Leadership Team Quarterly Meeting Minute

Date:	Thursday 19 August 2026, 10:00 – 15:00	
Attendees:	Ombudsman (Chair) Head of Improvement, Standards & Engagement Head of Corporate and Shared Services Head of Investigations (PSC) Corporate Services Manager (Note-taker)	Paul McFadden Andrew Crawford Stuart Crickmar Judy Saddler Fiona Paterson
Presenters:	Executive Casework Officers:	Adele Keddie, Scott Ramsay
Apologies:	Head of Investigations (INWO+SWF)	Elaine Cameron
Documents:	Papers: Leadership Team - Quarterly (2026): 2026-2028 (qA2045395)	

	Subject	*Main points of discussion*	*Actions agreed*	*Due*	*Lead*
1.	Minute, action points and matters outstanding	LT noted the minutes as published. The LTM actions from the previous meeting were reviewed, and it was noted that the log required updating. AAB outstanding actions were also reviewed and meeting updated on progress.	LT Actions log - move closed actions to an archive list below.	Aug	FP
2.	LT Governance decisions	LT requested the LT decisions log is updated following each LT monthly meeting or decision agreed by email, to continue to be a central log of LT decisions taken at these meetings.	Update LT Decisions Log following each LTM meeting or decision agreed by email.	Sep	LT

		PERFORMANCE			
3.	**PSC**	HoI informed the meeting that early indications are the new KPIs will provide a clearer measure of performance for all stages of the case-handling process and more accurate benchmarking against similar organisations, as planned. LT noted the continuing increase in casework demand and looked in detail at the dashboard statistics over the different time periods. In particular, the LT noted the continued strong output performance, and the positive impact of overtime in Q4. The Ombudsman thanked all for the continuing efforts to address the caseload issue. LT noted the additional resource allocated to PSC teams will not be fully available until the CR's current INWO cases are completed, sometime into Q3. These remaining cases are not able to be transferred due to their complexity. The Ombudsman suggested considering a graphic projection showing the impact of an additional three and six CRs on closure rates and backlog, including the recruitment and induction lag-time. This may support the narrative accompanying the budget submission, showing the two scenarios. HoI flagged the different risks arising, and the hope that in time there will be capacity to reinstate the QA process. The changes to the PSC risk register were noted.			
4.	**INWO**	LT noted the paper showing a strong performance in Q1, and the resource pressure that will be experienced by the team in the short-term. LT noted interviews were taking place today for the known upcoming vacancy. The LT discussed the short-term capacity plan, and compared it to the alternate approach being taken in TED team. Further discussion will be undertaken with the HOI.			

5.	**SWF**	LT noted the paper, and discussed the recent increase in crisis grants reviews, and the possible drivers behind the uplift in cases. LT also noted that despite the operational pressure of these fast-turnaround cases, the quality of decision-making on cases remains very high.			
6.	Customer Surveys	The LT discussed the preferred approach to publishing all the Customer Surveys results, in a format most useful to key stakeholders. ISE Comms team will be coordinating this publication, with links made available through the appropriate briefing papers and the Annual Report.			
7.	Decision Reviews report	The ECOs were invited into the meeting to address their paper. The ECOs noted the implementation of the online complaint form and other process changes will be applied to requests received and decisions closed from today's date. The LT noted the impact of these changes will only be noticed 4-6 weeks time. The LT were provided with further details on specific issues raised from requests for review, and discussed possible ways to mitigate the impact. The Ombudsman shared that he was very aware of the pressure the ECOs are experiencing, and was grateful for their work and perseverance. The ECOs were thanked for their contribution to the meeting.			
8.	Customer Service Complaints reports	HoISE noted that the changes introduced to the process from April are starting to be evident in the statistics, with more cases closed than received in Q1. The key message was there was nothing of concern to note, and individual points are addressed directly with the staff members concerned.			
9.	Positive Comments	The LT reviewed the new graphic to be used on social media outlets summarising the report. The main point from analysis was 75% of the total comments received were from complainants about the handling of their case.			

10.	**ISE**	HoISE noted it was a high-output quarter, with the full implementation of the Engagement Strategy, focussing on Parliamentary, media and INWO engagement. Topics of engagement for MSPs and Committees is currently being finalised. Alongside this work, the contract with a new webservice provider was finalised, and work for the changeover begins in Q2. LT noted the new insights statistics on the top 10 complaint-generating NHS Boards, which is very helpful and focussed. Q2 will provide statistics on the top 10 councils. LT discussed whether there is value in more targeted engagement with Boards and Councils who are high generators of complaints, what impact this might have, and how much resource this would require. LT also discussed if there would be value in showing the statistics with per head of population when evaluating individual organisation's performance. HOISE noted the ISEROs do consider this data when prioritising workflow for BUJ engagement. Also, that more nuanced and detailed statistics would be available once PowerBI is in place. Discussion on additional resource to assist with the building of PowerBI reports in Q4, ready for the start of the new year, was discussed. Q2 will see a review of the Data Strategy in preparation for this work. Planning for the 25th Anniversary year has begun, with a venue for the conference secured.			
		GOVERNANCE AND REPORTING			
11.	Financial monitoring	At this point in the year the financial forecast is as expected, with a small overspend on staff costs following the conclusion of the pay award, and an overspend in running costs due to a change in webservices provider and inflation. Bridgeside House budget is currently showing an underspend, however the annual service charge invoice has not yet been issued.			

		The HoCSS updated the LT on the contingency funding position for the additional CRs, the initial plans being implemented, and the constraints for using the funding. This may result in only partial use of the funding. The LT were informed there has been no update received on the property review undertaken by the SPCB, but information is expected following summer recess, possibly after the Committee's office visit on Thursday 17 September. Office occupancy levels and adherence to policy were discussed. The budget submission will be finalised this week by the HoCSS and the Omb for submission at the end of the month.			
12.	External Audit	LT noted the audit fieldwork was completed with the closing meeting held on 16 July. No major findings were reported. The draft Independent auditor's report is due mid September, and the draft AAB Chair's Annual Report has been received.			
13.	Internal Audit	LT noted the first two internal audit activities, Procurement and Performance Management, will be undertaken next week with opening meetings tomorrow. The final activities will be covered in November. The LT noted the SPCB internal audit contracts will be in place by December.			
14.	Risk, Incident, and Issue Management Report	LT noted the personal data security incidents report, and that no likely risks have needed to be reported to the ICT since 2022-23. The number of unlikely risks reported has remained low despite the increase in casework pressures. There was no movement on the strategic risks from the baseline. LT noted good progress on the operational plans at this point in the year.			
15.	Corporate Services assurance	The LT noted the suite of papers covering all areas of responsibility, and were updated on performance and key risks. LT discussed the drop in sickness absence days, with no long-term absence recorded in 2026. ICT issues and major projects were reviewed, and the drop in professional advice requests noted.			

	AOB				
16.	Future Budget Growth Considerations	LT noted the paper summarising the growth bids, outlining principles underpinning the decision process, and the recommendations for each bid. LT then reviewed the list, agreed those for taking forward in this year, and those to be listed in the budget request for the next three years. Those items not currently being considered will be reviewed in the next budget round.			

Approved for publication on 8 September 2026

Paul McFadden, Scottish Public Services Ombudsman