Meeting of the Extraordinary Board of Healthcare Improvement Scotland
Date: 18 March 2020
Time: 13.00–14.00
Venue: Teleconference

Present
Carole Wilkinson, Chair
Jackie Brock, Non-executive Director
Suzanne Dawson, Non-executive Director
Dr Zoë M Dunhill MBE, Non-executive Director
Paul Edie, Non-executive Director
John Glennie OBE, Non-executive Director
Gill Graham, Non-executive Director
Rhona Hotchkiss, Non-executive Director
Robbie Pearson, Chief Executive
Duncan Service, Non-executive Director
Christine Lester, Non-executive Director

In Attendance
Lynsey Cleland, Director of Community Engagement
Ann Gow, Director of Nursing, Midwifery and Allied Health Professions (NMAHP)
Ruth Glassborow, Director of Improvement
Lynda Nicholson, Interim Head of Communications
Safia Qureshi, Director of Evidence
Maggie Waterston, Director of Finance and Corporate Services

Apologies
Sandra McDougall, Interim Director of Quality Assurance
Kathleen Preston, Non-executive Director
Sybil Canavan, Director of Workforce

Board Support
Natalie Hannigan, Business Manager
## OPENING BUSINESS

### 1.1 Chair’s welcome and apologies

The Chair opened the meeting of the Board by extending a warm welcome to all joining via teleconference.

To manage the agenda, the Chair requested items 2 and 3 be taken together and noted the likely overlapping of discussions across the agenda.

For the purpose of the minute discussions have been recorded against the relevant agenda item.

## Overall Position

### 2.1 Current Scottish Government Advice

The Chief Executive provided an update to the Board on the current SG advice noting the collective approach with the UK government and other devolved governments.

The Chief Executive highlighted that the current advice was for a reduction in social contact and recommended move to working from home to minimise travel and contact. He confirmed that home working was being implemented by Healthcare Improvement Scotland with effect from 18 March 2020.

He referred to the wider implications for the country, and the key challenge of ensuring the resilience of the UK economy, public sector, infrastructure and schooling.

This is a fluid situation and the Chief Executive noted that the advice is changing by the day in response to emerging developments.

The board noted the update from the Chief Executive.

## COVID-19 HIS Response

### 3.1 Resilience Structures and Operational arrangements

- Staff Deployment
- Staff Welfare
- SITREPS

The Director of Evidence provided an update on the HIS response to COVID-19 as the nominated executive lead. As COVID-19 lead she had established a COVID-19 Operational Hub that was co-ordinating the internal efforts in the organisation to manage the impact of the virus.

The Director of Evidence highlighted a range of measures that were in place to support the resilience of the organisation and to support staff in the coming months.

The Director of Evidence confirmed that a wide range of existing programmes had been paused given the current situation, including routine inspections.

It was noted that clinical secondees to the organisation were being returned to their host boards to assist in the response to tackling
coronavirus. In addition, the offer of support was being made to all NHS Boards and integration authorities for Healthcare Improvement Scotland staff to assist them in their operational response.

The Director of Evidence referred to the work that was being taken forward at pace to refocus our national work programmes to support the health and social care system. This included Hospital at Home and Near Me (teleconferencing for clinical advice and consultations).

The Director of Evidence highlighted the communications that had been in place for staff with a focus on their welfare and support through this time.

The Board thanked the Director of Evidence for the update. It was confirmed that Healthcare Improvement Scotland will ensure a clear governance and decision making audit trail is in place to provide a record of decision making, in particular in relation to pausing of work programmes and re-prioritisation of work.

The Chief Executive confirmed that we was keeping Scottish Government sponsor colleagues updated on our response.

4. Leadership

4.1 Leadership Continuity and Resilience

The Chief Executive gave an update on the current leadership arrangements noting that the organisation will continue to function and support the health and social care system.

The Chief Executive said that there was a strong focus on ensuring staff are supported and have certainty and clarity about their roles, highlighting this time as a test of organisational resilience.

He also shared his appreciation of the staff’s response, demonstrating pragmatism and resilience as the organisation moved to a very different way of working. Daily huddles and other arrangements are being put in place to ensure staff continue to feel engaged and connected.

It was agreed that it will be important as the pressure builds that the members of the Executive Team - as individuals - are also visibly making a leadership contribution to the efforts to support the NHS.

The Board thanked the Chief Executive for this update.

The Board highlighted the need to keep a close eye on staff welfare in those areas where activity has been suspended, and whose resilience will be tested. It was confirmed that this was a priority area and work was underway – through the employee deployment matrix – for every individual member of staff to have a clear and well-defined role.

It was noted that colleagues in the community engagement directorate local office network will be an important resource that can help directly within their communities across Scotland, including support for the dissemination of information and using existing networks and links with community councils.
5. Communications

5.1 Communications update

The Head of Communications provided an update on communication activity underway.

The focus had been on directing staff to the Source intranet site for information whilst quickly applying national guidance, sharing the Executive Team decisions and practical information providing clear direction to staff on what is expected of individuals. Longer term communications will focus on how to keep the organisation together whilst dispersed, acting as an anchor and sharing good news, such as teams supporting the service, morale boosting support and stories.

The Board thanked the Head of Communications for the update and endorsed the approach.

It was acknowledged that Healthcare Improvement Scotland has a key role to play as wider social contact reduces with family and friends. The Board highlighted the need for guidance about how to separate work life and home life given the impact of a dual home/work environment.

The Chief Executive confirmed that the impact of the announcement that had been made during the course of the Board meeting regarding school and nursery closure would need urgent and careful consideration.

The Board highlighted the opportunity for employees to respond in different ways to the crisis such as through volunteering, and there was a need to be receptive to flexible models to the deployment of staff.

The Board noted that it was important to demonstrate a compassionate approach in uncertain times for staff but need to consider the sustainability and burden to HIS over a significant period of time in supporting potential extended carers leave and carried over annual leave. The Chief Executive said that many issues like this would require a national approach in the months ahead.

6. Risk Register (not on agenda)

The Chair provided an update on discussions at the Audit and Risk Committee (ARC) on COVID-19 and the risks around this. The ARC recommend to the HIS Board to include new COVID-19 risk on the strategic risk register and Executive Team to develop the wording and mitigating actions to support.

It was noted that in due course the risk register will be reviewed in context of COVID-19.

The Board also agreed that whilst there is likely to emerge more risks around COVID-19 to the organisation that this should not flood the risk register but just remain as a strategic risk to the organisation.
7. **AOB**

The Board formally noted that work and dedication of staff and the Executive Team in responding to the crisis and commended them on their efforts so far.

The Chair requested feedback on how to run meetings remotely and any comments to support the smooth running of the formal board meeting next week.

8. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

8.1 The next meeting would be held on 25 March 2020 by teleconference.

Name of person presiding: Carole Wilkinson

Signature of person presiding: [Signature]

Date: 25/3/20