



Minutes of Board Meeting

Held via Microsoft Teams on Friday 20th December 2024

Board Members in attendance

Mr Peter Strachan (Chairperson), Mr Hugh Creegan (Interim CEO), Mr Pat Mangan, Mr Brian McCormick, Mr Iain Docherty, Ms Eleanor O’Neill, Mr Richard Shakespeare (CEO of Dublin City Council), Ms Ann Fitzgerald, Mr Frank O’Connor.

Apologies: Ms Joyce Loughnan.

Others in attendance

All Items: Mr Philip L’Estrange, Director of Finance & Corporate Services; Mr Jeremy Ryan, Director of Public Transport Services; Mr Declan Sheehan, Chief Information Officer, Mr Richard Kelly, HEO (Minutes); Mr Gerard Cuddihy, Head of Governance - Chief Risk Officer.

Item 5: Mr David O’Flynn, Group Head of Finance and Deputy CFO; Ms Joanne Regan, Head of Finance – Public Transport Services; Ms Hannagh Golden, Senior Capital Finance Manager.

Item 7: Mr Conor Daly, BusConnects Programme Integration Director; Mr Aidan Gallagher, Head of BusConnects Dublin Infrastructure.

Item 8: Ms Roisin Cullinan, Head of Licensing, Transport Regulation; Mr Mark Bradwell, Head of Procurement and Contract Management; Mr Derek Malone, Head of Transport Technology Operations.

Item 11: Ms Siobhan O’Mahoney, Head of Public Transport Contracts Tendering.

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1. Declarations of Interest

a) Declarations of Interest

None.

2. Minutes

a) Minutes of Previous Meeting

The draft minutes of the Board meeting held on 15th November 2024 were approved.

3. Matters Arising & Board Schedule

The Board meeting dates for 2025 were noted by the Board.

The Board approved the appointment of Hugh Creegan as Interim Chief Executive Officer.

The Board noted that the appointment of Brian McCormick to the position of Chairperson of the Audit and Risk Committee (ARC) had been approved by correspondence in the period since the November 2024 meeting.

4. CEO Report & Statement of Strategy Quarterly Update

a) CEO Report

The Interim Chief Executive outlined key developments since the last meeting and provided an update on various items. The Interim Chief Executive then responded to other matters raised by Board members.

5. Finance Matters

a) Finance Report

Mr O'Flynn presented the financial report on the Authority's current financial position and responded to questions from Board members.

b) Budget 2025

Mr O'Flynn provided an overview of the proposed 2025 Budget for the National Transport Authority in the areas of Capital (including Accessibility), Public Service Obligation (including Rural Transport) and Administration expenditure. An extensive discussion took place on this item, following which the Board approved the capital investment section of the 2025 Budget.

In relation to the Public Service Obligation (PSO) budget, the Board expressed its serious concern at the shortfall between the allocated PSO funding for 2025 and the actual cost of the intended service provision. The Board noted the commitment of the Department of Transport to support the provision of public transport services throughout 2025 in line with planned service levels, and that similar shortfalls in the two prior budgets were subsequently addressed by supplementary funding provision.

However, the Board considers that this reliance on subsequent uncommitted allocations does not reflect best governance practice, and seeks early engagement with the new Minister for Transport to ensure that this is addressed as part of the next budget discussions. In the light of these concerns, the Board did not approve the PSO 2025 Budget but did authorise continued expenditure by the Executive in line with the planned budget pending an engagement with the new Minister for Transport on this issue.

6. Board Effectiveness Review

Mr L'Estrange provided an overview of the Board Effectiveness Review for 2024 and responded to questions from the Board members.

The Board noted the updated provided by Mr L'Estrange and the satisfactory outcome of the Board Effectiveness Review.

7. Capital Programme Committee Report

a) Report from Committee Meeting

Mr Docherty provided an update report from the December meeting of the Capital Programme Committee. He reported on the Committee's consideration of the capital budget for 2025 and provided an update in respect of the Luas fleet replacement process as it relates to Approval Gate 2 of the Infrastructure Guidelines.

Mr Docherty outlined that the Capital Programme Committee had also considered two further items at its December meeting, following which they were recommending approval by the Board of these items. These were in respect of the BusConnects Cork Preliminary Business Case and the BusConnects Dublin Swords to City Centre Core Bus Corridor Scheme, which are set out in the following sections.

b) BusConnects Cork Preliminary Business Case

Following consideration of the report from the Capital Programme Committee in relation to its review of the BusConnects Cork Preliminary Business Case, the Board authorised the submission of the BusConnects Cork Preliminary Business Case for government consent for Approval Gate 1 (Approval in Principle) in respect of the BusConnects Cork programme.

c) BusConnects Swords to City Centre Scheme

Following consideration of the report from the Capital Programme Committee in relation to the Swords to City Centre project, the Board authorised the submission of Approval Gate 2 (AG2) documentation to seek Ministerial approval in respect of the BusConnects Dublin Swords to City Centre Core Bus Corridor Scheme, with such approval to be conditional upon the resolution of two ongoing judicial review proceedings.

8. Procurements

a) Taxi Vehicle Inspection Services

Mr Bradwell provided an overview of the procurement competition for the provision of Vehicle Inspection and Other Test Services in relation to small public service vehicles.

Following the overview provided, the Board approved the awarding of the contract to Applus Car Testing Service.

b) Metric Contract Extension

Mr Malone provided an overview of the proposal to amend and extend the existing contract with Metric Tristarinc Limited (Metric) in relation to the provision of ticketing systems and support services to the end of 2028.

Following the overview provided, the Board approved the amendment/extension to the existing contract with Metric Tristarinc Limited (Metric).

9. ARC (Audit and Risk Committee) Update

Mr McCormick outlined the main issues discussed at the ARC meeting held on 13th December last and responded to questions from Board members.

10. Risk & Governance Matters

a) Risk Update – For Information

The Board noted the Risk Report provided by Mr Cuddihy.

11. PSO Bus Services Tendering Strategy 2025-2028

Ms O'Mahoney provided an update in respect of the PSO bus services tendering strategy which is currently being prepared to cover the period 2025 to 2028. Mr Ryan outlined that the Strategy was being developed in line with the Board's approval in November 2023 of the 2024-2029 direct awards contracts for Dublin Bus and Bus Éireann, which noted the Authority's intention to keep kilometres or bus fleet operated under the direct award contracts broadly in line with July 2023 levels.

Mr Ryan and Ms O'Mahoney then responded to questions from the Board members.

The Board noted the update provided and requested that an estimate of tendered scheduled kilometres as a percentage of total scheduled kilometres be provided to the Board, and that a paper be brought before a future Board meeting regarding strategic market engagement in relation to the tendering of PSO bus services.

12. AOB

None

Next Meeting: Friday 17th January 2025 @ 10.30 hrs at NTA HQ and via Microsoft Teams

Signed: _____
Chairperson

Dated: _____