

NICTS BOARD MEETING: Monday 27 June 2011 at 4.30pm

Present:

David A Lavery (Chair)	Director, NICTS
The Hon Mr Justice Deeny	Judicial Representative
His Honour Judge Burgess, Recorder of Belfast	Judicial Representative
Mrs Bagnall, Presiding District Judge (MC)	Judicial Representative
Mr MacLynn, President, Appeals Tribunal	Judicial Representative
Jacqui Durkin	Head of Business Operations
Geraldine Fee	Head of Criminal & Coroners Policy
Siobhan Broderick	Head of Civil Policy & Tribunal Reform
Anthony Carleton	Head of Business Support
Robert Crawford	Head of Public Funded Legal Services
Carol Moore	Department of Justice Representative
PJ Fitzpatrick	Independent Board Member
Colm McKenna	Independent Board Member

In Attendance:

Angela Barratt	Secretary
Alison Houston	Office of the Lord Chief Justice
Derek Anderson (Agenda items 7-9)	Head of Risk & Assurance Branch

Apologies: None

Conflicts of Interest: There were no conflicts of interest declared.

The Director formally welcomed the new Independent Board Member to his first meeting.

1. Minutes of the last meeting and matters arising

- 1.1 The minutes of the meeting on 7 March were agreed, subject to an amendment at paragraph 2.5. The minutes were subsequently amended and signed and will now be published on the NICTS website.
- 1.2 There were no matters arising that were not covered on the agenda.

2. Director's Report

- 2.1 The Board noted the Director's Report.
- 2.2 The Board discussed the increase in business volumes during 2010/11. The Department of Justice Representative commented that the DOJ Research and Statistics team were analysing the statistics to identify the reason for the increase.
- 2.3 It was noted that all courthouses in Northern Ireland have been re-accredited as meeting the Customer Service Excellence standard.
- 2.4 The organisational sickness absence levels for 2010/11 showed a decrease on the previous year.
- 2.5 The Board noted the legal challenge to the award of the Security and Ancillary Services contract.
- 2.6 The Board also noted the report following the 'Review of Court Orders made in Sexual Offence Cases from 1997 to 2011'.
- 2.7 The Board noted that Criminal Justice Inspection NI is undertaking an inspection looking at the adequacy of the court & tribunal estate.
- 2.8 The Board noted the ongoing withdrawal of services by solicitors and barristers following the introduction of new Crown Court legal aid fees. The Minister had offered to hold an early review of the remuneration arrangements.
- 2.9 The Board discussed the proposed DOJ re-structure. The Judicial Representatives expressed reservations regarding the positioning of the NICTS as an Agency. They considered that this did not reflect the constitutional independence of the judiciary.

3. NICTS Business Plan 2011/12

- 3.1 The Board noted the publication of the NICTS Business Plan for 2011/12, following approval by the Minister.

4. NICTS Organisational Redesign

- 4.1 The Head of Business Operations provided an overview of the work of the NICTS Organisational Redesign Group and agreed to provide a further update at the September meeting.

5. Finance Director's Report

- 5.1 The Finance Director provided an update on the financial position at 31 May and presented a synopsis of the 2010/11 end of year results and accounts. The Audit & Finance Committees had approved the end of year accounts, which had received an unqualified audit opinion, and were recommended to the Board.
- 5.2 Savings Delivery Plans had been approved by the Finance Committee. It was agreed to put proposals forward to the Minister for a consultation exercise on the possible phased closure of the Hearing Centres.

6. Annual Report of the NICTS Audit and Risk Committees 2010/11

- 6.1 The Board noted the achievements in the 2010/11 Report.

7. Audit & Risk Committee Quarterly Report

- 7.1 The Board noted the quarterly report from the Audit and Risk Committees. The Audit Plan for 2011/12 had been approved by the Audit Committee and was noted by the Board.
- 7.2 There was a discussion of the risk associated with the withdrawal from cases by the legal profession following the introduction of the new Crown Court remuneration arrangements. It was agreed to review the Corporate Risk Register to reflect this.

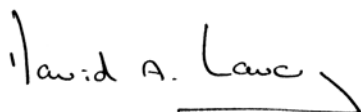
8. Board Effectiveness Review

- 8.1 The Head of Risk and Assurance Branch presented proposals for a Board Effectiveness Review. An overview of the findings would be presented to the Board at the September meeting.

9. Any Other Business

- 9.1 There was no other business.
- 9.2 The next meeting will take place on Monday 26 September 2011.

Signed:



Date: 26th September 2011

Chair