

## **NICTS BOARD MEETING: Monday 6 December 2010**

### **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
Carol Moore	Department of Justice Representative
Jacqui Durkin	Head of Business Operations
Laurene McAlpine	Head of Civil Policy & Legislation
Geraldine Fee	Head of Criminal Policy & Legislation
Anthony Carleton	Head of Business Support
Robert Crawford	Head of Public Funded Legal Services
PJ Fitzpatrick	Independent Board Member

### **In Attendance:**

Angela Barratt	Secretary
Alison Houston	Office of the Lord Chief Justice
Derek Anderson (Item 4 only)	Head of Risk & Assurance Branch

### **Apologies:**

Siobhan Broderick	Head of Tribunal Reform
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### **Conflicts of Interest:**

There were no conflicts of interest declared.

## **1. Minutes of the last meeting and matters arising**

- 1.1 The minutes of the meeting on 13 September were agreed and signed.
- 1.2 The Director noted some matters arising:  
The Financial Awareness session has been re-scheduled for Tuesday 14 December at 1500.

## **2. Director's Report**

- 2.1 The Board noted the Director's Report on business performance and key strategic projects within the Agency.
- 2.2 The Board discussed the work of the DOJ Reform Programme and it was agreed that a short paper would be presented at the next meeting outlining the emerging thinking on the future structure of the Department. There was a discussion on the possibility of

policy and legislation work moving into the core Department, however the NICTS may keep some capacity in this area.

2.3 It was noted that the 'Value for Money Report of the Very High Cost Criminal Legal Aid Expenditure in NI' by the Northern Ireland Audit Office is due to be published in January 2011.

2.4 The Board noted that the NI Executive had agreed to the statutory transfer of responsibility for NI Departmental tribunals to the NICTS. Subject to agreement on transferring the necessary budget, the transfer was planned for April 2011. The Board also noted the on-going work related to the devolution of UK wide tribunals to NI.

### **3. Finance Director's Report**

3.1 Anthony Carleton provided an update on the financial position at 31 October 2010 and the Budget 2010 process. The Board noted that the Budget 2010 deliberations required to be aligned with the statutory obligation on the Department of Justice to provide an effective system of court administration. Discussions on the NICTS budget were on-going and an ad-hoc Board meeting may be called in the New Year to discuss the outcome of the Budget 2010 process.

3.2 The Board noted the Finance Director's Report and the on-going budget negotiations.

### **4. Audit & Risk Report**

4.1 PJ Fitzpatrick, as Chair of the NICTS Audit and Risk Committees, presented the quarterly report from the Audit and Risk Committees. The Northern Ireland Audit Office were satisfied with the governance arrangements of the NICTS. The only concern related to the qualification of the NILSC Annual Accounts.

4.2 The timetable for the production of the 2010/11 Annual Report and Accounts would be challenging for all Departments.

4.3 The Board noted the annual Audit Report covering the period 2009/10. PJ Fitzpatrick acknowledged the work of Risk and Assurance Branch.

4.4 A draft Audit Plan for 2011/12 would be tabled at a future meeting for the Board's consideration.

### **5. Progress Report on NICTS Business Plan 2010/11**

5.1 The Board noted the half-yearly report on performance against the objectives contained in the 2010/11 Business Plan.

### **6. NICTS Business Plan 2011/12**

6.1 The Board agreed to develop a one-year Business Plan for 2011/12.

### **7. ICT Services Contract Award**

7.1 Jacqui Durkin informed the Board that the ICT Services Contract had been awarded to Fujitsu Services. The Board noted the paper outlining the procurement process and business benefits. The new contract will start in January 2011.

## **8. Increasing the Jurisdictional Limits of the County Court in NI**

8.1 Laurene McAlpine provided a summary of the responses received during the public consultation.

8.2 There was a discussion on the desirability of also increasing the limit for Equity Civil Bills, and it was agreed to consider this.

## **9. Investigation Reports - Donagh Case**

9.1 The Board noted the reports by the NICTS Risk and Assurance Branch and the Criminal Justice Inspection Northern Ireland.

## **10. Publication of Board Minutes**

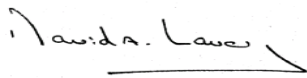
10.1 The Board agreed to publish the minutes of Board meetings. The minutes would be published following approval at the next meeting.

## **11. Any Other Business**

11.1 It was noted that a scheme to appoint an Independent Board Member was underway.

11.2 The next scheduled meeting of the Board will take place on Monday 7 March 2011.

**Signed:**



**Chair**

**Date: 7 March 2011**