

Minutes of the 157th Meeting of the Board of InterTradeIreland, the Trade and Business Development Body.

Tuesday 29th September 2015 InterTradeIreland (12.45pm – 14.10 pm)

Present:

Board Members:

Mr Martin Cronin	Chairman
Ms Joanne Spain	Vice Chair
Mr Brendan Butler	
Mr Terry Crossan	
Ms Rosemary Delaney	
Mr Jack Gallagher	
Mr Ray Hayden	
Mr Hubert Brown Kerr	
Mr Timothy Mayes	
Ms Patricia McKeown	
Mr Kevin Norton	
Prof Terri Scott	

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

157.1 Apologies.

There were no apologies.

157.2 Conflict of Interest.

No conflicts of interest were declared.

157.3 Authorisation of Previous Minutes.

The Minutes of the 25th August 2015 Board meeting were approved by the Board.

157.4 Chairman's Report

The Board approved the draft schedule of 2016 Board meetings. It was agreed that the Board Secretary would send proposed dates for 2016 Sub Committee meetings and Board members should advise the Board Secretary of any unsuitable dates.

157.5 CEO Report

Mr Hunter McGowan advised that he attended the launch of Mid East Action Plan for Jobs. He also recently attended the launch of the 2015 Startup Gathering in Dublin which is chaired by Mr Butler. Mr Butler thanked the Executive for their support of this initiative. Mr Hunter McGowan informed the Board that he had an interview with Richard Buckley, Editor of Business Eye magazine on the work of InterTradeIreland which will feature in the September/October edition. He attended the launch of the EXIM (Export-Import) Summit in Dublin and a dinner organised by the Certified Public Accountants Ireland. An inaugural IVCA conference in partnership with the Galway Chamber was held in Galway University at which the InterTradeIreland Equity Advisor, Drew O'Sullivan and the CEO attended. The 3rd Fusion Graduation took place on 21st September at Queen's University Belfast. The Mary Breslin Award was presented Tobias Prewitz. The CEO advised the Board that he attended a British Ambassador's event at which Ben Wallace, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State at the Northern Ireland Office was present and he was given the opportunity to brief him on the work of InterTradeIreland.

An Oversight and Liaison meeting with the two sponsoring Departments was held recently and indications were given that the 2016 Business Plan which was approved by the Board in August submitted to the Departments may need to be reviewed if the DETI vote for 2016 is reduced. Mr Hunter McGowan advised that he had organised separate meetings with Department officials to discuss further.

Mr Hunter McGowan reported that he is due to meet next week with the Joint Secretaries of the NSMC.

The CEO commended the team working on the Interreg V application.

The Chairman thanked Mr Hunter McGowan for his report.

157.6 Board Sub Committee/Steering Committee Reports

Innovation Sub Committee Report

Mr Norton reported from the Innovation Sub Committee meeting held on 25th August 2015 to consider 10 new Fusion applications and 1 deferred application. 10 projects were approved and 1 was rejected. The Board noted the decisions of the Innovation Sub Committee in relation to the Fusion Programme. The Chairman thanked Mr Norton for his report.

157.7 For Consideration, Discussion, Decision &/or Approval

Operations Directorate Progress and Activity Report

Ms Hearty presented the Operations Directorate Progress and Activity Report. She confirmed that all programmes are largely on track and on budget. She advised that staff continue to deal with company enquiries and attend outreach events. Positive feedback from companies availing of InterTradeIreland support through our formal monitoring system and unprompted positive feedback helps to keep staff motivated and focused. Ms Hearty informed the Board that to date 988 people have registered to attend the Meet the Buyer event being held in Dublin on 21st October, The Taoiseach is scheduled to open the event. At the request of Minister Hamilton, the Procurement Team recently met with CPD staff from the Innovation Lab's project to discuss opportunities to introduce innovation to the public procurement process. A number of areas were identified for further development.

The Chairman thanked Ms Hearty for her report.

Governance and Financial Matters

Mr Lord presented the Governance and Financial Matters Report. The internal auditors recently reviewed systems and processes in respect of corporate governance structures and recommended that all Board Sub Committees review and present their terms of reference to the Board for approval on an annual basis. They also recommended that the Sub Committee structures are reviewed at least once every 3 years. The Audit and Risk Assurance Committee will consider this matter and revert to the Board in October.

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

Premises Update

The Chairman advised that the Premises Sub Committee met prior to the Board meeting and were awaiting the final draft of the economic appraisal.

Communications and Marketing Performance Report

Mr Lord presented the Communications and Marketing Performance Report. He advised the Board that Dwayne Stewart, our Communications Manager was invited by the Taoiseach's office to deliver an element of an "All about Jobs" training course in Dublin. The aim was to provide civil servants with knowledge and skills to speak to SMEs about jobs and the range of supports available to them to support the Action Plan for Jobs. There are now 100 more civil servant job ambassadors trained to promote key SME supports including InterTradeIreland programmes and activities. Mr Lord commended the Communications team on their work and highlighted the 63% for brand awareness metric against a much reduced advertising budget.

The Board noted the Communications and Marketing Performance Report.

Tenders and Variations to Letters of Offer/Appointment – Continuation of the InterTradeIreland Business Monitor.

Dr Eoin Magennis, Policy Research Manager, joined the Board meeting for this agenda item.

Mr Gough sought Board approval for the continuation of the InterTradeIreland Business Monitor. He advised that it is the largest and only all island survey of business sentiment, which each quarter surveys the views of owner/managers across the island. The Business Monitor provides InterTradeIreland with an evidence base which has been used to inform and develop new programmes including the Funding for Growth Advisory Service. Mr Gough informed the Board that the Monitor has also supported InterTradeIreland research reports and other policy makers and Government Departments for their own policy research and development. It offers the opportunity for InterTradeIreland to publicly disseminate authoritative information and keep in touch with the issues impacting on businesses on the island. The Board discussed the merits of the Monitor and approved the request to go to competitive tender for the service to produce the Business Monitor survey for a further 3 years (12 quarters).

The Chairman thanked Mr Gough for his input.

Targeting of Growing Companies: Internal Discussion Paper

It was agreed that both the Trade and Innovation Sub Committees would consider the internal discussion paper on *Targeting Growing Companies* and report back to the Board at a future date with their views and recommendations.

Interreg Update

Mr Gough gave an update on the Interreg V programme. He reported that the cross directorate team are doing extensive work on all aspects of the application form which must be submitted to SEUPB by 21st October. InterTradeIreland's application is to Objective 1.2 of the Interreg V programme, the objective is: *to increase the number and capacity of SMEs engaged in cross border research and innovation activity in the region aimed at the development of new products, processes and tradable services*. Mr Gough outlined the 5 strands:

- Strand 1. Preparatory workshop to SMEs to raise awareness of research and innovation
- Strand 2. More intensive intervention with SMEs delivered on a one to one basis
- Strand 3. Intensive research and innovation capability development programme
- Strand 4. Cross border innovation internship programme
- Strand 5. Cross border R&I projects

Mr Gough informed the Board that the Interreg V programmes differs from previous programmes and applicants must clearly describe what the results and outputs of the activities will be and how they will be tracked and measured to demonstrate how they have contributed to the result and output indicators. The output indicators/targets for this objective are:

- 1,408 SMEs receiving support, preparatory workshops – Strand 1
- 469 SMEs receiving one to one innovation advice – Strand 2
- 94 SMEs in receipt of an Intensive Research and Innovation Capability Development Programme – Strand 3
- 70 enterprises engaging in an Innovation Internship Programme - Strand 4
- 19 enterprises participating in cross border, Research and Innovation Projects – Strand 5

Mr Gough advised that InterTradeIreland are working with other partners to deliver the programme in the eligible region from all research institutes across the eligible region.

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.

.....Authorised by:

Mr Martin Cronin
 Chairman, InterTradeIreland
 21st October 2015