

**INVEST NORTHERN IRELAND**  
**EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP TEAM**  
**MINUTES 2022**

Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> January 2022  
Friday 21<sup>st</sup> January 2022  
Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> February 2022  
Monday 21<sup>st</sup> February 2022  
Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> March 2022  
Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> April 2022

**INVEST NI EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP TEAM MEETING**  
**Meeting Minutes: 11<sup>th</sup> January 2022**  
**Via MS Teams call**

Chair: Mel Chittock

Attendees: Denise Black; Brian Dolaghan; Donal Durkan; Jeremy Fitch; Peter Harbinson;  
 Steve Harper; Vicky Kell; Alan McKeown

Minute Taker: Arora Upritchard

		Action Assigned to
1.	<b><u>Apologies</u></b> None received.	
2.	<b><u>Minutes of Previous Meeting</u></b> The minutes of the meeting of 17 <sup>th</sup> December were approved and will be published online.	
3.	<b><u>Outstanding Actions</u></b> All outstanding actions were discussed.	
4.	<b><u>Board Actions and Agenda</u></b> Ian Maxwell (IM) and Wendy Savage (WS) joined the call to discuss this item.  IM took the group through the outstanding actions from the recent Board meeting and the next agenda.	
5.	<b><u>Any Other Business</u></b>	
5.1	Independent Review of Invest NI - DD provided a verbal update to the group.	
5.2	AICC – VK highlighted again a resourcing request in connection with AICC. VK to share request with the group.	<b>VK</b>
6.	<b><u>Date of Next Meeting</u></b> Friday 21 <sup>st</sup> January 2022	

**INVEST NI EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP TEAM MEETING**  
**Meeting Minutes: 21<sup>st</sup> January 2022**  
**Via MS Teams call**

Chair: Mel Chittock

Attendees: Denise Black; Brian Dolaghan; Donal Durkan; Jeremy Fitch; Peter Harbinson;  
 Steve Harper; Vicky Kell; Alan McKeown; Alan Harris; Gerard McNally

Minute Taker: Arora Upritchard

		Action Assigned to
1.	<b><u>Apologies</u></b> None received.	
2.	<b><u>Minutes of Previous Meeting</u></b> The minutes of the meeting of 21 <sup>st</sup> December and 11 <sup>th</sup> January were approved and will be published online.	
3.	<b><u>Outstanding Actions</u></b> All outstanding actions were discussed.	
4.	<b><u>Review of WIP and Programme Activity</u></b> BD took the group through the work completed to date on the review of work in progress and programme activity.  The group discussed the analysis presented and agreed that a sub-set of the executive team would produce a set of options that would then be tabled and agreed before discussion with the Invest NI Board.	
5.	<b><u>Any Other Business</u></b> There was no further business tabled.	
6.	<b><u>Date of Next Meeting</u></b> 1 <sup>st</sup> February 2022	

**INVEST NI EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP TEAM MEETING**  
**Meeting Minutes: 1<sup>st</sup> February 2022**  
**Via MS Teams call**

Chair: Mel Chittock

Attendees: Denise Black; Brian Dolaghan; Donal Durkan; Jeremy Fitch; Peter Harbinson;  
 Steve Harper; Vicky Kell; Alan McKeown

Minute Taker: Arora Upritchard

		Action Assigned to
1.	<b><u>Apologies</u></b> None received.	
2.	<b><u>Minutes of Previous Meeting</u></b> The minutes of the meeting of 21 <sup>st</sup> January were approved and will be published online.	
3.	<b><u>Outstanding Actions</u></b> All outstanding actions were discussed.	
4.	<p><b><u>Risk Register</u></b> Colin Morelli (CM) and Alan Harris (AH) joined the call to present this item.</p> <p>CM reported that there are currently 19 risks on the Corporate Risk Register, six of which are in the 'Very High' category. These risks will be reported to DfE for discussion at the Departmental Audit and Risk Assurance Committee. CM referred to the summary of changes as laid out in the tabled paper.</p> <p>MC referred to COR032 and queried the decrease in mitigation score. CM commented that a lot of the potential impact is reduced, by its nature, if not running Covid schemes. AH stated that even with the decrease score, the risk remains in the very high category. The team will keep a watch and review during the next quarter.</p> <p>JF asked that if in light of the recent restructuring if risks need to be reviewed in terms of ownership. It was agreed that JF and CM would discuss. JF also referred to COR004 and indicated that a number of discussions have taken place with BEIS.</p> <p>BD referred to COR005 and asked if the group were comfortable that it adequately reflects the severity of where the organisation is in terms of budget allocation. COR005 has had its mitigated risk score increased. MC stated that he was comfortable with the scoring for this risk. AH stated that he may review the wording to include some further update.</p> <p>CM asked if the Executive Team were content to approve the risk register update to end of December 2021. ELT agreed.</p>	

5.	<b><u>Review of WIP and Programme Activity</u></b> The group continued their review of work in progress and programme activity.	
6.	<b><u>Any Other Business</u></b> There was no further business tabled.	
7.	<b><u>Date of Next Meeting</u></b> Monday 21 <sup>st</sup> February 2022	

**INVEST NI EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP TEAM MEETING**  
**Meeting Minutes: 21<sup>st</sup> February 2022**  
**Via MS Teams call**

Chair: Mel Chittock

Attendees: Denise Black; Brian Dolaghan; Donal Durkan; Jeremy Fitch; Peter Harbinson;  
 Steve Harper; Vicky Kell; Alan McKeown

Minute Taker: Arora Upritchard

		Action Assigned to
1.	<b><u>Apologies</u></b> None received.	
2.	<b><u>Minutes of Previous Meeting</u></b> The minutes of the meeting of 1 <sup>st</sup> February were approved and will be published online.	
3.	<b><u>Outstanding Actions</u></b> All outstanding actions were discussed.	
4.	<p><b><u>New temporary Guidance on Start at Your Own Risk (SAYOR)</u></b></p> <p>Stephen Wightman (SW) joined the call to discuss this item. SW stated that the purpose of this revised submission is to seek ELT approval for the introduction of new temporary guidance for staff on the use and approval of a Start at Your Own Risk (SAYOR) notification.</p> <p>SW referred to the proposed conditions that ensure a SAYOR will only be issued as laid out in the paper. SW stated that due to some of the changes required and the current WIP review he is proposing that this guidance takes effect from 1 April.</p> <p>SW highlighted the following key points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• it is proposed that there is a two stage process adopted to the approval and issue of a SAYOR notification to reflect the points at which the SAYOR is normally issued;</li> <li>• an absolute maximum project completion rate of 30% of eligible costs under SAYOR is proposed and</li> <li>• the default position is that a SAYOR notification approval should cover the full period up to letter of offer issue date.</li> </ul> <p>The group discussed the process for Skills Growth, Skills Advancement Grant and R&amp;D projects. SW stated that under the approvals given for the Skills Growth Programme if we wanted to change the guidance that DfE &amp; DoF approval would be required.</p>	

	<p>MC asked SW to check and confirm the process around issuing SAYORs under the Grant for R&amp;D scheme.</p> <p><b>Action: SW</b></p> <p>ELT agreed to implement the guidance from 1 April as a trial for six months and to bring some analysis back on how the guidance is working in practice from a client executive perspective. BD commented that he would be keen to keep Director sign off in this process and agreed that this be reviewed at the six month point.</p> <p>ELT agreed to roll out the table guidance with a review in six months' time. SW to also work with Communications Team to prepare a piece for Newsweekly.</p> <p><b>Action: SW/PH</b></p>	
5.	<p><b><u>WiP/Casework</u></b></p> <p>BD provided feedback on recent meeting with DfE and confirmed that client executives have been tasked with providing information for the data capture exercise. MC asked colleagues to encourage client executives to update the information required.</p> <p>The group discussed the current pause on casework and agreed to review following the Board meeting.</p>	
6.	<p><b><u>Board</u></b></p> <p>The group reviewed the agenda for this week's Board meeting.</p>	
7.	<p><b><u>Any Other Business</u></b></p> <p>7.1 <b><u>Independent Review</u></b> The group discussed the Independent Review of the agency as commissioned by the Department for the Economy. MC commented that the Minister has now appointed the panel members to assist Sir Michael Lyons in the review.</p> <p>7.2 <b><u>Hybrid Working</u></b> DB referred to paper provided laying out the potential approach to new ways of working for the organisation. ELT discussed the planned expectations and the communications plan. It was agreed to discuss further at next meeting.</p> <p>7.3 <b><u>NI Showcase</u></b> PH referred to his email providing an update on the planned NI Showcase event.</p> <p>7.4 <b><u>Operating Plan</u></b> It was agreed to table a discussion on the Operating Plan. MC to consider extension to current Operating Plan.</p>	
8.	<p><b><u>Date of Next Meeting</u></b></p> <p>Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> March 2022</p>	

**INVEST NI EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP TEAM MEETING**  
**Meeting Minutes: 1<sup>st</sup> March 2022**  
**Via MS Teams call**

Chair: Mel Chittock

Attendees: Denise Black; Brian Dolaghan; Donal Durkan; Peter Harbinson; Steve Harper;  
 Alan McKeown

Apologies: Jeremy Fitch

Minute Taker: Arora Upritchard

		<b>Action Assigned to</b>
1.	<b><u>Apologies</u></b> None received.	
2.	<b><u>Minutes of Previous Meeting</u></b> The minutes of the meeting of 21 <sup>st</sup> February were approved and will be published online.	
3.	<b><u>Outstanding Actions</u></b> All outstanding actions were discussed.	
4.	<b><u>Board actions and March agenda</u></b> Ian Maxwell (IM) and Wendy Savage (WS) joined the call to discuss this item.  The group discussed actions from the recent Board meeting and agreed a way forward on each. The group also reviewed the proposed agenda for the next meeting and Board Secretariat will amend accordingly and share with the Chair.	
5.	<b><u>Peace Plus Programme 2021 – 2027</u></b> Paul Gunn (PG), Ian Maxwell (IM) and Alan Harris (AH) joined the call to discuss this item.  AMcK referred to the tabled paper and informed the group that a number of conversations have taken place to understand Peace Plus funding and potential partnerships at cross border level. AMcK stated that Invest NI would have an interest in two key themes. PG provided further background on Peace Plus funding commenting that this was an area Invest NI has not delved in to previously.  PG stated that the next objective is to identify projects internally. These projects would have to be cross border and have a cross border partner. PG confirmed that engagement has commenced with InterTradeIreland and Enterprise Ireland.  AMcK stated that the organisation will coordinate with the Department and PG confirmed that discussions are already underway and the Department is supportive of Invest NI moving in to this area.	



	<p>MC asked if Peace Plus will work in the same way as ERDF. PG stated no but will have similar regulations; SEUPB will be the managing authority. MC asked how funding is accessed and what the parameters for use are. PG stated that he has not seen the Programme detail as yet.</p> <p>BD asked if there was a different way to look at this whereby Invest NI is not directly applying for the funding. Could Invest NI help others to apply and then remove an element of what it is doing and allow this to fill it? AMcK stated that there is an opportunity to look at that. MC agreed there is an opportunity for Invest NI here.</p> <p>IM asked ELT for approval to request input from Operating Divisions to consider strategic projects that align with the Peace Plus Programme and to collaborate with stakeholders and cross border bodies to identify, assess and develop potential projects for application. ELT agreed.</p> <p>It was agreed that ELT will be updated in terms of the collaboration taking place and projects identified, and to agree how these bids will be taken forward and, if successful, how the projects will be administered.</p>	
6.	<p><b><u>City Deals Update and Direction of Travel</u></b></p> <p>DD informed the group that going forward Invest NI would take on the sponsorship role for the Innovation related projects across the four City &amp; Growth Deals. DfE will continue to act as the accountable department/budget holder and issue Letters of Offer. As well as continuing its development role Invest NI will take on responsibility for project appraisal, casework development and approval and monitoring of the performance of respective projects.</p> <p>DfE will continue to hold the sponsorship role for the Digital Pillar, with Invest NI continuing to act in its advisory role. Invest NI will also take responsibility for managing, including budget responsibility, for the innovation related projects within the Complementary Fund.</p> <p>Given the increasing responsibility DD laid out the staffing requirement that will be required to manage this process, and stated that he would be engaging with Alan and Denise as part of the Evolve Programme.</p> <p>MC reflected that there are lots of detailed questions on how this is going to work, but acknowledged that this is a significant step forward and is recognition of the expertise and skill within Invest NI.</p> <p>DD agreed to share background papers and confirmed that once the details have been finalised a paper would be shared with Board, as a follow-up to discussions at the February Board meeting.</p>	DD

7	<p><b><u>Update on prioritisation and budget</u></b></p> <p>MC provided an update to the group on its budget allocation from DfE. BD felt that there will be an expectation that the organisation can now issue letters of offer and do business and it is incumbent that we are clear on how and what we can do.</p> <p>BD asked how the organisation is going to practically apply the ranking process. BD had proposed to allow caseworks to proceed and at the ranking cut off dates those projects that had been deemed supportable would be ranked. In parallel, we will need to communicate with our customer base that we will move to competitive ranking. This will need to be done within the next few weeks to inform customers on what will happen and provide a timeline.</p> <p>Discussion ensued regarding the practicalities and options open to the organisation in relation to the practical aspects of prioritisation and its implementation including the establishment of core operating principles.</p> <p>It was agreed that BD would write an options paper setting out the options so that core principles could be agreed and communicated.</p>	<b>BD</b>
8.	<p><b><u>Any Other Business</u></b></p> <p>8.1 Official Statistics – DD referred to his recent email on official statistics. DD reminded colleagues that the organisation is required to publically announce KPI release date six weeks in advance. Therefore a decision will be required by end of March/early April on when the organisation plans to do this.</p> <p>The ability to publish is ultimately contingent on the response rate and to that end another KPI reminder email is scheduled for next week. DD also asked colleagues to garner support from the Client Executives, whose contact with the customer would greatly help to boost response.</p> <p>8.2 Attendance at NI Showcase – PH provided an update on the upcoming showcase event.</p> <p>8.3 Annual Leave – DB highlighted that there are still a significant group of staff who are over the annual leave limits. DB to share information with ELT colleagues and to discuss with Finance in terms of understanding what impact this will have on closing accruals.</p> <p>8.4 Incident Management Team – AMcK stated that the Incident Management team has met to discuss any impact of the conflict in Ukraine. MC suggested engaging with the Food Team to see if any client companies are significantly impacted.</p>	<b>DB</b>
9.	<p><b><u>Date of Next Meeting</u></b> 5<sup>th</sup> April 2022</p>	

**INVEST NI EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP TEAM MEETING**  
**Meeting Minutes: 5<sup>th</sup> April 2022**  
**Via MS Teams call**

Chair: Mel Chittock

Attendees: Brian Dolaghan; Donal Durkan; Jeremy Fitch; Peter Harbinson; Alan McKeown;  
 Anne Beggs

Apologies: Denise Black; Steve Harper

Minute Taker: Arora Upritchard

		<b>Action Assigned to</b>
1.	<b>Apologies</b> Apologies received from Denise Black and Steve Harper. Anne Beggs deputised for Steve Harper.	
2.	<b>Minutes of Previous Meeting</b> The minutes of the meeting of 1 <sup>st</sup> March were approved and will be published online.	
3.	<b>Outstanding Actions</b> All outstanding actions were discussed.	
4.	<b>People</b> Siobhan Haughey (SHy) and Paddy Robb (PR) joined the call to discuss the next items.	<b>DB</b>
4.1	Premises – SHy stated that the attached paper has been updated following some asks from colleagues. SHy is now seeking ELT approval to progress.  SHy confirmed that floors 2, 3 & 4 will be opened at this stage and that the Contracts Team will monitor uptake and can open an additional floors as soon as required. SHy stated she plans to return to present a proposal for the remainder of the building by early May. The group discussed the paper and SHy confirmed this was a short term proposal. ELT were content to approve.	
4.2	Evolve – PR stated that the purpose of the culture audit was to examine options for assessing Invest NI’s culture and levels of employee engagement and to make a recommendation on the preferred way forward.  PR stated that the preferred option is to move from transactional to transformational engagement. PR laid out two options – to continue with the current approach to staff engagement or to adopt a more employee centred approach. PR stated that the working group are recommending option 2 and presented the detail of how this would work in practice.	

	<p>JF stated that he was content with the direction of travel but wanted to be sure that, if moving to forum based format, that we do not miss feedback from the quieter members of staff. JF also asked if the current trend analysis we have will be maintained as the organisation will need to be able to benchmark. PR stated that this was possible.</p> <p>BD stated that he wanted to be clear if the new forum format will replace the monthly information cascade sessions or will they sit alongside. PR stated that he would see the forum format replacing the information sessions. BD felt it was important to maintain the regular flow of information.</p> <p>PH also stated his support for option 2 but wants to be certain the organisation will get as many staff involved as possible particularly more junior members of staff. PH asked if this format will also be replicated for International staff and PR confirmed.</p> <p>MC concluded that the executive team agreed with option 2 as presented. MC stated that PR has received some feedback from the team on the mechanics and processes and to move forward on that basis.</p>	
5.	<p><b><u>Board actions and March agenda</u></b>  Ian Maxwell (IM) and Wendy Savage (WS) joined the call to discuss this item.</p> <p>The group discussed actions from the recent Board meeting and agreed a way forward on each. The group also reviewed the proposed agenda for the next meeting and Board Secretariat will amend accordingly and share with the Chair.</p>	
6.	<p><b><u>Prioritisation</u></b></p> <p>The group discussed the recent presentation to the Invest NI Board on the prioritisation process.</p> <p>BD stated that he was keen to move to decision making as soon as possible. BD stated that caseworks are still paused and would be in favour of allowing them to proceed as this will prevent a backup and will allow more comparisons to be made.</p> <p>The group agreed that the CEO would hold a staff briefing next week to keep staff informed of the process.</p>	
7.	<p><b><u>Evolve – Competitions</u></b>  AMcK referred to his tabled a paper. AMcK asked that colleagues review the paper and provide input. AMcK indicated that the team are looking at piloting an R&amp;D and SFA competition. Following feedback from ELT, AMcK will update and bring back a more complete paper for further debate. ELT colleagues to provide feedback.</p>	<b>ELT</b>

8.	<b><u>Any Other Business</u></b>	
8.1	<p>Migration Advisory Committee (MAC) – DD referred to his email informing the group that the MAC are setting up a team in Belfast. MAC is an independent body with a UK-wide remit to advise the UK Government on migration and its impact upon the economies and labour markets of all four nations. DD stated that he will be meeting the MAC team on Friday and reminded colleagues to forward any comments in advance.</p> <p>DD stated that going forward a decision is required on where the interface sits within Invest NI. ELT agreed that this should sit within the Skills Team.</p>	
8.2	<p>Ukrainian Refugee Support – DD informed the group that The Executive Office has set up a team to manage the arrival of Ukrainian refugees. DD commented that the Executive are looking to set up a sub group and this is something Invest NI could get involved in particularly in the matching of skills to employment and local companies identified who wish to sponsor. DD will update the group following further discussions.</p>	<b>DD</b>
8.3	<p>Diversity &amp; Inclusion – DD informed the group that he has reached out to two local companies to invite them to attend a meeting to hear what they are doing in the area of diversity and inclusion.</p>	
8.4	<p>KPI Response Rate – DD referred to his recent email. DD asked colleagues for their help and support in encouraging higher levels of completion, as there are varying levels to date. This is the first year Invest NI will be releasing ‘official statistics’ and are required to notify the UK Statistics Authority of the date of publication.</p>	<b>ELT</b>
8.5	<p>Legal – BD provided an update on the backfill of the Legal post. BD commented that the team are looking at a secondment, which will have some challenges, and he will update the group as soon as possible on the outcome.</p>	
8.6	<p>Communications – PH updated the group on changes within the Press Team. PH asked that any communications issues be flagged as soon as possible to the Press Team.</p>	
8.7	<p>Land – BD provided an update on a land issue and will update the group following a forthcoming meeting.</p>	
9.	<p><b><u>Date of Next Meeting</u></b> 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2022</p>	