

## Board Meeting

Friday, 17<sup>th</sup> November 2023 at 10:30am  
In Person. Georges Quay House, Dublin

**Present:** Catherine Heaney (Chair), Seán Sheridan, Mary Doyle, Ian Power, Claire Byrne, Brid O’Donovan, Seamus Smith, Stephen Lycett, Sarah Harte, Teresa Blake, Catriona Curtis, Mary Dorgan, Mary Corcoan.

**In attendance:** Graham Long, Acting Chief Executive, Rachel Downes, Carmel Beirne, Adrian O’Connor, Enda Connolly (also taking minutes), Gary Watters (items 10 and 11)

**Apologies:** John Saunders, Fiona Ward

## Minutes

Item	Agenda Description
1.	<b>Declaration of Interests</b>
1.1	The Chair invited Board members to declare any relevant interests. No relevant interests were declared.
2.	<b>Board Business and Approval of Agenda</b>
2.1	<p>The Chair proposed adding an additional closed session to the agenda. This was agreed and the agenda for the meeting was adopted by the Board.</p> <p>The Chair welcomed three of the four recently appointed new directors to the Board who briefly introduced themselves.</p> <p>It was requested and agreed that as items on the Action Log from Board Meetings are completed, that they be removed.</p>
3.	<b>Minutes of Previous Meeting, 29 September 2023</b>
3.1	The minutes of the meeting held on 29 <sup>th</sup> September 2023 were proposed by Ian Power and seconded by Seamus Smith.
4.	<b>Appointment of Acting Board Secretary</b>
4.1	Enda Connolly, acting Head of Corporate Services, was appointed as Board Secretary.
5.	<b>Report from the Acting Chief Executive and Chair</b>

5.1	<p>Graham Long spoke to a number of areas set out in his Acting Chief Executive’s Report including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An event organised by National Traveller MABS in relation to ‘Money and Mental Health’.</li> <li>• The opening of the refurbished Monaghan CIS by Minister Humphreys.</li> <li>• The launch of the new SLIS voucher scheme.</li> <li>• Further progress on the CIS Library project with a Wicklow launch.</li> <li>• The CIB Staff Day held on 26<sup>th</sup> September.</li> <li>• SMT in person-meetings with the CIS, MABS, SLIS and RISLI Chairpersons – an initiative that is intended to become regular quarterly events.</li> <li>• Regular weekly update meetings with the DSP are also now being held.</li> <li>• An experienced industrial relations negotiator has been appointed to assist with putting in place a process that may assist with the progression of the CIS pay claim.</li> <li>• It was noted that the FAR Committee had considered a report from Mazars in relation to National Traveller MABS at its meeting on 1 November. A communication was issued to the Board on this matter on 3 November 2023.</li> </ul> <p>Graham Long also spoke to a number of other areas including the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Acknowledged the recent Budget 2024 allocation to CIB of €61.3 million, a figure that represents an increase on the 2023 budget but is below the proposal that was requested. This means that, among other things, the business case for three additional staff to support the development of a digital strategy has not been approved.</li> <li>• SLA agreements have been issued to the SDCs for final comment.</li> <li>• CIB has become aware of a potential pay claim in NAS but no details are yet available. It was also noted that RISLI are likely to submit a pay claim.</li> </ul> <p>The Chairperson, Catherine Heaney, informed the Board of a number of matters including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discussions she held with the Minister and DSP prior to the Budget to try to advance CIB’s case for additional funding. She emphasised the difficulty of seeking transformational change without adequate funding and the importance of CIB opening budget dialogue with the DSP well in advance of submission deadlines.</li> <li>• Discussions she had with the State’s <i>Civil Legal Aid Review Group</i> concerning possible areas for co-operation with CIB.</li> </ul> <p>There was a discussion on the reports regarding the impact on risks arising from funding matters combined with pay claims and potential industrial relations challenges.</p>
6.	<b>CIB Strategy, including Strategic Risk</b>
6.1	<p>Graham Long introduced a paper on the proposed next steps in implementing CIB’s Strategy 2023-2026 (a copy was circulated in advance with the Board papers). Members of the Senior Management Team outlined the proposed priority areas, along with proposals in relation to outcome metrics, digital service provision, staff training and resourcing and the steps that are proposed to increase CIB’s capacity to deliver on these across a multi-year work plan. Potential risks to implementation were also discussed. The Board expressed support for the paper and proposed steps. Concern was expressed about the lack of additional funding being made available to support the implementation of a digital strategy.</p>

7.	<b>Report from the Governance Committee, 9<sup>th</sup> November 2023</b>
7.1	<p>A briefing note on the work of the Governance Committee of 9<sup>th</sup> November was circulated in advance of the meeting. The Chair of the Committee provided an update on their work.</p> <p>The draft Performance Delivery Agreement with the DSP was approved.</p> <p>The annual CIB Board and Committee evaluation process for 2023 was approved. The next in-person Board meeting in 2024 (date to be confirmed) will review the evaluations.</p>
8.	<b>Report from the ICT, Digital and Data Committee, 20<sup>th</sup> October 2023</b>
8.1	<p>A briefing note on the work of the ICT, Digital and Data Committee of 20<sup>th</sup> October was circulated in advance of the meeting. The Chair of the Committee explained the strategic importance of the work of the committee and the need for CIB to have adequate resourcing for a digital strategy. The proposed access to the DSP’s contract with Deloitte was identified as a critical element.</p>
9.	<b>Report from the Standards and Development Committee, 11 October 2023</b>
9.1	<p>A briefing note on the work of the Standards &amp; Development Committee of 11<sup>th</sup> October was circulated in advance of the meeting. The Chair of the Committee provided an update on their work, particular in terms of reviewing the provision and operation of advocacy services.</p> <p>The Committee Chair suggested that an area for future consideration should be whether the area of social policy reporting might sit better under the Standards and Development Division. The Committee is currently looking for an additional external member – ideally someone with a service user or provider perspective.</p>
10.	<b>Report from the Finance, Audit and Risk Committee, 1 November 2023</b>
10.1	<p><b>a) FAR Summary Slide Deck</b></p> <p>The Chair of the Finance, Audit and Risk Committee presented a new format slide deck arising from their meeting of 1<sup>st</sup> November 2023 (copy was circulated in advance of the meeting). It was explained that the new format was designed to provide a more effective balance between quantitative and qualitative data and information.</p> <p>An update on the audit of NT MABS was provided.</p>
	<p><b>b) Procurements</b></p> <p>The Board approved the following procurements to commence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accounting software to support the SDCs</li> <li>• Microsoft Dynamics support for the SAOR case management system</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Accounting support services to support the Compliance and Reporting Division with the management and delivery of compliance and financial reporting projects.</li> </ul>
11.	<b>Finance Matters</b>
11.1	<p><b>a) Risk Management</b></p> <p>An updated risk register was provided. The Board requested that fraud be considered for inclusion as a risk category.</p>
11.2	<p><b>b) Budget Monitoring Report, September 2023</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CIB's budget for 2023 is €61.283m.</li> <li>By the end of September, income had totalled €47.329m, of which €47.131m was Government funding and €198,275 was "other income".</li> <li>Total expenditure to the end of August was €46.679m, leaving an excess of income over expenditure of €650,073.</li> <li>Underspends of €383,164 relates to Operational Compliance and Reporting and is largely due to the delay of receipt of the George's Quay House rental invoices. A further €253,226 relates to Information &amp; Communications Technology across a range of different budget lines.</li> </ul>
11.3	<p><b>Update on Budget Estimates 2024</b></p> <p>A CIB budget allocation of €61.333m was announced for 2024. This is an increase of 0.78% on the 2023 allocation. However, the allocation is below the Existing Level of Service request made for 2024 and does not allow for the progression of business cases put forward as part of the estimates process. To help advance the development of a digital strategy, the Board requested that the ICT Budget be revisited for the December Board meeting.</p>
11.4	<p><b>Update on Audit of Annual Financial Statements 2022</b></p> <p>An update was provided on the audit which is nearing completion. No significant issues have been identified to date. A full and final set of audited accounts are expected for the Board meeting on the 15<sup>th</sup> December.</p>
11.5	<p><b>Rent increase – Riverstone House, Limerick</b></p> <p>The Board approved payment of a rent increase, along with arrears, for the lease on Riverstone House, Limerick.</p>
12.	<b>Update on PQs, FOI, Reps, SARs, Complaints</b>
12.1	The Board were provided with an overview of the volume and nature of PQs, SARs, Reps, FOIs and Complaints reviewed by CIB in 2022 and up to 31 <sup>st</sup> October 2023.
13.	<b>Date of next meeting – 15 December 2023, online</b>

14.	<b>Closed Session</b>
14.1	<p>During the closed session, the Board was updated on and agreed the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• An updated business case was submitted re: CEO role to DSP in mid-October. No update has been secured since then.</li><li>• While all ongoing matters in respect of CEO replacement continue to rest with the Governance Committee, the board agreed to the following as the make up of the shortlisting and interviewing committee: Catherine Heaney (Chair of the panel); Brid O'Donovan; Seán Sheridan; rep from Osborne; rep from DSP.</li><li>• Board agreed that Catherine Heaney and Brid O'Donovan would be responsible for the Acting CEO end-of-year (to take place no later than January), and using the PMDS as the primary tool for review and future development.</li><li>• As the Chair of the Board will not be available to fully participate in the December meeting of the Board, the Board agreed that Brid O'Donovan would chair this meeting. Seán Sheridan will provide the report from the Governance Committee in lieu of the chair.</li></ul>