



NORTHERN AREA HEALTH BOARD

Bord Sláinte an Limistéir Thuaidh

13th October 2000

Do gach Comhalta den mBord

A Chara,

The monthly meeting of the Northern Area Health Board will be held in **The Boardroom, Northern Area Health Board Headquarters, Unit B Swords Business Campus, Balheary Road, Swords, Co. Dublin** on **Thursday 19th October 2000 at 5.00p.m.** Tea is arranged for 4.30pm.

Hereunder is the agenda.

Mise, le meas,

M. Windle

PRIOMH FEIDHMEANNACH

CLAR

1. Chairpersons Business
2. Minutes of proceedings of monthly meeting held on 21st September 2000 [copy herewith]
 - (a) Matters arising from minutes
3. Questions to the Chief Executive
4. Chief Executive's Report
5. Review of Patient Comforts System – Report No. 33/2000 [copy herewith]

6. Progress Report Northern Area Addiction Services – Report No. 34/2000 [copy herewith]
7. Report on Orthodontic Services – Report No. 35/2000 [copy herewith]
8. National Breast Screening Campaign – Report No. 36/2000 [copy herewith]
9. Progress Report from Standing Committees
 - (a) Community Services and Continuing Care Committee
 - (b) Acute Hospital and Primary Care Committee
10. Notices of Motion

10.1 Cllr. Christy Burke

“That this Board agrees to review the allocation of medical cards to people who suffer from Multiple Sclerosis and other illness regardless of their income.”

10.2 Cllr. Christy Burke

“That this Board agrees to recommend an increase to the Department of Social Community and Family Affairs regarding Back to School Allowances for low income families.”

10.3 Cllr. Roisin Shortall

“That the Chief Executive report on the progress to date on the establishment of an orthodontic service for this Board area and that she outline the arrangements which apply in the interim period.”

10.4 Cllr. Roisin Shortall

“That the Medical Officer compile a report on cancer rates in the Santry area over the past 5 years where residents report anecdotally that the rates are high and in view of public health concerns about possible effects from the ESB power stations (at the corner of Ballymun Road/Collins Avenue) and also the presence of three telecommunications masts in the area (Santry Avenue, Santry Garda Station, and at the ESB station).”

11. Correspondence

NORTHERN AREA HEALTH BOARD

Minutes of proceedings of the 8th Board Meeting of the Northern Area Health Board
held in The Boardroom, NAHB Headquarters, Swords Business Campus,
Balheary Road, Swords, Co. Dublin.

on Thursday, 19th October 2000 at 5.00p.m.

Present

Cllr. C. Burke	Ald. I. Callely, T.D.
Mr. M. Cowley	Mr. J. Fallon
Sen. Dr. D. Fitzpatrick	Ms. N. Harvey
Cllr. D. Heney	Dr. M. Laffoy
Mr. G. McGuire	Cllr. D. Murray
Cllr. E. O'Brien	Dr. P. O'Connell
Cllr. M. O'Donovan	Cllr. R. Shortall
Mr. L. Tuomey	

In the Chair

Cllr. Ann Devitt

Observer

Dr. B. Murphy

Apologies

Ms. M. Hoban

Officers in Attendance

Ms. M. Windle, Chief Executive
Mr. M. Walsh, Assistant Chief Executive
Mr. J. Lamont, Assistant Chief Executive
Ms. M. Kelly, Director, Human Resources
Ms. L. McGuinness, Director of Finance
Ms. N. Murphy, Communications Manager
Ms. M. Halpin, Secretariat
Ms O. Treacy, Secretariat
Ms. K. Fagan, Secretariat

66/2000**CHAIRMAN'S BUSINESS**

The Chairman read the following report.

1. Condolences

I am sure members will join with me in expressing sincere sympathy with those whose names that have been included on the list of condolences which has been circulated to members.

2. St. Ita's Hospital Art Project

I wish to advise members that the launch of the St. Ita's Art Project will take place on 27th October 2000, at 2.30pm, in St. Ita's Hospital, Portrane, Co. Dublin.

67/2000**MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS OF MONTHLY MEETING HELD ON 21ST SEPTEMBER 2000-10-20**

On a proposal by Mr. G. McGuire, seconded by Mr. J. Fallon, the minutes of the proceedings of monthly meeting held on 21st September 2000 were agreed.

68/2000**QUESTIONS TO THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

On a proposal by Cllr. C. Burke, seconded by Cllr. M. O'Donovan, it was agreed to answer the questions that had been lodged.

1. Cllr. Christy Burke

"To ask the Chief Executive of the Northern Area Health Board to agree where home improvements grants are approved, and in the case of O.A.P. and senior citizens who cannot meet the shortfall for works to be completed, that this Board allocate the 100% grant.

Reply

The Special Housing Aid for the Elderly Scheme in the Eastern Regional Health Authority area is funded by the Department of Environment and Local Government and delivered by Eastern Community Works Ltd., a subsidiary company of the Area Health Boards. The funding provided this year is £1.2m. Funding in 1999 was £0.99m.

The scheme provides for the carrying out of urgent, essential minor repairs and improvements to the homes of eligible elderly persons living alone or with no able bodied relatives available to carry out the work. It does not apply to local authority tenants.

With the exception of electrical house rewiring and the installation of central heating systems all works carried out under the scheme are undertaken free of charge. Grants are paid in respect of electrical house rewiring and the installation of central heating systems. The criteria for the payment of such grants are the same as that which applies in the case of the Disabled Persons Home Improvement Grant Scheme which is 90% of the approved cost subject to a maximum of £2,800.00 in any case.

To date, Eastern Community Works have paid grants to twelve eligible applicants in respect of the installation of central heating systems and none of these applicants have indicated an inability to meet any shortfall. The grant for the electrical house rewiring has only commenced recently.

A multi-disciplinary group has been set up to examine and report on all aspects of the Special Housing Aid for the Elderly Scheme.

2. Cllr. Christy Burke

"To ask the Chief Executive if the Northern Area Health Board would draw up a plan to identify a site or premises in the north inner city for respite services for senior citizens"

Reply

Respite / intermittent care facilities for older persons are provided in our Board's area at the following locations:-

James Connolly Memorial Hospital, Blanchardstown	-	2 Places
St. Mary's Hospital, Phoenix Park	-	12 Places
St. Clare's Home, Griffith Avenue. Ext.	-	2 Places
Seanchara Community Unit, St. Canice's Road, Ballymun	-	4 Places
Cuan Ros, Navan Road	-	6 Places

Total: 26 Places

In addition to the above, private nursing home places are also contracted for respite care where necessary.

All of our Board's facilities have a flexible approach to the use of respite care places and every effort is made to facilitate respite / intermittent admissions. Our Board is fully committed to extending this service which is vital to the support of carers in their effort to maintain older dependent relatives in the home environment for as long as possible.

Our Board provides funding for the provision of 40 long-stay care beds for older persons at St. Monica's Home, Belvedere Place. This is a valuable service for the North Inner City area. We are currently in discussion with the management of St. Monica's Home regarding the re-dedication of some of these beds as respite care beds. It is intended that this development will come on stream in the context of Year 2001 service plans.

Discussions are also planned with the management of St. Monica's Home regarding the development of a day care facility on the site of the home.

3. Cllr. Roisin Shortall

"To ask the Chief Executive to report on the up to date situation at the new St. Clare's Nursing Home, the number of beds currently in use, the staffing levels, numbers on the waiting lists and the specific proposals to open all beds as a matter of urgency."

Reply:

Seanchara, St. Clare's new Community Unit for Older Persons, has a complement of 50 beds.

Currently, because of the difficulty in recruiting professional care staff, there is a total of 18 vacant beds. Thirty-two patients have been admitted to the Unit of which 28 are admitted for extended care and the remainder for respite care. Appropriate admissions are determined by the Consultant Physicians in Geriatric Medicine in the Mater, Beaumont Hospital and James Connolly Memorial Hospital, Blanchardstown. Waiting lists for admission are maintained by the Head Social Worker in each Acute Hospital.

Details of care staff levels are as follows:-

	Complement	Filled	Vacant
R.G.N.'s	16	7.5	8.5
Care assistants:	8	4	4

At the present time there are 12.5 vacancies for care staff in Seanchara. Continuous efforts are being made to retain existing staff and to attract new staff to the Unit. A recruitment drive is currently underway in the Philippines in an effort to attract nursing personnel to the services for older persons in the Northern Area Health Board. Successful overseas candidates must receive a six-week placement programme in an Acute Hospital in Ireland before registration with An Bord Altranais (The Nursing Board) is approved. Following registration they will commence employment in Seanchara and other Community Units, Homes and Hospitals for Older Persons in our Board's are no later than 1st March 2001.

In the interim every effort will continue to be made to recruit staff locally and nationally in order to have this unit fully operational as quickly as possible.

4. Cllr. Roisin Shortall

"To ask the Chief Executive to report on the speech and language service in the Ballymun area, the staffing levels and the number of cases in the past year, the frequency with which the children receive therapy and her views of this service."

Reply:

There are nine full time Speech and Language Therapy posts in Community Care Area 7, five which are filled full time and there are four vacancies. One full time post is assigned to the Ballymun Sector which is based in Geraldstown House providing a clinic based service.

In the last twelve months there have been ninety-six referrals to the Ballymun service. Children on the current caseload received therapy on a weekly basis. Children on review are seen and monitored every three to six months as appropriate. The total number of clients waiting for therapy in Ballymun is seventy seven - seven on the priority list and seventy on the general list.

The challenges facing our Speech and Language Service includes the recruitment and retention of staff and the huge demand from clients for our service in our area. While there are vacancies in other Speech and Language Therapy posts in this area, Ballymun has not been affected. We aim to provide a quality Speech and Language Service to clients in our area within the shortest possible timeframe, notwithstanding the current challenges that prevail at the present time.

69/2000**CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT**

Following discussion on the Medical Screening for Asylum Seekers and the Balbriggan Medical Centre the report from the Chief Executive was noted:

On a proposal by Cllr. D. Murray and seconded by Cllr. A. Devitt it was agreed that this Board would write to the staff of the Balbriggan Medical Centre to congratulate them on the success of the project.

FINANCIAL MATTERS**Capital Works**

I have circulated with agenda papers for this meeting copies of letter dated 9th October 2000 from the Eastern Regional Health Authority advising that the Department of Health & Children have approved funding for capital works at Finglas Day Care Centre and St. Mary's Hospital, Phoenix Park, Dublin 20.

National Lottery Grants 2000

The total amount available to the three Area Health Boards for distribution under the National Lottery and Respite Care Grant Scheme is £875,000 in the year 2000. Of this £875,000, a minimum of £175,000 must be allocated to organisations providing respite facilities.

The amount available to the Northern Area Health Board for distribution is £306,000. Of this £306,000, a minimum of £62,000 will be allocated to organisations providing respite facilities.

The Northern Area Health Board has received 162 applications for funding. Our Board's Lottery Committee are currently examining and assessing these applications. This process will take approximately two weeks following which a further report will be brought back to our Board for information.

SERVICE MATTERS

Ambulance Strike

The ambulance strike action planned for Thursday October 12th has been deferred. A conciliation conference in the Labour Relations Commission has been scheduled for Tuesday 17th October 2000.

The issue in dispute is whether the filling of vacancies in the Control Room, Townsend Street, should be filled by internal or external competition.

PRESS RELEASES

I have circulated with agenda papers for this meeting the following:

Minister responds to Tobacco Manufacturers

Copies press release dated 26th September 2000 from the Department of Health and Children in which the Minister for Health and Children, Mr Micheál Martin responds to the press release issued by tobacco manufacturers Gallagher (Dublin) Limited concerning the ban on tobacco sponsorship from 1st July 2000.

Minister for Health Launches Ireland's most Extensive National Immunisation Programme

Copies press release dated 3rd October 2000 from the Department of Health and Children in which the Minister for Health and Children, Mr Micheál Martin announces the launch of Ireland's most extensive ever immunisation programme.

Record Intake of Nursing Students

Copies press release dated 4th October 2000 from the Department of Health and Children in which the Minister for Health and Children, Mr Micheál Martin express delight at the record number of students who accepted places on this years nursing diploma programmes.

Launch of Overview Report n Health Board Children's Residential Centres

Copies press release dated 10th October 2000 from the Department of Health and Children announcing the launch of the Social Services Inspectorate report of findings relating to inspection of children's residential centres run by health boards.

Martin meets Nursing Directors on Dublin Shortages

Copies press release dated 11th October 2000 which advised that the Minister for Health and Children, Mr Micheál Martin met a delegation representing the Directors of Nursing of the major teaching hospitals in Dublin to discuss the current shortage of nursing and midwifery staff.

MEDIA MATTERS

Members will be aware of two items that attracted media coverage over last weekend i.e. Medical Screening for Asylum Seekers and General Practitioner Services at Balbriggan Medical Centre. I have circulated reports this evening regarding these two issues.

Medical Screening for Asylum Seekers

Members will be aware of media coverage of recent medical screening for asylum seekers. I am circulating a statement regarding the uptake of medical screening by asylum seekers in the Eastern region. The Minister for Health and Children, Mr. Micheal Martin, said that there were questions over the legality of compulsory screening of asylum seekers which would make its introduction difficult.

The provision of services to asylum seekers in reception centres in all Eastern Regional Health Authority was the subject of report no. 9/2000 which was presented to the Board in April 2000.

Medical screening services are provided at three reception centres - Parnell Square West, the Harcourt Inn Harcourt Street and Viking Lodge, off Francis Street. The reception centres are staffed by:

- Area medical officer
- Nurse
- Administrative support
- Portering/security staff

Medical screening is carried out in line with Department of Health and Children protocols and is governed by the Infectious Diseases Regulations 1981. The main diseases screened for are: Hepatitis B and C; HIV; Tuberculosis and Intestinal Parasites. X-Ray services are arranged with the Mater, St. Mary's and Baggot Street Hospitals.

At the end of August, a revised system for following up medical screening for clients was implemented by our Board. Over the last number of weeks staff at the various reception centres have concentrated efforts on persuading clients of the benefits of medical screening. It can be seen from the attached statistics in relation to the uptake of medical

screening that their efforts have been quite successful. The figures for the four weeks ending 29/9/00 show that 84% of asylum seekers availed of medical screening. The update at the Harcourt Inn Reception Centre for this period was 100%.

The system operates most effectively in the Harcourt Inn Reception Centre where numbers of asylum seekers are lowest. Consequently follow-ups by staff are more frequent.

In Viking Lodge, medical screening facilities are located off site due to accommodation capacity restrictions. A site at Francis Street (within 50 yards of Viking Lodge) has been identified to which the medical unit will be relocated within the next eight weeks approximately.

Parnell Square West is the main reception centre and the medical unit is located within the centre. However there are two other overflow centres attached to Parnell Square West i.e. in Gardener Place and North Fredrick Street which provides an additional sixty places (30 each approx.). As the increasing numbers of asylum seekers fluctuates from week to week follow-ups become more complicated. It takes an average three follow-ups before medical screening is availed of by asylum seekers.

We are currently reviewing the system at both Viking Lodge and Parnell Square West. The latest medical screening figures for a four week period ending 1st September 2000 is attached.

Totals for 4 week period ending the 01/09/00

<i>Centre</i>	Offered	Screened	%
Viking Lodge (SWAHB)	262	102	39%
Harcourt Inn (ECAHB)	130	123	95%
Parnell Square (NAHB)	280	217	77%
4 week total	672	442	66%

Totals for 4 week period ending the 29/09/00

<i>Centre</i>	Offered	Screened	%
Viking Lodge (SWAHB)	196	153	78%
Harcourt Inn (ECAHB)	120	120	100%
Parnell Square (NAHB)	266	211	79%
4 week total	582	487	84%

Balbriggan Medical Centre

Balbriggan Medical Centre has five doctors and two Practice Nurses which operate a rota system. This system enables a minimum of 2 doctors to work simultaneously. There are times, where more than 2 doctors work simultaneously. The hours of service provided by the Medical Centre up to the 18th September were: -

Monday – Friday

9.30 – 11.30; 2.30 – 4.30; 6.30 – 8.30

Saturday

9.30 – 11.30

The medical service also provided an after hours service – where a doctors would perform house calls. This was a service given personally by the Balbriggan Medical Centre.

The special services provided by Balbriggan Medical Centre are: -

D.I.S.C. Scheme – The development of diabetic clinics in collaboration with Beaumont Hospital. Part of the plan to reduce hospital waiting lists.

Asthma Clinics:

Both nurses are specially trained for Asthma Clinics. This special service will also participate in research being carried out. This clinic enables the development of preventative care to take place. It also helps to reduce the number of patients who present themselves at accident and emergency departments with asthma related illnesses.

Smear Testing:

A smear test is available by appointment. This is given free of charge to G.M.S. patients. This service was developed through identifying the need for women in the Balbriggan area to gain better access to such facilities.

Cardiac Risk Assessments:

The Balbriggan medical team have developed their own system of cardiac risk assessments. This clinic was in operation prior to the development of the cardiovascular strategy.

Phlebotomy Clinic:

This clinic takes place once a week. This clinic enables the patients in Balbriggan access greater levels of care within the community. (This clinic is currently suspended while the flu vaccination campaign is in operation).

Methadone Maintenance:

The Balbriggan Medical Centre deals with local methadone maintenance patients on a regular basis. This service enables the community to progressively take care of local medical issues.

Immunisation Clinics:

The Immunisation Clinics in the Balbriggan Medical Centre have been very successful. There has been a high number of mothers who presented their children for immunisation. In the recent outbreak of measles, Balbriggan had a low incident rate of children affected by measles. To date over 400 patients have presented themselves at the clinics for the flu vaccination.

The Current Situation in Balbriggan Medical Centre

The current working hours for the Balbriggan Medical Team since 18th September are as follows: -

The Northern Area Health Board regards these surgery hours as an acceptable number of working hours for this practice.

Monday – Friday

9.00 a.m. to 11.30 a.m.

2.00 p.m. to 5.00 p.m.

- This service requires the patient after 6.00 p.m. to call the 1850 777 911 number.
- The calls are received by a receptionist / secretary.
- The calls are triaged.

When a patient rings the receptionist/secretary details are taken. The receptionist/secretary then informs the doctor of the patient's details. This form of communication between patient and doctor is becoming wide spread in Europe. The triaging of calls is also backed with 24 hour emergency services.

- The doctors inform the patient as to the best course of action.
- The patient will be told where to meet with the doctor.

The current main centre of practice is at the Cottage Hospital in Drogheda. It is possible that patients north of Balbriggan will prefer to travel to the Cottage Hospital. However there are a number of out-of-hours centres located in periphery zones. One of these periphery centres is Balbriggan Medical Centre. It is possible for a patient to see a doctor in the Balbriggan Medical Centre. It is necessary to have made contact with the North East DOC service prior to attending the Balbriggan Medical Centre as the doctor must be aware of where the practice consultation will take place.

The doctor can also decide to visit the patient in their own home.

All vehicles are specially equipped in case the doctor needs to communicate by phone with the patient prior to a consultation. The doctor is able to co-ordinate an immediate response through the ambulance service if this is deemed necessary.

This service is available to Balbriggan patients from 6.00 p.m. to 8.00 a.m. Monday to Friday and 24 hours at the weekend.

In an absolute emergency the out-of-hours doctor will contact the Balbriggan G.P.s. This service is free for G.M.S. patients.

All of the services currently provided by the Balbriggan Medical Centre will continue to take place.

The Balbriggan Medical Centre is a prime example of quality based care within the community.

Appointment System

The Northern Area Health Board is aware of the difficulty some patients have in adjusting to an appointment system. It can take time for the benefit of an appointment system to be perceived by patients.

The development of an appointment system by Balbriggan Medical Centre has enabled the doctors to plan the service provided in such a way that there are now 65 morning appointments and 65 afternoon appointments. On most days there are at least 4 doctors in the practice. On Mondays there are 5 doctors operating the appointment system. This service is time efficient and there is enough flexibility through the number of doctors providing the service to facilitate emergency calls to the surgery.

It is through the appointment system that the Balbriggan Medical Centre has been able to adequately cope with the demands of flu and Meningococcal vaccinations.

The cost of the 1850 call is the same as a local call with no duration.

BALBRIGGAN MEDICAL CENTRE

New arrangements for family doctor services.

If you need an experienced family doctor between 6.00 p.m. and 8.00 a.m.
Monday – Friday and 24 hours weekend and Bank Holidays, please call:

1850 777 911

If you need a family doctor from 9.30 a.m. – 11.30 a.m. or 2.00 p.m. – 5.00 p.m.

Call **8412543** for an appointment

Talk to your family doctor if you require further details on this service.

This service is free to medical card patients

(Balbriggan Medical Centre is affiliated to the North East Doctor On Call in the North Eastern Health Board)

What is North East Doctor On Call?

Balbriggan Medical Centre is a member of the North East Doctor On Call. This is a new service staffed by experienced family doctors which are available to all patients of participating practices. This service is available from 18th September 2000.

How Does It Work?

- This service requires the patient to call 1850 777 911
- The calls are received by a Receptionist/Secretary. Basic details such as your name, address, medical card number and basic details of your problem are taken.
- Details are passed to the family doctor. The doctor phones the patient back as quickly as possible.
- The doctor informs the patient as to the best course of action. This can be,
 - Immediate advice over the telephone
 - Invite the patient to go to the out-of-hours centre at the Cottage Hospital, Drogheda, for further examination and treatment by the family doctor on call
 - Invite the patient to attend the satellite centre in Balbriggan Medical Centre for further examination and treatment by the family doctor on call
 - Co-ordinate an immediate response with the Ambulance Service when required
 - Where a home visit is deemed necessary, the doctor on call will be supported by a fleet of specially equipped vehicles, with experienced drivers. This will ensure effective and prompt access to both urban and rural areas. It will enable contact to be maintained where necessary between the doctor en route to the patient.

Talk To Your Family Doctor

This service is additional to the normal working hours provided by Balbriggan Medical Centre.

Talk to your family doctor if you require more details on this service.

Be prepared – please keep the North East Doctor On Call number **1850 777 911** by your telephone.

Phone calls cost the same as a local call (with no duration)

70/2000

REVIEW OF PATIENT COMFORTS SYSTEM

Following discussion on Report No. 33/2000 this report was noted.

71/2000

PROGRESS REPORT NORTHERN AREA ADDICTION SERVICES

It was agreed to note questions arising from Report No. 34/2000 and to carry this item forward to the monthly Board Meeting scheduled for 16th November 2000. The report will include additional issues on matters raised by the Board Members.

72/2000

REPORT ON ORTHODONTIC SERVICES

Following discussion on Report No. 35/2000 this report was noted and it was agreed to list this item on for a further progress report for the monthly Board Meeting scheduled for 16th November 2000.

73/2000

NATIONAL BREAST SCREENING CAMPAIGN

This report was welcomed by the members and noted.

74/2000

PROGRESS REPORT FROM STANDING COMMITTEES**(a) Community Services and Continuing Care Committee**

The report from the Community Services and Continuing Care Committee was noted. The following matter was dealt with in the report:-

- Report of the Inspector of Mental Hospitals for year ending 31st December 1999
- Update on service plans and capital developments
- Review of Services for Older Persons
- Review of Physical and Sensory Disability Services

(b) Acute Hospitals and Primary Care Committee

On a proposal by Cllr. C. Burke and seconded by Mr. G. McGuire it was agreed to adopt the report of the Acute Hospital and Primary Care Standing Committee. The following matters were dealt with in the report:-

- North Inner City Primary Care Partnership
- Report of the General Medical Services (Payments) Board for 1999
- Progress Report on Immunisation

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NOTICES OF MOTION

1. The following motion was proposed by Cllr. Burke

"That this Board agrees to review the allocation of medical cards to people who suffer from Multiple Sclerosis and other illness regardless of their income."

The Chief Executive circulated a report which was noted.

2. The following motion was proposed by Cllr. Burke and agreed.

"That this Board agrees to recommend an increase to the Department of Social Community and Family Affairs regarding Back to School Allowances for low income families".

3. The following motion was proposed by Cllr. Shortall and agreed.

"That the Chief Executive report on the progress to date on the establishment of an orthodontic service for this Board area and that she outlines the arrangements which apply in the interim period."

4. On a proposal by Cllr. C. Burke, seconded by Cllr. M. O'Donovan the following motion by Cllr. R. Shortall was agreed:

"That the Medical Officer compile a report on cancer rates in the Santry area over the past 5 years where residents report anecdotally that the rates are high and in view of public health concerns about possible effects from the ESB power stations (at the corner of Ballymun Road/Collins Avenue) and also the presence of three telecommunications masts in the area (Santry Avenue, Santry Garda Station, and at the ESB station)."

The meeting concluded at 7.00p.m.

CORRECT:

**M. WINDLE
CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

CHAIRMAN