

## **Minutes of the HSENI Senior Management Team (SMT) Meeting**

**24 October 2016, Ladas Drive, Belfast**

**In attendance: (Chair) K Morrison**

**B Monson**

**N Monson**

**L Burns**

### **1. Apologies**

### **2. Minutes of last meeting**

The minutes of the last meeting held on 7 June 2016 which had been previously circulated were approved and adopted.

### **3. Update on Agreed Action Points**

- Amended financial plans were received from HoGs by the end of June and final allocations were agreed by SMT in early July

### **4. Visit by Colin Jack, Director, DfE**

Colin Jack, newly appointed Director of Business and Employment Regulation in the Department for the Economy (DfE) met with SMT to discuss HSENI structures and responsibilities and to explain the changes in DfE. There was a good discussion around shared priorities, budgets and forthcoming legislative items including early thoughts on the potential legislative implications of the UK leaving the EU.

### **5. Corporate Health, Safety and Welfare**

SMT noted no staff accidents or near misses reported since the last meeting in June.

No significant issues had been identified at last inspection in Ladas Drive and Omagh on 20 September. A further inspection was planned for 12 December and K Morrison said he would participate.

#### **Action: K Morrison to participate in the next H&S inspection**

Following a query in relation to handling of bio contaminated equipment or evidence, it was agreed to reissue the guidance on this issue and discuss at the forthcoming HoGs meeting.

### **6. Audit, Risk Management and Finance**

SMT considered the risk register and emerging risks. SMT agreed to add 'Implications of the UK decision to exit the EU' to the risk register.

SMT agreed the June and September quarterly assurance statements for transmission to DfE.

SMT discussed the 2016/17 budget which remained on target at this stage. Spend to end September on Staff and Operating costs was c.44% and spend on Programme costs to end September was c.33%. SMT reminded staff of the need to spend budgets fully or signal any reduced requirements as soon as possible. SMT noted that spend on Staff and Operating costs was lower than expected so far because of staff absences and a delay in advertising and filling several posts.

In relation to future budgets, SMT noted that budgets would continue to be under pressure for the next few years. There was no clarity yet on future allocations and it was likely to be early 2017 before the picture was clear. SMT agreed to continue work on preparing for possible reductions and cost reduction / income generation options.

## **7. HR**

SMT considered the September absence statistics. During September the HSENI absence rate was 4.1% (NICS 5.7% and DfE 5.1%). 92% of HSENI staff had no absence in September. Of those absent 55% are deemed long term and SMT welcomed the return to work of some who had been off for a while. The total cost of sickness absence for September was estimated at £13,000.

Mr Burns updated SMT on the recruitment exercises for current vacancies. SMT agreed it was necessary to progress these as soon as possible. SMT noted work had begun on developing a new Inspector recruitment exercise which would help the organisation cope with any retirements or reduced hours over the next few years.

SMT agreed to continue monitoring of the usage of Malone Rugby Club car park to enable an early decision to be made on usage in the 2017/18 financial year.

## **8. Case and Project Work**

SMT discussed the current caseload of the Major Investigation Team. Out of 27 cases, 18 cases were currently being investigated or at the file preparation stage. The remaining cases were with the PPS (5 cases) or already in the court system (4 cases). Mrs Monson advised that the MIT team is currently at full capacity.

Mr Burns updated SMT on the CMS system replacement project. Unfortunately the first procurement process did not attract any bids. The documentation was being reviewed by the Project Board and it was expected that a new process would launch in November 2016. The go live date for the new system would now be from April 2018 rather than April 2017.

SMT noted an excellent analysis paper from P Moore on the potential legislative implications of the UK's decision to leave the EU. SMT endorsed the paper and recommendations and agreed to update the Board and DfE on the thinking and proposed strategic direction at the earliest opportunity.

## **9. Business Planning**

SMT noted that the Minister had approved HSENI's 2016/17 Operating Plan and that a copy would be sent to the DfE Committee in the coming weeks. The Minister had also tasked HSENI to look at the part it might play in supporting businesses and creating a better business environment for NI companies. SMT was working on this with a view to having something to present to the Minister before Christmas.

All targets in the 2016/17 Operating Plan remain on track, although it was noted that delivering 3000 farm advisory visits as part of the Farm Safety Partnership 3 year Action Plan remains very challenging given resource constraints.

SMT discussed the development of the new HSENI corporate Plan. Given the uncertainty around future budgets it was not possible to finalise a draft at this stage. However, SMT agreed to pull together a small group to prepare a draft for internal consultation. This would ensure HSENI was ready to go to DfE / the Minister once the budget situation became clearer.

**Action: K Morrison to pull together a small group to work up a draft document for a planned consultation with HSENI staff**

## **10. Performance Monitoring**

Dr Monson updated SMT on the HSENI performance statistics. The figures to 30 September showed the provisional work related fatality figure at 9 compared to 5 at the same stage in the previous year. The figure for all reportable injuries was 1200 compared to 1308 in the same period last year. SMT noted that 2924 inspections had been carried out to date and 467 complaints received so far, an increase of 23 complaints compared to last year. 30 Improvement and 41 Prohibition Notices had been issued to date.

## **11. Board Business**

SMT discussed the upcoming Board meeting on 27 October which would focus on finance, the development of occupational health priorities, an update on the HELANI review and the potential legislative implications of the UK decision to leave the EU

## **12. A.O.B.**

SMT considered forward diaries and key events over the next few months.

SMT discussed Christmas leave - Mr Morrison would be abroad from 26 December to 7 January 2017 inclusive and DCEs would cover this period.

## **13. Date of next meeting**

It was agreed that the next SMT meeting would be on 29 November in Ladas Drive.