

**Minutes of the 215th Meeting of the Board of InterTradeIreland,
the Trade and Business Development Body**

Tuesday 29th June 2021 — via Zoom (09:30am – 10.45am)

Present via Zoom:

Board Members:

Mr Ken Nelson MBE	Chairman
Mr Martin McVicar	Vice Chair
Ms Florence Bayliss	
Mr Micheál Briody	
Mr Pete Byrne	
Mr Richard Kennedy	
Dr Conor Patterson	
Mr Michael Hanley	
Mr Timothy Cairns	

Executive:

Ms Margaret Hearty	Designated Officer
Mr Martin Agnew	Corporate Services Director
Ms Kerry Curran	Assistant Director of Strategy and Policy
Mr Alan Morrow	Assistant Director of Operations
Ms Caroline Moore	Board Minutes

Apologies were received from Mr David Simpson, Ms Adrienne McGuinness

Presentation: Ms Alison Currie joined the meeting to present the Co Innovate update.
Ms Eimear Fitzpatrick joined for a Communications update.

Opening Remarks

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and noted apologies received.

Conflicts of Interest

The Chairman declared a potential conflict of interest arising from his position as CEO of LEDCOM, which is a member organisation of Enterprise Northern Ireland and is involved in the delivery of the Co-Innovate programme. Mr Briody declared a potential conflict of interest arising from his position as CEO of Silver Hill Foods, which is involved with the Co-Innovate programme. Mr Patterson also declared a potential conflict of interest arising from his position as CEO of Newry & Mourne Co-Operative & Enterprise Agency, and a Director of Enterprise NI Limited, a Delivery Partner in the Co-Innovate Programme. Mr Kennedy, Director of Devenish (NI) Limited, declared a subsidiary company of Devenish (NI) Limited is a partner in a project funded by the Co-Innovate Programme. No other conflicts were declared.

215.01 25th May 2021 Board Minutes

The minutes of the 25th May 2021 Board meeting were agreed as a true record of the meeting and were approved by the Board. These will be signed and authorised by the Chairman at a later date.

Matters Arising

The Chairman advised that the first meeting of the Strategy Sub-committee took place in June and that Ms Hearty will provide an update.

Chairman's Business

The Chairman updated the Board that Ms Kim Ashton has resigned from her position as Board member. The NSMC has been informed and a letter of appreciation has been sent to her on behalf of the Board. The Shared Island Meeting took place recently and attended by the Chairman, Vice Chair and Mr Kennedy. All agreed there was good engagement and a follow up meeting has been scheduled with InterTradelreland in the coming weeks.

Mr Kennedy noted that InterTradelreland's strategy is well aligned with the Shared Island themes and should work in parallel using its experience and the Board are advised to encourage and support this initiative.

The Chairman advised that pending public health guidelines, the August Board would be held in person in Newry. He is hopeful the CEO process will be finalised by then.

215.02 Designated Officer Report

Ms Hearty presented the Designated Officer's report. She advised that plans were in place for a phased and blended return to the office from 13th September, in line with public health guidelines. Ms Hearty briefed the Board on the Strategy Subcommittee meeting, which took place on 16th June. One key area of discussion centred on the effectiveness of our corporate messaging and the committee agreed that ITI should benefit from promoting the work undertaken in helping businesses. The committee were briefed on the strategic priorities and discussed how to enhance these looking at 'where we were, where we are and where we want to go' with particular reference to cross border trade and within our remit. The committee were asked to consider how InterTradelreland could enhance its trade offerings. The area of Clusters was discussed and how InterTradelreland could be enablers where it makes economic sense. The need to enhance the profile of the Body in the Republic of Ireland was discussed including the benefits of having a physical presence. The Board expressed their interest in pursuing opportunities identified with the Shared Island Unit and Peace Plus.

The Board noted Ms Hearty's report.

215.03 Innovation Sub-committee Report

Mr Kennedy reported on the May Innovation Subcommittee and commented that twelve submissions were approved along with a change of work plan for one company, which had recognised a new opportunity.

The Innovation Sub-committee Report was noted. The Chairman thanked Mr Kennedy for his report.

215.04 Trade Sub-committee Report

Ms Bayliss reported on the Trade Subcommittee. There were twelve applications assessed and eleven approved, a further one was deferred and a previous deferral approved.

The Trade Subcommittee Report was noted. The Chairman thanked Ms Bayliss for her report.

215.05 Operations Directorate Progress and Activity Report

Mr Morrow reported on operational activities for the first half of the year. Programmes are largely on track in terms of projected spend. The voucher programmes are currently ahead of target.

Three candidates were successful in a recent recruitment campaign for Operations Managers.

Mr Morrow advised on the launch of a new learning element for Innovation Boost graduates in which Queen's University will provide a unique qualification for participants focussing on innovation and personal development. The host company will also have an opportunity to participate in the learning.

The Board noted the Operations Directorate Progress and Activity Reports and the Chairman thanked Mr Morrow for his report.

215.06 Co-Innovate Programme Update.

Ms Currie provided an update on the current delivery noting the significant progress made with Strand 4 and the challenging targets and timescales for Strand 2 in particular. An extension was approved by SEUPB for Strand 4 & 5 delivery In NI/ROI to end March 2023. Ms Currie briefed on the new Peace Plus initiative, which will have specific funding calls around economic regeneration and transformation. Anticipated proposal design will deliver supports to SMEs that align to the Corporate Plan, Govt. policies and Peace Plus programme objectives. To assist with this she advised on a request for tender for a specialist support for strategic research, scoping and development work to support proposal development, which was approved by the Board.

The Chairman noted the good relationship with SEUPB and his satisfaction on progress to date. There was discussion around the Strand 2 targets. The update on the Co- Innovate programme was noted.

215.08 Synergy Cluster Centre Proposal and Application

Ms Kerry Curran presented a proposal from through the Synergy programme. An ad hoc approach in economic strategies to clustering and a lack of understanding and consensus about what is a cluster has been identified. The potential for cross border economic growth through clusters is not yet being realised. The proposal provides an opportunity to bring together leading academics and researchers and provides the potential to develop clusters at a strategic and programme level.

The SLT considered the proposal and agreed on the added value. A detailed proposal was provided. The Chairman thanked Ms Curran for her presentation. The Board approved the proposal.

215.09 Governance and Financial Matters Report

Mr Agnew provided an update on the Governance and Financial Matters Report, noting the status of audit and current funding arrangements.

The Board noted the Governance and Financial Matters report. The Chairman thanked Mr Agnew for his report.

215.10 Tenders and Variations to Letters of Appointment

Mr Agnew had one tender for a specialist support for the Peace Plus proposal and application process to be procured by competitive tender.

The Board approved Mr Agnew's request. The Chairman thanked Mr Agnew for his report.

215.11 Communications Update

Mr Agnew presented the Communications report.

Ms Fitzpatrick joined the meeting for a discussion of options for a potential corporate and trade campaign to highlight InterTradeIreland's offerings across the island.

The Board noted the Communications Update. The Chairman thanked Mr Agnew and Ms Fitzpatrick for the presentation.

215.12 Board Variance and Milestone Report

Ms Curran asked the Board to consider an amendment to the timings of the Fintech Corridor hackathon, which was due to take place in July, but due to the pandemic, an eight-month extension is requested. The Board approved the extension.

The Board variance and Milestone report was noted.

215.13 AOB

The Chairman advised that a follow-up Board survey will be undertaken in August.

Authorised by

MR KEN NELSON

Chairman