



Minutes of the VSS Board Meeting No 63
VSS, Seatem House, 28-32 Alfred Street, Belfast
Board Meeting Type: Quarterly Board Meeting
Tuesday 22nd October 2019 at 10:00am

Board Members Present:

Oliver Wilkinson (OW)	Board Member (Chair)
Patricia Haren (PH)	Board Member
Bertha McDougall (BMcD)	Board Member
Beverly Clarke (BC)	Board Member
Richard Solomon (RS)	Board Member
Stephen McIlveen (SMcl)	Board Member

VSS Officers in Attendance:

Margaret Bateson (MB)	Chief Executive
Andrew Walker (AW)	Head of Health & Wellbeing
Tara Lewsley (TL)	Head of Corporate Services
Lizzy Graham (LG)	Governance Officer (Minutes)
Melissa McCartan (MMC)	Business Support Officer (Minutes)

A Apologies

No apologies were received.

B Minutes of Previous Meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 10 September 2019 were approved.

The Board noted that RFJ had been invited to present learning as a BACP accredited organisation, being only one of four BACP registered VSS funded organisations.

C Action Points

Head of Corporate Services provided an update in relation to the outstanding action points.

It was noted that two action points were closed during the period as the VSS Board had met with the Commissioner and the VSS Communication Plan had been circulated.

The Board noted that two action points remain open, as follows:

02.05.2019 - AP3: Chair to arrange completion of all member appraisals. It was noted that completion is anticipated by end of October 2019.

MSFM 4.4.3: Ministers to meet Board. It was noted that the board request to meet Ministers has been sent and that a meeting is being scheduled.

D Conflict of Interest

D1 Supplier List / Agenda Items

The Board noted the Supplier List.

D2 Declaration Form

No conflicts of interest were declared.

E Chairman's Report

OW presented the Chairman's Update Report to members.

BMcD provided an update regarding the recent Victims Forum Meeting.

AP1 – PEACE IV Steering Committee update paper to be circulated to Board Members.

F Quarter End September 2019

F1 CEO/AO Exception Report

The Board asked the CEO to present this report.

MB provided an update on the key strategic issues, drawing attention to two concerns over the achievement of four targets, as follows:

- It has been identified that the targeted outcome in respect of the Regional Trauma Network will not be achieved by 31st March 2020. VSS are confident that they are close to an acceptable compromise and resolution, expected to be confirmed by end of November 2019.
- Progress in respect of the Peace IV frameworks targets against the delivery plan for 2019/20 (1-to-1 Literacy & Numeracy, Volunteering and Social Isolation) continues to be less than planned. However, when considering the overall target within the PEACE IV project, VSS is confident that resilience will achieve its overall target.

MB provided an update on delivering on outcomes, drawing attention to two key achievements:

- VSS supported a three day equine therapy pilot in September 2019 which reported positive results.
- Within the Psychological Therapies framework, a process has been agreed for clients engaging in Talking Therapies outside of VSS funded organisations to ensure outcomes can be monitored.

MB provided an update on risk STG 35 regarding lack of SHA legacy structures. It was noted STG 35 had been reduced from red to amber due to significant work within the Advocacy Support Working Group to develop a reporting framework and work plan. The Board asked that STG 35 be reviewed again next Quarter End.

F2 Quarterly ALB Performance Report

The CEO presented this report to the Board.

F3 Quarterly Assurance Statement

The Board noted this paper.

F4 Quarterly Outcomes based M&E

The Board noted this paper.

G Board Sub Committee

G1 Audit and Risk Committee Update

The Head of Corporate Services provided the Board with an update from the last Audit and Risk Committee meeting.

The Board noted that the Internal Audit reports: review of INP and review of VSP were presented to the ARC, both of which received a satisfactory rating.

G2 Health & Wellbeing Committee Update

The Head of Health and Wellbeing provided the Board with an update from the last Health and Wellbeing Committee meeting.

It was noted that the Committee has normalised the structure of these meetings, agreeing clear action points and identifying policy updates. AW provided an update on the remaining Northern Ireland Social Care Council (NISCC) registrations.

H Board Work Plan and Development

H1 Board Attendance/Work Plan

The Board asked the Head of Corporate Services to provide an update on Board Attendance and Work Plan.

TL drew attention to the Board Objectives for 2019/2020, providing an update on Annex 2, Reference 7.

H2 Board Training Update and Questionnaire

TL presented this paper. The Board noted that BMcD recently attended Corporate Accountability and Governance training which she found very informative.

H3 Board Self-Assessment Update

The Board noted this paper.

I Standing Agenda Items

I1 Compliance Update

The Board asked Head of Corporate Services to present this paper.

TL provided the Board with an update on the five suspected fraud cases open at the quarter end. It was noted that one case is awaiting a CCNI Final Report and four have been referred to TEO / GFIS.

The Board noted that four INP debtor balances remain open which are being actively sought / offset. VSS are confident that two debtor balances will be recovered by 2021.

The Board noted one case of whistleblowing in the quarter ended September 2019. It was noted that VSS concluded an internal investigation and found no evidence to support these allegations. VSS has now closed this case.

There were no new Ombudsman Complaints or Assembly Questions received during the period.

MB provided an update in relation to an organisation recently in receipt of a governance review. The Board noted that the independent specialist have now presented their final report and conclusions of this report are being communicated to the funded organisation, with an action plan to be agreed before funding restrictions are removed.

The Board noted that two complaints regarding VSS were received in the period, with one not upheld and the other addressed with appropriate actions taken. Two complaints were received in respect of VSS funded groups during the period, both of which have been closed.

The Board noted that one Freedom of Information Request remains open while VSS awaits clarification.

I2 Client Risk Update

The Board noted this paper.

TL advised that no new clients have been added to the Unacceptable Behaviour Register or the Client Risk Register during the period.

I3 Data Protection Update

One Data Sharing Agreement remains outstanding from a funded organisation. VSS have now sought advice from internal audit and are awaiting a response.

No data breaches were reported during the period.

J Communications

Nothing to report.

K AOB

MB advised the Board that the Government Consultation: *A legal framework for a Troubles-related incident Victims Payment Scheme* was due to launch at 12.00pm on 22 October 2019. It was agreed that VSS will provide a response by close on 26 November 2019.

AP2 – VSS to issue a response to the Victims Payment consultation before close on 26th November 2019.

The Board approved the signing of a revised bank mandate in relation to the temporary Finance and Governance Manager.

Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Board is scheduled for Tuesday 26th November 2019, 10:00am at Titanic Suites, Belfast.

The Board noted that the Commissioner is due to attend.