

PUBLIC SESSION

RQIA Authority Meeting

Thursday 25 May 2023 at 1:30 pm

Via MS Teams

<p>Present: Christine Collins (Chair) (CC) Alphy Maginness (AM) Cheryl Lamont (CL) Mary McIvor (MMcI) Nazia Latif (NL) Neil Bodger (NB) Sarah Wakfer (SW)</p> <p>Apologies: Bronagh Scott (BS) Stuart Elborn (SE)</p> <p>David McCann (DMcC), Head of Business Services Elaine Connolly (EC), Director of Adult Care Services Lynn Long (LL), Director of Mental Health, Learning Disability, Childrens' Services and Prison Healthcare Malachy Finnegan (MF), Senior Communications Manager</p>	<p>RQIA Staff in Attendance: Briege Donaghy (BD), Chief Executive Jacqui Murphy (JM), Head of Corporate Affairs Emer Hopkins (EH), Director of Hospitals, Independent Healthcare, Reviews and Audit Ian Steele (IS), Medical Lead and Responsible Officer Karen Harvey (KH), Professional Advisor, Social Work</p>
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1.0 Agenda Item 1- Welcome and Apologies

1.1 The meeting commenced at 1.30 pm.

1.2 Apologies were received from Bronagh Scott (BS), Stuart Elborn (SE), David McCann (DMcC), Elaine Connolly (EC), Lynn Long (LL), and Malachy Finnegan (MF).

2.0 Agenda Item 2 - Minutes of the Meeting of the Authority held on 20 April 2022 and Matters Arising

2.1 BD provided an update to the Action List from the previous meeting of 20 April 2023.

- 2.2 Action 255 – Closed. RQIA Statement relating to the ‘RQIA Review of Systems and Processes for Learning from Serious Adverse Incidents in Northern Ireland, June 2022’ - BD reported that the statement has been placed on the front of the review report and published to the RQIA website, replacing the original document. BD advised that the social work forum is meeting to consider the report.
- 2.3 Action 260 – Closed. The meeting with the social workers to discuss the previous use of a controlled risk self-assessment for the care homes and possible future applications has taken place.
- 2.4 Action 261 – Closed. RQIA’s Strategic Plan 2022-2028 has been submitted to the DoH. We await a response before publishing to the RQIA website.
- 2.5 Action 262 – Closed. JM reported that she and Chair will commence the review of the Standing Orders in the next few weeks, by taking each section and liaising with relevant Authority Members and staff for updates and amendments.

CC further explained that it is important the new Committees’ Terms of Reference (ToR) are added and the ToR for the other Authority Committees are updated in line with the new Authority Members being appointed. CC particularly mentioned the newly established Legislative and Policy Committee, chaired by AM, which will consider RQIA’s responsibilities and functions and how these are affected by the legislation and also the policies impacted by the legislation.

- 2.6 NB asked whether this would include Human Resources policies, such as disciplinary. To which AM replied that it would not; rather how the legislation impacts upon us as an organisation and the policies which emanate from it.
- 2.7 BD advised that there is a Policy Group in place which reports to the Executive Management Team and then policies will be discussed at the Business, Appointments and Remuneration Committee (BARC) before being considered by the Authority.
- 2.8 Action 263 – Closed. A formal note on behalf of the Authority Chair, to be issued to the UK NPM, advising of the Authority’s approval to adopt the new NPM Constitution – this has been completed through the Legislative and Policy Committee.
- 2.9 Action 264 – Progressing. Publication of Children’s Inspection Reports: Authority comments to be taken on board in respect of the next steps to establish a Short Life Working Group and a sample inspection report to be brought back to the Authority in due course. BD reported this work is progressing.
- 2.10 Authority Members agreed the minutes as a true and accurate record and **APPROVED** the minutes of 20 April 2023.

3.0 Agenda Item 3 - Declaration of Interests

- 3.1 There were no declarations of interests.

4.0 Agenda Item 4 - Chair's Business

- a) RQIA Strategic Plan 2022-2028: Verbal Update**
- b) RQIA Annual Management Plan 2023/2024**
- c) RQIA Annual Report and Accounts 2022/2023: Verbal Update**
- d) Chief Executive Post: Extension**
- e) Judicial Review: Mental Health Community Services**
- f) Maternity Review**

4.1 a) RQIA Strategic Plan 2022-2028: Verbal Update

CC advised that the Strategic Plan 2022-2028 has been finalised and a copy submitted to the Chief Medical Officer (CMO) at the DoH. RQIA awaits a response before the document will be published to the RQIA website.

4.2 b) RQIA Annual Management Plan 2023/2024

CC advised that the Management Plan for 2023/2024 has been developed and is presented in a much more user-friendly format. BD also described the single double-sided page, outlining the organisation's functions and core duties. The first page provides some highlights from 2022/2023 and includes information on how to make contact, with an emphasis on Whistleblowing and raising concerns.

BD went on to explain that the second page consists of the four strategic objectives and outlines the practical actions to be taken during 2023/2024. The Strategic Plan focuses on outcomes and the Management Plan has a focus on actions to achieve these outcomes.

BD advised that the actions will feature in the quarterly performance report going forward and mentioned that the whole organisational development event, to take place on 28 June 2023 at the Pavilion, will have the strategic objectives underpinning the programme. Staff on the ground who are delivering the work to achieve the outcomes will present evidence and initiatives as to how this is being taken forward. BD reminded Members that it is important that staff feel connected to the strategic direction in RQIA, which was noted in the Investors in People Report and we need to ensure we make efforts to make this real.

4.3 NL commended those who had developed the Plan, commenting that it is an excellent document which is visually pleasing, accessible and easy to follow. NL noted that it is important that we work with people to develop our tools and skills so that we can engage better with people living with dementia and other communication challenges and perhaps this needs to be more specific. NL also noted that there is no mention of a human rights based approach, which is vital for a public-facing document.

4.4 BD explained that the wording around 'human rights' is included in the Strategic Plan, advising that this would include working with a wide ranges of stakeholders, to include those people with lived experience, families, advocate and gave the example of the work ongoing with Volunteer Now and the University of Ulster at Jordanstown in relation to the Inspector Support Volunteers initiative. BD also mentioned work progressing in developing the RQIA Equality and Disability Action Plan.

4.5 MMcl commented on an action under the strategic objective 'Improve', that is, "We will undertake Reviews that help assess the effectiveness of services and follow up

to embed recommendations and learning”. MMCI asked how would the Authority hear about the embedding of recommendations and learning.

- 4.6 BD explained that there is a lot of work progressing in this area, which is an outstanding recommendation from Internal Audit. EH went on to say that the current system is not entirely robust, with the protocol requiring to be reviewed and refreshed. The responsibility for follow up sits with the DoH and, from time to time, the DoH will direct RQIA to follow-up on the actions, for example in the Review of Governance in Outpatients, the follow-up has been incorporated into the current programme. Also, in relation to the previously published three reviews, RQIA has been meeting with the responsible Director in SPPG or those responsible in the DoH and the DoH has promised to send updates in relation to progress of recommendations.
- 4.7 CC recognised that while this was to be commended, this is an area that needs to be developed in RQIA and perhaps the organisation needs to develop a dedicated report, outlining those reviews already completed, and showing what had happened as a result.
- 4.8 NL agreed that it is very important and that, internationally, other organisations will use their powers to conduct periodic reviews and report on how many recommendations have been positively addressed. NL commented that there is a balance on what we publish and what we do not and this is important for our public image.
- 4.9 In relation to the DoH directing a follow-up exercise, NB commented that if something went wrong in an area that had been reviewed he was sure that the DoH would disclaim any responsibility. Therefore, it is up to RQIA to have conducted the appropriate follow-up, which raises the issue of funding of resources to undertake this.
- 4.10 EH again referred to the Protocol for the Review Programme with the DoH, reiterating that it requires to be revisited and will be aligned to the Partnership Agreement. EH agreed it is vital that this follow-up process is clear in the Protocol. EH agreed that it is not acceptable that RQIA undertakes a review with recommendations in respect of safety aspects and that these are not taken notice of, or enacted in a timely fashion.
- 4.11 NB asked the question, therefore is RQIA an independent regulator or a little Arms’ Length Body which the DoH can tell what to do.
- 4.12 CC replied that RQIA is both, in that the DoH can direct the organisation as it requires, and RQIA can also invoke its own reviews: it has an “Own Motion” power. In essence, it is important to make sure that RQIA’s independence is, and is seen to be, an asset rather than a threat to the DoH and the health and social care system.
- 4.13 Following discussion and subject to minor editorial amendments, the Authority **APPROVED** the RQIA Annual Management Plan 2023/2024.

4.14 c) RQIA Annual Report and Accounts 2022/2023: Verbal Update

JM provided an update, explaining that the:

- Draft Governance Statement was agreed by the Chair, Chief Executive and Chair of ARAC and submitted to Sponsor Branch and to the DoH Governance Unit on 5 May 2023;
- Draft Accounts were submitted to the DoH and the Northern Ireland Audit Office (NIAO) on 5 May 2023;
- Draft Annual report was submitted to the NIAO and DoH on 15 May 2023; and
- External Audit commenced on 15 May 2023 and JM has collated the volume of evidence required and continues to respond to queries;

JM advised that the Annual Report and Accounts would be considered at the next extraordinary meetings of BARC and ARAC in June and brought forward for approval to the Authority's extraordinary meeting on 6 July 2023.

- 4.15 CC thanked JM and the Team for their hard work in preparing the report and acknowledged the continuing work required to satisfy the external audit.

4.16 d) Chief Executive Post: Extension

CC updated Members, explaining that she has been working with Human Resources in HR and securing agreement from the Permanent Secretary and the Chief Medical Officer and BD and she was pleased to announce that BD's secondment from the Northern Trust has been extended and BD will remain with RQIA as Chief Executive for a further two years until June 2025. CC commented that she is delighted and this will provide stability for the organisation for the next two years.

CC further advised that the Authority will need to start thinking about recruitment for the permanent position as this can take 6 months-1 year. CC advised that this will be progressed by BARC.

CC congratulated BD, and thanked her for her work over the past two years; Authority Members joined in these sentiments.

- 4.17 BD thanked CC for her kind words, saying working with the Authority and Senior Team over the past two years had been a pleasure and she was looking forward to the next two years.

4.18 e) Judicial Review: Mental Health Community Services

CC continued with additional business items, inviting BD to provide an update on the recent Judicial Review.

- 4.19 BD provided the update, explaining that RQIA had conceded the case about RQIA's responsibilities in respect of regulation of mental health community services and was presently engaging with the applicant through the appropriate channels. BD noted that the organisation is committed to following up on its responsibilities in this area.

BD explained that there has been considerable media coverage over the past few days and that RQIA had submitted a response to the BCC and MF is working to publish a statement to the website. BD is engaging with the Mental Health

Champion, the Patient Client Council (PCC), the Human Rights Commission and DoH Policy Leads, which will result in meetings being held over the next weeks. BD noted that there is commitment within the organisation to correct the narrative and our responsibilities in this area of mental health.

- 4.20 LL added that staff training and awareness sessions will be arranged; concerns and intelligence are being examined and we are ensuring our policies and procedures are in line. LL noted that it is important we recognise our responsibilities under the Mental Health Order (MHO). LL advised that staff would be engaging with community groups and individuals as this is progressed.

LL went on to say that work to ensure we communicate this clearly is needed during this period of engagement, following through with written materials and reminded Members of the underlying capacity issues across the organisation.

- 4.21 CC noted the actions being taken forward in this important piece, advising that it is vital that there is an open and collaborative approach to constructing this new aspect of our work, to ensure it is embedded across the whole organisation.

4.22 **f) Maternity Review**

CC invited EH to provide a verbal update in relation to the Maternity Review.

- 4.23 EH advised that this review is being prepared for publication and requested the Authority's endorsement for publication on Tuesday 30 May 2023. EH further advised that this would coincide with an event being organised by the Royal College of Nursing (RCN) on the same day and RQIA has been invited to speak at same.

EH noted that the version included in papers two weeks ago had undergone quality assurance checking and some cosmetic changes only had been made.

The key finding was about the changing complexity within the maternity services and meeting the needs of those patients whose first language is not English and those seeking asylum, alongside an ageing profile for the service, with RQIA's concern around workforce planning to meet those needs.

EH commented that the recommendations have been constructed as to what can be done in the system given the challenging financial landscape, for example, the use of agency staff.

EH advised the report has 23 recommendations. RQIA has met with the Policy Leads at the DoH, who are broadly content with the review and are already taking steps to implement some of the recommendations.

The first set of stakeholder letters will issue tomorrow to the Permanent Secretary (in the absence of a Minister) and to the Chief Medical Officer and the report will publish on Tuesday.

- 4.24 AM commented that this is a very comprehensive report. He noted that on pages 7 and 16, there was circa £109 million paid in respect of clinical negligence. AM felt that this may be point which the media will pick up on and asked EH to provide more detailed information, such as the number of years this refers to.

AM advised EH to contact the Directorate of Legal Services (DLS) directly as it would manage all of these cases. AM further advised that the £109 million may not necessarily be the compensation figure and that other costs, such as counsel fees and accountancy fees would be included in this. The tendency is not to pay out a lump sum, rather pay out on an annual basis and he felt the figures would be much more complex, with nuances and subtleties that are not reflected in the report.

- 4.25 EH advised that, if the Team is able to get this detail, then the information can be amended and, if not, then she will omit the sentence. EH commented further that an explanation can also be offered in any follow up questions from the media.

4.26 Resolved Action: 265: EH to update the Maternity Review Report to accurately reflect the detail, nuances and subtleties of the compensation figure noted on pages 7 and 16.

- 4.27 CC noted other initiatives underway around the topic of maternity services, such as the Chief Nursing Officer's Review of Midwifery. CC also noted the references in the Report in respect of governance and the ask in the recommendations on Trust Boards. CC advised this would form part of the dialogue with Trust Chairs when she and the Chief Executive meet with the new Chairs over the next few months.

- 4.28 Authority Members **APPROVED** publication of the RQIA Maternity Review Report on 30 May 2023.

- 4.29 Members **NOTED** the Chair's Business.

5.0 Agenda Item 5 - Business, Appointments and Remuneration Committee (BARC)

5.1 a) Meeting of 4 May 2023: Verbal Update

In the absence of SE, Chair of the BARC Committee, CL provided the update, advising that a meeting of the Committee had taken place on 4 May 2023, with a full agenda. CL thanked JM for providing support to the meeting, commenting that the quality of the papers and presentation continue to be of a high standard.

5.2 b) Performance of Senior Executives Pay Award (2021/2022)

CL noted that the Authority Chair had attended for this item and had presented the details of the Chief Executive's performance, advising on the secondment extension and that all was satisfactory.

The Chief Executive had then provided a full update on appraisals for the Directors, again all satisfactory to that point. BD had also taken the opportunity to explain the arrangements for the pay awards and how this would apply to the different senior executives, depending upon their start dates.

BARC had approved the pay award for 2021/2022 and 2022/2023, subject to end of year appraisals.

- 5.3 CC noted that performance has been good this past year and congratulated all. The Authority **APPROVED** the performance of the Senior Executives and the Pay Award.

5.4 c) RQIA / DoH Draft Partnership Agreement

CL advised that the Committee had been updated in relation to progress and noted that the draft Agreement is currently with the DoH, which will be raised by RQIA at its next Liaison Meeting with the DoH. When the final draft is received, it will come to the Authority meeting for approval, likely to be July 2023.

Members **NOTED** the update in relation to the RQIA / DoH Draft Partnership Agreement.

5.5 d) Inspection Support Volunteers

CL advised that BARC had received a progress update from DMcC, Head of Business Services, indicating that 12 persons have been shortlisted, all which could potentially be appointed, depending upon the outcomes from interview. The initiative will commence in September 2023 as a pilot in the Care Homes Inspection Teams. Work is ongoing with the University of Ulster, Jordanstown and a Direct Award Contract is being finalised. There is a planned evaluation throughout and this will help in RQIA's improvement journey, evidencing its commitment to active listening and engagement and breathing life into the recommendation from the 'Home Truths' Report. SW will engage with DMcC to share her experience from her involvement with the Care Quality Commission (CQC).

The Authority **NOTED** the update in relation to the Inspection Support Volunteers.

5.6 e) Activity Performance and Outcomes Report: Quarter 4, 2022/2023

CL reported that the Chief Executive had provided a comprehensive update in relation to the Quarter 4 report, explaining that the format and presentation of the report was continuing to improve and would be further revised when reporting commences against the 2023/2024 Management Plan.

Highlights included information in relation to the care home sector, with all care homes having received one visit this year, with 48% receiving two visits. The need to continue to develop a risk-based approach, similar to CQC, supported by a modern digital platform was also noted. The Chief Executive will look to arranging a presentation on the risk-based approach for Authority Members.

In respect of staff, there had been an increase in headcount of around 10.6% and all mandatory training was up to date, with an update of over 99%. Sickness absence is low and this has been reflected as having a stable and positive impact throughout the organisation.

Overall satisfactory assurance has been received from the Head of Internal Audit and all staff have worked extremely hard to take forward and address issues as they have arisen.

CC agreed that there has been dedication and a lot of hard work from staff. She also noted that it will be interesting to see the performance report re-aligned to the new Management Plan for 2023/2024 and to the overarching Strategic Plan 2022-2028.

Members **APPROVED** the Activity Performance and Outcomes Report: Quarter 4, 2022/2023.

5.7 f) Inquiries

CL noted that the Committee had received updates in relation to the COVID-19 Inquiry and the Muckamore Abbey Hospital Inquiry (MAHI). CL also noted that the Chief Executive had given evidence to the MAHI Inquiry in early May, doing an excellent job. There will be some follow-up questions.

BD advised that it had been a privilege to represent RQIA in the Inquiry and CL congratulated BD on her preparation and attention to detail, which was evident.

The Authority **NOTED** the update in relation to Inquiries.

5.8 g) Accommodation

CL reported that BARC had been advised that the final accommodation move to RQIA's permanent accommodation had gone well and staff were well settled in James House. A Pilot Hybrid Working Scheme had also been implemented, with staff being able to apply for a number of days working in and out of the office. Early indications showed this was going well.

Authority Members **NOTED** the update in relation to Accommodation.

5.9 h) Digital: iConnect Upgrade

CL reported the update in respect of the iConnect Upgrade, explaining that the iConnect System had undergone an upgrade to its software operating platform from 8 March 2023, with down-time overall several days. The down-time was project managed and the Executive Management Team met on a daily basis to assess the situation, providing Sit Rep reports. The iConnect system is now back up and running, with a couple of residual issues being examined. The down-time and upgrade were followed by an evaluation with staff and providers who use the web portal. Phase 2 of the Business Continuity Plan, which will be a desk-top exercise of a full-scale mock cyber event, will follow in the next few months.

BARC had also noted an Addendum to the Business Case for the Upgrade, which had been completed and submitted to Digital Healthcare Northern Ireland (DHCNI).

Members **NOTED** the update in relation to Digital: iConnect Upgrade.

5.10 i) RQIA Equality and Disability Action Plan 2023-2028: Public Consultation

CL reported that BARC had noted the public consultation on the RQIA Equality and Disability Action Plan 2023-2028. Two consultation events were taking place, one today and one on 20 June 2023. These events were being facilitated by the Equality Unit at BSO. RQIA will also approach some of RQIA's key stakeholder groups, for example, the Northern Ireland Disability Forum, to hold specific events. The Public Consultation closes at the end of June 2023.

BD invited Authority Members to join RQIA staff at the consultation events if they were interested.

The Authority **NOTED** the update on the RQIA Equality and Disability Action Plan 2023-2028: Public Consultation.

5.11 j) Policy on the Management of Unreasonable, Persistent or Vexatious Contacts

CL advised that BARC Members had considered and approved the Policy, reporting that this is a comprehensive policy for managing these contacts, updated to reflect how it aligns with policies for Complaints and Zero Tolerance on Abuse to Staff. The Policy includes a detailed procedure, with templates and process maps. The Equality Screening will be updated.

CC agreed that this is a very important policy and suggested that immediate approval is required as staff deal more and more with these types of contact.

Authority Members **APPROVED** the Policy on the Management of Unreasonable, Persistent or Vexatious Contacts.

The Authority **NOTED** the update from the Business, Appointments and Remuneration Committee (BARC).

6.0 Agenda Item 6 - Audit and Risk Assurance Committee (ARAC)

6.1 a) Meeting of 18 May 2023: Verbal Update

NB provided an update of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee meeting of 18 May 2023.

6.2 b) Principal Risk Document

Committee Members were apprised of the Principal Risk Document (PRD) updates since its previous meeting, approving the removal of three risks. NB felt that the document will need to be reviewed once the training in risk on 20 July 2023 has taken place. It was also noted that the PRD will be revised to align with the Strategic and Management Plans.

The Authority **APPROVED** the Principal Risk Document.

6.3 c) Draft Governance Statement

NB advised that the Draft Governance Statement was agreed and approved by ARAC and had been submitted to the DoH. ARAC Members had also noted that the Chief Medical Officer has now approved same.

Authority Members **APPROVED** the Draft Governance Statement.

6.4 d) Internal Audit Update and Plan

NB reported that the Audit Committee had approved the Internal Audit Plan and the Committee had held a discussion on outstanding recommendations, which had also been reviewed at the March 2023 meeting.

Members **NOTED** the Internal Audit Update and **APPROVED** the Internal Audit Plan.

6.5 e) Audit Action Plan

NB reported that, as above, the Audit Action Plan, which had been reviewed at the March 2023 meeting, was reviewed to focus on those recommendations which were outstanding. NB reported that there is nothing contentious to note.

Members **APPROVED** the RQA Audit Action Plan.

6.6 f) External Audit Update

NB advised that there had been no update from External Audit.

6.7 g) Draft Year End Accounts: 2022/2023

NB noted that the Draft Year End Accounts for 2022/2023 had been presented to the ARAC Committee by the Client Accountant from Finance at BSO and the Committee had approved same.

As noted earlier in this meeting, the Draft Year End Accounts 2022/2023 have been submitted to the DoH and to NIAO.

The Authority **APPROVED** the Draft Year End Accounts: 2022/2023.

6.8 h) Standing Reports

NB advised that the Audit Committee had received updated standing reports and noted nothing contentious to report.

Members **NOTED** the Standing Reports.

6.9 NB went on to say that a meeting with the NIAO had taken place yesterday, at which the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) was present. NB reported that the CAG was keen to see regulators liaising directly with NIAO, so there is no duplication of work and no overlapping of remits.

BD noted that the NIAO is part of the Regulator's Forum (not the Joint Regulator's Forum which represents the professional bodies) and includes the Chief Executive, the commissioners, the Charity Commission, Human Rights Commissioner, etc and provided a good conduit for liaison and networking.

CC noted that the NIAO should be included as part of the roadshows to present the RQIA Strategic Plan and Management Plan for 2023/2024.

The Authority **NOTED** the update from the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee (ARAC) Chair.

7.0 Agenda Item 7 - Finance: 2022/2023 End of Year Position and Budget Build: Verbal Update

7.1 CC invited PC to give the update in relation to the end of year position and the budget build.

7.2 PC advised the Financial Performance Report for Month 12 had previously been issued to Members and the final accounts have not changed in any material way.

A small surplus of £9.6k at year-end was noted, with the organisation having received an additional £135k from the DoH.

PC advised Members that BSO continue to struggle to meet the agreed timescales and noted that BSO had delayed agreement of the end of year figure for some time.

RQIA continues to have challenges with BSO, particularly around the timeliness of the return of documents to the External Auditor. This same issue was noted by the Auditors last year and a recommendation followed around the fact that BSO was

not meeting the deadlines and the quality of data was deemed to be insufficient; it is likely there will be a similar recommendation this year. PC reported that the Auditor has commented that RQIA staff continue to make timely responses on each occasion. Both JM and PC have escalated this issue again to the Assistant Director in BSO, which had resulted in the information being returned immediately. BD has also escalated to the Director of Finance.

PC advised that the year-end position is a good result and there is a good financial position in respect of out-turn.

In relation to the Budget for 2023/2024, PC had planned to bring this to the Authority today, however, was not in a position to do so as yet. Again he noted delays from BSO and reiterated his disappointment in this performance, stating this is in breach of the financial standing instructions. This has again been escalated.

PC advised that the RRL letter has been late and the 2023/2024 budget is being built on a stand-still position of rolling forward the previous year's budget. PC advised he plans to bring the 2023/2024 budget to the July meeting.

- 7.3 BD also noted the efficiency savings of circa £230k (approx. 3% of the £9m yearly figure). While the DoH allocated funding for the MAHI legal costs, no additional costs have been forthcoming.

BD further noted that, while the spending pattern has remained steady, our allocation has been reduced and that the Executive Management Team has invoked a cautious approach to any spend. The Executive Management Team acts as a Scrutiny Committee and it has been agreed to invoke a moratorium for recruitment of non-clinical roles. Also, due to these financial pressures, there are two non-legal staff currently working in MAHI who may need to be redeployed in the near future.

BD advised that it has taken significant hard work to reduce the number of agency staff throughout the organisation, currently with no agency staff working in substantive posts.

She went on to note there is little opportunity to reduce spend further, with zero temporary contracts and no discretionary spend.

While RQIA awaits the budget for 2023/2024, it is likely that we will have to take more steps to modify our spending soon in order to have the desired impact by year-end.

- 7.4 CC thanked PC and JM for continuing to support the finance work and noted it is necessary that we recognise we are in this extremely challenging financial position.

- 7.5 BD also advised that, as part of actions to address these reductions, the annual programme to offer small amounts of funding for quality improvement initiatives and audits has had to be 'stood-down'. This accounts for circa £50k. This has inevitably sent a signal out to the system. Nevertheless, the organisation will still continue to work in collaboration with others around quality improvement. RQIA is a member of the Regional Quality Improvement (QI) Alliance.

- 7.6 SW asked whether there is any scope to work with medical schools in respect of quality improvement initiatives.
- 7.7 BD confirmed of some work already underway with the University of Ulster at Jordanstown with regard to the Inspection Support Volunteer Initiative. BD went on to say that the regional QI Alliance is a worthwhile network, established to assist with addressing the challenge of scale and spread across the HSC. It is chaired by Dr Cathy Jack. BD also noted a meeting this week with Dr Aideen Kearny from the PHA in order to continue to enhance our relationships and build QI into the core of what we do.
- 7.8 SW agreed, commenting that we should not limit our thinking to engaging only in the HSC arena and that we should look further, for example for ideas from industry. It is about trying to spread the field and our thinking wider.
- 7.9 CC agreed that this is a space which we need to get into, and feeds directly into our strategic objective on transforming. CC advised there is a need to leverage our 'soft power', influencing and negotiating, which would help to pull this approach together.
- 7.10 CC thanked PC for his continued advice and guidance and Authority Members **NOTED** the Finance: 2022/2023 End of Year Position and Budget Build: Verbal Update



There being no other business, the Chair closed the meeting at 3:30 pm.

Date of Next Meeting: Thursday 6 July 2023 at 9:30 am, Room 1.7, First Floor, James House. This will be an Extraordinary Meeting to approve the Annual Report and Accounts for 2022/2023.



Signed 
Christine Collins MBE
Chair

Date 6 July 2023

Authority Action List: Meeting of 25 May 2023

Authority Public Session: Action List					
Action number	Authority meeting	Agreed Action	Responsible Person	Date due for completion	Status
264	20 April 2023	Publication of Children's Inspection Reports: Authority comments to be taken on board in respect of the next steps to establish a Short Life Working Group and a sample inspection report to be brought back to the Authority in due course.	Director of Mental Health, Learning Disability, Children's Services and Prison Healthcare	30 September 2023	
265	25 May 2023	Maternity Review Report: EH to update the Maternity Review report to accurately reflect the detail, nuances and subtleties of the compensation figure noted on pages 7 and 16.	Director of Hospitals, Independent Healthcare, Reviews and Audit	30 May 2023	

Key

Behind Schedule	
In Progress	
Completed or ahead of Schedule	