

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
NATIONAL CANCER REGISTRY BOARD (NCRI)**

HELD ON

4 DECEMBER 2023 AT 1.30 PM

AT

BUILDING 6800, CORK AIRPORT BUSINESS PARK, KINSALE ROAD, CORK / MICROSOFT TEAMS

1. Register of Attendance

Present

Name	Details	Initials
Dr Jerome Coffey	Chairperson	JC
Ms Mary Bourke	Board Member	MB
Dr Robert O'Connor	Board Member	ROC
Prof Mark Lawler	Board Member	ML
Ms Ellen Farrell	Board Member	EF
Mr Niall Murphy	Board Member	NM

In Attendance

Name	Details	Initials
Prof Deirdre Murray	NCRI Director	DM
Ms Rose O'Connor	NCRI Corporate Operations Manager	COM
Ms Catherine McGovern	NCRI Business & Planning Manager	CMcG
Ms Grace Murray	NCRI Governance & Compliance Officer	GM

2. Quorum

IT WAS NOTED THAT there was a quorum of board members present at the meeting.

3. Declaration of Conflicts of Interest

The board members confirmed that they had no conflict of interest in the matters to be discussed at the meeting.

4. Board Composition

4.1. The Chairperson reported to the meeting that, following a discussion with the Department of Health (“DOH”), consideration is being given to introducing legislation to expand the membership of the board.

4.2. The board discussed the current vacancy on the board. The Chairperson reported that, following discussions with the DoH, it is proposed that a certain named individual be appointed as an additional board member to fill the vacancy.

4.3. Following careful consideration, **IT WAS AGREED THAT** the Chairperson would formally recommend to the Minister for the Health that the individual, having the necessary skills and experience, be

appointed as an additional board member, the details of such appointment to be confirmed by the Minister in the letter of appointment.

5. Director's Report

5.1. DM reported to the board on the NCRI's strategic and operational objectives, during which the following points were noted and discussed:

Strategy

5.1.1. a publisher has been engaged to assist with the graphic design of the Strategic Plan 2024-2026 (the "**Strategic Plan**") with a copy to be circulated to the board once finalised;

5.1.2. the Strategic Plan was launched internally at an all-staff event held on 30 November;

5.1.3. the proposed external launch of the Strategic Plan by the Minister for Health will be discussed at a meeting with the DoH to take place later in the week with details of the launch to be shared with the board in due course;

Great Places to Work ("GPTW")

5.1.4. NCRI was certified as a Great Place to Work and a Best Workplace in Pharma and Healthcare;

5.1.5. NCRI scored 81% overall in the GPTW survey;

KPIs

5.1.6. key metrics for Q4 were presented to the meeting and **IT WAS NOTED THAT** the backlog accrual has halved in 2023 compared to previous years;

Cybersecurity

5.1.7. cybersecurity precautions and statistics relating to blocked items were presented.

5.2. There followed a discussion on cybersecurity and CMcG confirmed that the NCRI completes a penetration test every year. ROC queried whether the Senior Management Team ("**SMT**") had considered whether it was appropriate to mimic a cyber security breach in order to test the NCRI's response protocols. **IT WAS AGREED THAT** that such a proposal would be considered by the IT department and that cybersecurity be added as a stand-alone item to the board's programme of work for 2024 to be discussed later in the meeting.

6. Service Plan Dashboard

CMcG presented the service plan dashboard to the meeting and the status of each of the 2023 goals was noted by the board.

7. Corporate Services Update

7.1. COM provided the board with a profile of the staffing, organisation, responsibilities, and activity of the Corporate Services Department.

7.2. Current challenges facing the department, risks relating to the department and recent departmental achievements were noted and discussed.

8. IT Update

8.1. CMcG provided an overview of the IT Department, noting staff members and their areas of expertise.

- 8.2. CMcG highlighted the department's responsibilities and projects from a technical and development perspective. A SWOT analysis of the department was noted and discussed by the board.

9. Stakeholder Engagement Report

The board noted the stakeholder engagement report which detailed all strategic and executive level stakeholder engagements that have taken place since the last board meeting.

10. Board Internal Evaluation Survey

- 10.1. The Chairperson reminded the board of the internal board evaluation survey (the "**Board Survey**") which had been completed by the board in October in accordance with its obligations under the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies.

- 10.2. The results of the Board Survey, which had been circulated to the board prior to the meeting, were noted and discussed. The Chairperson encouraged the board to reach out to the Chairperson or the Director and her team if they ever need any additional support or information in performing their duties as board members.

- 10.3. There followed a discussion on whether it would be beneficial to the board to establish additional committees of the board for particular areas of expertise. **IT WAS AGREED THAT** the board would formally consider the establishment of a Research Committee once a Head of Research & Analysis had been appointed.

11. Director Performance Evaluation

The Chairperson reported to the meeting that the Director's Performance Evaluation had been discussed with the Director and **IT WAS AGREED THAT** a further report would be provided at the next board meeting.

12. Terms of Reference of the Board

- 12.1. The board reviewed the proposed changes to the terms of reference of the board ("**TOR**") as included in the board pack.

- 12.2. The board discussed the role of the secretary of the board and requested that section 2.3 of the TOR be updated to clarify that the board is responsible for the appointment and removal of the secretary in their capacity as secretary of the board only (such appointment or removal shall not impact any other position held by the secretary at the NCRI). The board also requested that "*and take appropriate action*" be added to the end of section 8.8 of the TOR.

- 12.3. There followed a discussion on the term of appointments to the board. **IT WAS NOTED THAT** pursuant to The National Cancer Registry Board (Establishment) Order 1991 (as amended) the Minister for Health may appoint board members for a term of up to five years. **IT WAS FURTHER NOTED THAT** the term of any individual board member's appointment is determined by reference to the letter of appointment issued by the Minister for Health in respect of that board member. Following a discussion in relation to the foregoing, **IT WAS AGREED THAT** the Chairperson would recommend to the Minister for Health that any future appointments to the board be for a term of five years.

- 12.4. Following careful consideration of the TOR, **IT WAS RESOLVED THAT**, subject to the amendments discussed at 12.2 above, the TOR be approved and adopted by the board accordingly.

13. Oversight and Performance Delivery Agreements

13.1. The Chairperson reminded the meeting that the NCRI is required to enter into: (i) an oversight agreement; and (ii) a performance delivery agreement, with the DoH each year (together the “**DoH Agreements**”). Copies of the signed DoH Agreements were circulated to the board prior to the meeting and reviewed by the board members.

13.2. Following a discussion in relation thereto, **IT WAS RESOLVED THAT** each of the DoH Agreements (including the execution thereof on behalf of the NCRI) be approved, ratified and confirmed accordingly.

14. Publication Plan

14.1. DM presented a draft publication plan for 2023-2025 to the board.

14.2. There followed a discussion on recruitment for the Head of Research & Analysis role and the advertisement of the role. **IT WAS AGREED THAT** the new advertisement for the Head of Research & Analysis role be circulated to the board once available and that board members would forward the advertisement to any relevant contacts.

15. Training and Development Plan

The board noted the training and development plan which had been circulated to and reviewed by the board prior to the meeting.

16. Board Work Programme

16.1. A draft board work programme setting out key matters for the board to consider in each quarter of 2024 (the “**Work Programme**”) was produced to the meeting and reviewed by the board.

16.2. **IT WAS AGREED THAT** cybersecurity be added as an additional item to be considered by the board in the second or third quarter of 2024 and that specific deadlines for the review of the system of internal financial control and the annual report be included.

16.3. Following a detailed discussion, **IT WAS RESOLVED THAT**, subject to the amendments discussed at 15.2 above, the Work Programme be approved and adopted by the board accordingly.

17. ARC Report to the Board

17.1. EF provided a report to the board on the Audit & Risk Committee (“**ARC**”) meeting held earlier that morning, during which the following points were highlighted:

Financials

17.1.1. management accounts as at 31 October 2023 were reviewed by the ARC and expenditure is favourable to budget due to ongoing vacancies and deferred start dates for new hires;

17.1.2. the financial policies and procedures manual was reviewed and approved subject to certain amendments discussed at the meeting;

17.1.3. the procurement plan was reviewed and approved subject to certain updates discussed at the meeting;

Risk

- 17.1.4. there were no changes to the corporate risk register since the last ARC meeting;
- 17.1.5. a risk expert from Mazars is supporting the organisation with a review of the corporate risk register against the Strategic Plan. Once this review is complete, it is proposed that Mazars be engaged to provide risk training to the ARC (such training to be available to board members also if of interest);

Data Protection

- 17.1.6. no data breach incident was reported in Q4;
- 17.1.7. the revised conflict of interest policy approved by the ARC at its previous meeting has been circulated to all staff;
- 17.1.8. an external Data Protection Officer has been engaged for maternity leave cover;

HR

- 17.1.9. the results of the GPTW survey were presented to the ARC and it was agreed that the full GPTW report be circulated to the ARC following the meeting;

Lease

- 17.1.10. the ARC considered, and approved subject to discussions with the DoH, a proposal to extend the lease of the NCRI offices in Cork for a further five year period in exchange for a six month rent-free period; and

ARC Work Programme 2024

- 17.1.11. a programme of work outlining the key matters to be considered by the ARC each quarter was approved and adopted by the ARC.

18. GPTW

18.1. There followed a discussion as to whether the NCRI should continue to participate in the GPTW initiative once the current contract expires in the middle of next year.

18.2. **IT WAS AGREED THAT** options for continuing with the GPTW initiative would be presented to the board for consideration at the next board meeting to be held in January 2024.

19. Minutes of the Previous Meetings

19.1. The draft minutes of the previous board meetings held on 24 October 2023 and 8 November 2023 respectively (together the “**Previous Minutes**”) were produced to the meeting and reviewed by the board.

19.2. Following a discussion in relation to the foregoing, **IT WAS RESOLVED THAT:**

- 19.2.1. the Previous Minutes be approved in the form produced to the meeting; and
- 19.2.2. the Chairperson be authorised to sign the Previous Minutes in his capacity as Chairperson of the current meeting.

20. Northern Ireland Cancer Registry

20.1. ML reported to the meeting that he has been appointed chairperson of the Northern Ireland Cancer Registry (“NICR”).

20.2. The meeting congratulated ML on his appointment and **IT WAS AGREED THAT** the board would consider potential opportunities for collaboration with the NICR board at a future meeting.

21. Close

There being no further business, the Chairperson declared the meeting closed.

[signature page follows]