

Board Paper

Date

27 October 2022

Title

Proposal for Board meeting dates 2023 - 2024

Report Author

REDACTED, Business and Governance Officer

Responsible Executive Director

Richard Greenhous, Chief of Staff

Paper for decision.

Open**Issue**

1. There are currently no Board meetings scheduled after 2 March 2023.

Recommendation

2. We recommend that the Board:
 - a. agrees to the schedule of meetings set out in the paper.
 - b. agrees to alternate between remote and face-to-face meetings.
 - c. agrees to one meeting in Belfast in 2023.

Background

3. Since the creation of the OEP Board in July 2021 the Board has met sixteen times through a combination of ordinary scheduled meetings and extraordinary meetings.
4. The agreed schedule of ordinary meetings has not to date proven sufficient for the timing and volume of business for the Board to consider.

5. The Board meeting schedule and the ARAC schedule have been misaligned which has led to irregularly scheduled meetings and impacted the timeliness of ARAC's reporting to the Board.

Analysis

6. We propose a schedule of one ordinary Board meeting every six weeks. We judge this will enable the appropriate time for the Board to consider its business, and at an appropriately prompt time.
7. Of these meetings we propose that every other meeting should be held-in person. This was stated as a preference by the Board in July 2021. This model has been disrupted by lockdowns, but we judge worked well for the last year, and we believe it to be a good balance of in person and remote meetings when all factors are taken into consideration. We judge that discussion and decisions have been just as effective remotely as in person when seeking the Board's input.
8. In addition to these ordinary Board meetings, we propose to hold a two-hour time-slot mid-way between the ordinary meetings. This time will be confirmed or released as early as possible. This is to allow for the extraordinary business the Board has been required to consider this year, in a planned way that makes time planning for the Board, and work planning for the OEP more predictable. We judge this will significantly reduce the need for further extraordinary meetings to be scheduled.
9. In addition to the ordinary meetings, and the placeholders for extraordinary meetings. We propose two day-long strategy sessions for the Board and the Executive. The first of which will take place in Spring 2023, the second of which will take place in Autumn 2023.
10. We propose one of the six in person Board meetings next year should be held in Northern Ireland because the OEP has committed to having a presence in Northern Ireland and it is important to hold a proportionate amount of meetings in Northern Ireland and England.
11. We also propose that ARAC be scheduled quarterly, ahead of an ordinary Board meeting so that it can routinely and promptly report to the Board on its business. This will be timed to coincide with routine quarterly financial and risk reporting to the Board, so that appropriate scrutiny can be undertaken by ARAC in advance. The ARAC schedule may need to be augmented by further extraordinary meetings when detailed planning for the 2022/23 audit has been completed.
12. The proposed schedule is below. At this stage, we have identified target dates. If Board members are unable to accommodate any of these, we will seek the closest alternative date through polling of Members.
13. It is suggested that the Board strategy days include dinner the night before, and an overnight stay, so there are no dates proposed for them currently. We will liaise with Board members to schedule them.

2023 - 2024			
Ordinary Board meeting	Remote/In person	Extraordinary meeting (time held, and released if not needed)	ARAC
			Early April
13 April	Remote	4 May	
Proposal for a Board strategy day to start to re-evaluate the strategy			
25 May	In person (NI)	15 June	
			Early July
13 July	Remote	17 August	
5 September	In person	28 September	
Proposal for Board strategy day to develop further plans and take stock			
			Early October
12 October	Remote	2 November	
30 November	In person	14 December	
			Early January
16 January	Remote	1 February	
29 February	In person	28 March	
			Early April
16 April	Remote	2 May	

Northern Ireland

14. At least one Board meetings will be held in Northern Ireland in the year 2023-2024.

Finance and Resource

15. There is a cost involved with an in-person meeting. *This section has been redacted as its publication would be prejudicial to commercial interests.* The cost of meetings will reduce once permanent office accommodation is in place.

16. This proposal is designed to reduce the administrative burden of organising meetings.

Impact Assessments

Risk Assessment

17. There is a risk that by having a more rigid meeting timeline that some pieces of work may have to come to the Board when not quite ready. We will mitigate this risk by communicating the timeline with staff as early as possible so they're able to work around the dates. Decisions can also be taken by electronic business.

Equality Analysis

18. No material equalities impacts have been identified.

Environmental Analysis

19. Good governance is essential to the OEP being able to carry out its functions. If the Board runs smoothly and is well organised then it will be able to make decisions on work that will fulfil our strategic objectives and statutory functions.

20. There will be an environmental impact when Board members are travelling to meetings rather than attending remotely. We propose to mitigate this by alternating in between remote and in-person meetings. All staff, including Board members, are encouraged to consider the sustainability impacts of travel as set out in the Travel and Subsistence Policy.

Implementation Timescale

21. Immediate

22. The only action needed from Board members for implementation will be to let us know their availability.

Communications

23. Once the Board meetings are in place, the dates and timelines will be communicated with the wider organisation. This will mean that teams can plan their work accordingly around the Board meetings so that the Board is sighted.

External Stakeholders

24. No need for stakeholder engagement.

Paper to be published	YES
Publication date (if relevant)	With meeting minutes

<p>If it is proposed not to publish the paper or to not publish in full please outline the reasons why with reference to the exemptions available under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) or Environmental Information Regulations (EIR). Please include references to specific paragraphs in your paper</p>	
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