from Board members.

11. Any other business

The Chairperson made a presentation to Dr Grist to mark her final meeting after 10 years as a member of the Board. Dr Grist thanked her Board colleagues and the management and staff of the Authority for their support during her time as a Board member.

Next Meeting: Friday 13 December 2019 @ 10.30am in the NTA Offices.

Signed: _____

Chairperson

Dated: _____

9/1/2020