



## **Minutes of Board Meeting**

**Held on Friday 21 February 2020**

**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, Ms Ann Fitzgerald, Mr Frank O'Connor, Mr Brian McCormick, Mr Kevin Kelly.

**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; Ms Wendy Thompson, Director, Transport Regulation; Mr David O'Flynn, Senior Finance Manager (Item 5); Mr Noel Beecher, Head of Governance, Mr Gerard McBrien, Risk Manager (Item 5); Mr Bernard Higgins, Head of Technology Services Group, Mr Mark Bradwell, Procurement Manager, Mr Gerard Deenihan, Procurement Support Officer, Mr Fran Kehoe, Procurement Officer (Item 6); Mr Karl Seeber (Minutes).

**Others in attendance:** None.

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### **1. Declarations of Interest**

None.

### **2. Minutes of previous meeting**

The draft minutes of the Board meeting on 17 January 2020 were approved without amendment.

### **3. Matters Arising & Board Schedule**

The Chairperson noted that it is unlikely that the current Board vacancy will be filled in the short term.

He drew attention to a number of major issues which are due to come before the Board in the near future and he indicated that the Executive would arrange detailed background briefing sessions for Board members in advance of the relevant 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: -

- Publication of Transport Strategy for Cork Metropolitan Area;

- Publication of revised proposals for BusConnects Core Bus Corridors;
- Formal launch of new urban bus services in Kilkenny City;
- Update on Marine Passenger Rights case;
- Update on measures being implemented to ensure that taxi, hackney and limousine vehicles can continue to undergo the full NCT test pending the resumption of normal services following the discovery of cracks in lifting equipment.

The Chief Executive drew attention to an issue which had arisen in relation to a Company providing services on behalf of the Authority. She noted that the situation is being actively managed and that corrective measures have been implemented.

## **5. Finance & Corporate Governance**

- a. Mr O’Flynn outlined items of note and key changes in the draft Financial Statements 2019. He noted that the Office of the Comptroller and Auditor General has now commenced its audit of the Authority’s activities in 2019. Mr O’Connor confirmed that the Audit and Risk Committee had reviewed the draft Financial Statements and was recommending their approval by the Board. Following discussion, the Board approved the Authority’s draft Financial Statements for 2019 and their submission to the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport. Mr O’Flynn advised that the Management Accounts for January and February will be presented to the Board at its next meeting and he confirmed that there were no issues of concern at this stage.
- b. Mr O’Connor outlined the main topics that had been considered at the most recent meeting of the Audit and Risk Committee including the draft Financial Statements 2019, an issue in relation to a Company providing services on behalf of the Authority, planned audits in 2020, GDPR assurance and the audit of a former Local Link company. Finally, he noted that the Audit and Risk Committee will be reflecting in due course on the outcome of a recent Board discussion on risk management including appropriate follow up action. Mr Beecher outlined recent changes in the Corporate Risk Register. The Board discussed some recent external developments with possible risk implications for the Authority.

## **6. Procurement**

- a. Mr Higgins outlined the procurement process undertaken by the Authority in respect of the operation, content management, maintenance and provision of multi-operator real time passenger information displays. Following discussion, the Board approved the award of the relevant contract to Vix Technology Limited, for a period of 5 years with an option for the Authority to extend the term for a further period or periods of up to 5 years in total.
- b. Following a presentation by Mr Creegan and subsequent discussion, the Board approved the award of a single supplier framework agreement for the purchase of double-deck regional commuter vehicles buses to VDL Bus & Coach B.V. and the placing of an initial order under that framework for 30 vehicles.

## **7. Taxi Fares Order**

Ms Thompson recalled that a review of the maximum fares is carried out approximately every two years to allow adjustments for changes in the operating costs and market environment facing the taxi industry. The last review was undertaken in 2017 and an increase in taxi fares in the order of 3.2% came into effect in February 2018.

Ms Thompson noted that the latest review of the maximum taxi fares was published in September 2019 and a public consultation was undertaken at that stage on a proposal to implement an average 4.5% increase across the Initial Charge and Tariffs A & B. She pointed out that the review included a proposal to mandate cashless payment acceptance in taxis in response to the rapidly increasing trend towards cashless payment for goods and services and that this change had been factored into the proposed increase.

Ms Thompson explained that in light of the outcome of the public consultation it was considered that an average 5% increase across the Initial Charge and Tariffs A & B is considered more appropriate increase to cover the additional costs incurred in mandating updated payment options. She noted that it would take a number of months to complete the process of programming all taximeters with the new fare tables, together with verification of each taximeter by the Legal Metrology Service of the National Standards Authority of Ireland. Accordingly, it was proposed that the new maximum fares should not come into operation until 1 July 2020.

Following discussion, the Board approved the making of the Taxi Regulation (Maximum Fares) Order 2020 in line with the draft document presented for consideration.

#### **8. Commencement of public consultation on the Draft Taxi Regulation for the acceptance of Cashless payments**

Ms Thompson noted that, as outlined under agenda item 7, a proposal to introduce a mandate that drivers provide in-taxi cashless payment facilities had been included in the 2019 National Maximum Taxi Fare Review. On the basis of the research conducted for the purpose of the taxi fare review, it is proposed to introduce this mandated in-taxi facility on a phased basis, largely mirroring both consumer demand and Wi-Fi coverage.

Ms Thompson explained that the Authority is statutorily enabled to make regulations with regard to the methods of payment of fares including cashless payment acceptance in taxis. In that regard, she advised that the Authority is required to first publish a draft of any proposed regulations and consider any representations in the matter.

Ms Thompson advised that the Authority had prepared a draft regulation to require the provision of in-taxi cashless payment acceptance facilities by drivers operating at Dublin Airport, Cork Airport, Shannon Airport and throughout the City and County of Dublin along with requirements regarding receipts and security of payment devices.

Following discussion, the Board approved the holding of a public consultation on the draft Small Public Service Vehicle (Cashless Payment) Regulations 2020 in line with the draft document presented for consideration. Ms Thompson indicated that the matter will be brought before the Board for final decision following the conclusion of the public consultation process.

#### **9. Fares 2020 Update**

The Chief Executive recalled that the process of setting fares in respect of the principal contracted bus and rail services has been split into two parts. Last October, the Authority had published its determination in respect of annual and monthly fares and those adjustments had come into effect last December.

The Chief Executive explained that a review of all other fares has now been completed and she outlined the main features of the Authority's determination, which will come into effect on 30 March 2020. The Chief Executive responded to questions from Board members regarding the proposed fare adjustments.

**10. Any other business**

None.

**11. Meeting without Executive**

None.

**Next Meeting: Friday 20 March 2020 @ 10.30am in the NTA Offices.**

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
**Chairperson**

Dated: \_\_\_\_\_