

Minutes of the 158th Meeting of the Board of InterTradeIreland, the Trade and Business Development Body.

Wednesday 21st October 2015 InterTradeIreland (2.15 pm – 4.05 pm) Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation Offices, Kildare Street, Dublin

Present:

Board Members:

Mr Martin Cronin	Chairman
Ms Joanne Spain	Vice Chair
Mr Terry Crossan	
Ms Rosemary Delaney	
Mr Jack Gallagher	
Mr Ray Hayden	
Mr Hubert Brown Kerr	
Mr Timothy Mayes	
Mr Kevin Norton	

In Attendance:

Executive:

Mr Thomas Hunter McGowan	CEO
Mr Aidan Gough	Director of Policy and Strategy
Ms Margaret Hearty	Director of Programmes and Business Services
Mr Laurence Lord	Director of Corporate Services
Ms Orla McGlennon	Board Secretary

Minister Bruton joined the Board Meeting

The Chairman welcomed Minister Bruton to the meeting. Minister Bruton commended the level of commitment by Board members and advised of his support and interest in the work of InterTradeIreland and its various programmes. He commended the efforts of InterTradeIreland in the area of public procurement and stressed the importance of SMEs having the best possible access to public procurement opportunities. The Minister advised that as part of the Action Plan for Jobs, the Government is committed to develop and implement a comprehensive national Strategy for Entrepreneurship. The Enterprise 2025 Strategy is due to be published which will outline the plan for the next ten years. He informed the Board that the next decade will bring challenges and supporting self sustaining hubs of entrepreneurship and promoting a strong entrepreneurial culture is important. A planned approach to develop a strategy for clusters was discussed. Mr Gough advised that InterTradeIreland had recently published a clusters

report '*Mapping the Potential for All Island Sectoral Ecosystems*' which recommends different types of support for individual sectors such as, Pharmaceuticals, Medical Devices and ICT. The Minister praised the work of InterTradeIreland across the regions. He informed the Board that the desirability of staggered replacement of Southern Board members was being addressed. Board members expressed their gratitude to the Minister for his support and assistance over the years. Board members expressed their view that although InterTradeIreland is a small agency, it is making a significant impact in building the capability of SMEs in a range of sectors on the island. Activities adding substantial value include InterTradeIreland's Funding for Growth initiatives, public procurement activities and various cross border programmes which build the capability of SMEs. Mr Hayden reported on the very successful Meet the Buyer event that was held that morning in Dublin. Over 1,200 participants had registered and approximately 30 buying organisations attended. Ms Hearty reported on the ongoing rollout of the Funding for Growth workshops and one to one advisory clinics taking place across the island. She advised that these supports were in response to recommendations made in the InterTradeIreland '*Access to Finance for SMEs on the Island of Ireland*' policy research report.

The Chairman thanked Minister Bruton for joining the Board meeting and for his engagement with the Board.

Minister Bruton left the Board meeting.

158.1 Apologies.

Apologies were received from Mr Brendan Butler, Ms Patricia McKeown and Prof Terri Scott.

158.2 Conflict of Interest.

No conflicts of interest were declared.

158.3 Authorisation of Previous Minutes.

The Minutes of the 29th September 2015 Board meeting were approved by the Board and authorised by the Chairman.

158.4 Chairman's Report

The Board discussed the implications of proposed funding reductions for the Body at length and agreed that the matter should be further considered at the next Board meeting.

158.5 CEO Report

Mr Hunter McGowan advised that he had recently attended the Startup Gathering 2020 forum in Dublin. He attended the Mid East Action Plan for Jobs in Navan at which Minister Bruton acknowledged the work of InterTradeIreland. A meeting of the Enterprise, Trade and Investment Committee of the Northern Ireland Assembly was held in the InterTradeIreland offices on 7th October at which elected representatives of the main political parties were present. The Executive had the opportunity to give a presentation on the work of InterTradeIreland. Mr Mayes also attended the meeting. The CEO reported on a recent Federation of Small Businesses event which was attended by Minister Foster. The keynote speech was given by Professor Marie McHugh, Dean of the Ulster University Business School who spoke at length on the successful Fusion projects delivered by University of Ulster.

The Chairman thanked Mr Hunter McGowan for his report.

158.6 Board Sub Committee/Steering Committee Reports

Audit and Risk Assurance Committee Report

Mr Mayes reported from the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee meeting held on 29th September 2015 and referred to the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee Board report. The Chairman suggested that the ‘relevance’ risk recorded in the Risk Register refers to ‘perceived relevance’.

The Chairman thanked Mr Mayes for his report.

Trade Sub Committee Report

Mr Hayden reported from the Trade sub Committee meeting held on 29th September 2015. He advised that the Trade Sub Committee Board report had been revised to include a concise description of the business, the value added dimension and the target market. The Trade Sub Committee considered 19 applications and approved 17 projects, 5 from the Munster region, 6 from the Leinster region, 3 from the Connacht region and 3 from Ulster region.

The Chairman thanked Mr Hayden for his report.

158.7 For Consideration, Discussion, Decision &/or Approval

Operations Directorate Progress and Activity Report

Ms Hearty presented the Operations Directorate Progress and Activity Report. She advised that October is one of the busiest months for outreach activities and events. Ms Hearty reported on the Meet the Buyer event held that morning in the City West hotel, Dublin which was very well attended. Minister Harris, Minister of State, Department of Public Expenditure and Reform gave the opening address and it was suggested that a copy of the Minister’s speech be emailed to Board

members for information. The Board asked that a letter of thanks be sent to the Minister for his support for this event. The Board also requested an analysis of the suppliers attending the event for the next Board meeting. Ms Hearty informed the Board that next year, a more thematic approach would be taken including sector specific Meet the Buyer events and pre-procurement events in partnership with the Office of Government Purchasing and Central Procurement Directorate.

Ms Hearty advised the Board that the tender for the Managing Agent contract for the Fusion V programme would be advertised in the next few days.

Ms Hearty informed the Board that the Seedcorn final awards ceremony will take place on 25th November in Clontarf Castle, Dublin and all Board members are cordially invited to attend.

The Chairman thanked Ms Hearty for her report.

Governance and Financial Matters

Mr Lord presented the Governance and Financial Matters Report. He informed the Board that currently Board members are paid on a bi-annual basis. A proposal to pay Board members on a monthly basis was considered and recommended by the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee. This practice will streamline the processing of payroll and related deductions. The Board discussed and agreed the proposal by the Committee to pay Board members on a monthly basis.

The Board noted the Governance and Financial Matters Report and the Chairman thanked Mr Lord for his update.

Premises Update

Mr Lord advised that the Premises Sub Committee met prior to the Board meeting and had commended the team on the work undertaken to date.

Communications and Marketing Performance Report

Mr Lord presented the Communications and Marketing Performance Report. He thanked Mr Hayden for support at the Meet the Buyer event held that morning.

The Board noted the Communications and Marketing Performance Report.

Tenders and Variations to Letters of Offer/Appointment

There were no requests for permission to go to tender and no requests for variations to Letters of Offer or Letter of Appointment.

Interreg Update

Mr Gough gave an update on the Interreg V programme. He advised that InterTradeIreland's Part A application form had been submitted to SEUPB ahead of today's deadline. A decision will be made at the next SEUPB Steering Committee meeting due to be held on 16th December.

The Chairman thanked Mr Gough for his update.

Business Plan Budget Variance and Milestone Exception Report

The Board noted the Business Plan Budget Variance and Milestone Exception Report.

158.8 AOB

Mr Gough advised that the InterTradeIreland Horizon 2020 Collaborate to Innovate Conference will take place in Belfast on Friday 23rd October and is currently over-subscribed.

.....Authorised by:

Mr Martin Cronin
Chairman, InterTradeIreland
24th November 2015