



**Minutes of the Board meeting of the Health Research Board  
held on Friday, 6 February 2026, held on Zoom.**

**Present:** Dr Tracy Cunningham (Chairperson)  
Dr Sarah Barry  
Dr Leonora Bishop  
Prof Peter Doran  
Dr Julie Ling  
Prof Mark Lawler  
Dr Martina Ní Chúlain  
Dr Terry McWade  
Dr Cliona Saidlear

**Apologies:** No Apologies

**In attendance:** Dr Gráinne S Gorman, Chief Executive Officer.  
Ms Lorna Purcell, Board Secretary and Head of Governance.  
Ms Mellisa Tierney, Governance and Compliance Officer.  
Mr Martin Morgan, Director of Corporate Operations, attended for items 6, 10 & 11.  
Dr Teresa Maguire, Director of RSF, attended for items 6 & 8.  
Ms Oonagh Ward, Head of Research and Innovation Infrastructures, RSF & Mr Gavin Lawler, RSF, attended for item 8.  
Mr Dara Murphy, Head of Finance, attended for items 10 & 11.

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## 1. Apologies

No apologies were received.

## 2. Conflicts of Interest

No conflicts of interest were declared.

## 3. Minutes of the previous meetings

The minutes of the meetings held on December 12, 2025, were approved.

## 4. Matters Arising and action points from previous meetings

Action points from previous meetings were either addressed or appeared as an agenda item.

## 5. CEO's Report

The CEO reported to the Board on the following matters:

- Introduction and welcome
- U.S. Update – Implications for the HRB
- Adoption of the Horizon Europe Work Programme 2026-2027
- Awards made under Delegated Authority
- Researchfish – closing operations
- HRB contribution to the Greener Trials Project
- All-Island Cancer Data Forum, Queen's University Belfast
- NHIS Activities and Updates
- National Drugs Forum 2025
- Development of drugswatch.ie: An early warning platform for drug-related threats to public health in Ireland
- National Drug Strategy 2026 to 2030
- Peer reviewed publications 2025
- National Office for Research Ethics Committees Update
- Secretariat to Health Research Consent Declaration Committee Update
- Organisation Structure and strategy
- Committees and Working Groups
- ICT and Finance Activities and Updates
- An Update on Development of KPIs for the Strategy
- Report on the Disposal of Baggot Street Property and Future Use of Proceeds
- HRB participation/influence on external groups and committees
- HRB Staff Updates
- Strategic Communications and Outreach
- HRB Media Coverage

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## 6. Strategy Development

On behalf of the Strategy Steering Group, Mr Morgan presented an update on the Strategy development project plan and timelines. He confirmed that work was ongoing, that the last KPI workshop took place in the first week of February and that members of the Strategy Steering Group are currently in the process of assessing organisation development consultants. The final draft of the Strategy will be provided to the Board for approval in March and published in May. The Board noted the update.

## 8. Approval to Issue Calls

### 1. All Island Cancer Consortium grants (AICC)

The Board approved the launching of the All-Ireland Cancer Consortium (AICC) Research and Innovation Grants Scheme call for 2026 'Survivorship-Living Well, With & Beyond Cancer' at a cost of €1.5-2M inclusive of overheads to the HRB over 36 months.

## 10. HRB Service Plan 2025

The Board noted the report on the status of HRB's Service Plan for 2025 as at 31 December 2025.

## 11. Corporate Reporting

### 1. Contracts valued at in excess of €75k

The Board approved the award of:

- (a) an initial six-year framework agreement to [REDACTED] for the provision of a Grants Management System. This contract has the option to extend twice by a period of two-years at each extension. The maximum value of this contract is €4,000,000 excluding VAT.
- (b) a two-year contract to [REDACTED] for the provision of Project Management Services for the Grant Management System Implementation Phase. The maximum value of this contract is €174,000 excluding VAT.
- (c) an initial two-year contract to [REDACTED] for the provision of Conference and Event Management Services. This contract has the option to extend twice by a period of one year at each extension. The maximum value of this contract is €850,000 excluding VAT.

### 2. HRB Procurement Activity Report

The Board noted the following (between the period 01 November 2025 to 31 December 2025):

- a. Purchase Orders raised with a value more than €20,000
- b. Contracts awarded between €25,000 and €75,000 (ex VAT)
- c. Contracts approved by the Board more than €75,000 (ex VAT)

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- d. Authorised exceptions to the competitive procurement guidelines

And Between period 01 January 2025 to 31 December 2025:

- a. Supplier expenditure more than €25,000

## 12. Other Governance Matters

### 1. Decisions reserved for the Board and matters delegated to the Executive

The Board noted the HRB's 'Decisions reserved for the Board and Matters delegated to the Executive' and approved the decision that the document remains the same bar one minor amendment.

### 2. Risk Management SOP and Policy

The Board approved the Risk Management SOP and approved the changes to the Risk Management Policy to align with the SOP.

### 3. Development Committee Report

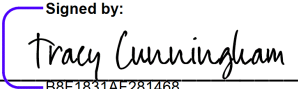
The Chair provided a verbal report on the Development Committee meeting, including information on training, upcoming focus groups, and the silver award in diversity awarded to the HRB.

### 7. Programme of Work for the Board

The Board noted the Programme of Work for the Board.

The Chair acknowledged that Dr Terry McWade's term on the Board of the HRB comes to an end on April 8th, 2026, and thanked him for all of his hard work, dedication and insights over the years, and particularly in his role as Chair of the Audit & Risk Committee.

## Executive Session of the Board

Signed:  (Chairperson)  
Signed by: Tracy Cunningham (Chairperson)  
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