

**Note of the Executive Board Meeting held on 30 July 2008**

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Present:	Alice Brown Eric Drake Niki Maclean David Robb	Ombudsman Director of Investigations Head of Services Director of Policy and Development
	Fiona Paterson,	Senior Personal Assistant (secretary)
In attendance:	Emma Gray Judy Saddler Kathleen Steindl Annie White	Communications & Outreach Manager Investigations Manager Investigations Manager Casework Knowledge Manager

**Actions**

1. The meeting opened at 09:30 with apologies from Iain Law, Investigations Manager.
2. The minutes from the meetings held on 18 June and 2 July 2008 were agreed with minor amendments.
3. Action points held over from previous meetings were reviewed. The Board requested that all outstanding Management Away Day actions be circulated with the minute.

**4. Executive Board Forward Planner**

The Board reviewed the upcoming events and asked that any major planned events be included as soon as possible.

**All**

**5. General Projects Update**

The Board noted the updated Project Tracker and approved the simplified scoping document for small projects.

**5.1. Rolling Survey Report**

The Board discussed the process and approved the rolling survey for implementation in August. Board members will forward suggestions for minor adjustments to the questionnaire wording.

**EB, EG**

**6. Operational Report**

The Board noted the contents of the paper and accompanying annex. Issues arising from the report were discussed.

The Board thanked the Managers for the report and made further suggestions for information to be included. NM will prepare a note for Managers on additions required for the paper with an example template with this note outlining suggested topics for inclusion. DR happy to continue to provide input.

**NM, FP**

The Board requested that the statistics on Challenges to Decisions be included in the report as a part of the quality assurance data.

EG updated the Board about changes to the Equal Opportunities Monitoring Form (to be issued with the new Complaints Form when reprinted in August/September). Information provided by complainants is in line with average statistics for the general population. 26% of complainants state that they have a disability. Our new EOM forms will ask further questions about the nature of the person's disability in order to find out more about their needs and therefore ensure that we are accessible to all.

**6.1. Action Plan on old cases**

The Board noted the paper and discussed the proposal to provide management information on cases over 18 months old. The Board agreed that information to track progress on old cases was a requirement. The process for providing this information in an open and accessible manner is for the Investigation Managers to agree and implement.

**6.2. Managing high risk / profile cases and prioritisation of cases**

The Board requested that the paper be re-tabled at the next meeting incorporating the points from the discussion. The Board agreed that the recording spreadsheet be implemented as soon as possible.

**7. Financial Performance**

The Board noted the current financial position at the end of quarter one for 2008-09 and the predicted overspend. The Board discussed potential areas for savings and will continue to monitor the budget closely.

**8. People and Human Resources Report**

The Board noted the paper and congratulated the Complaints Investigator who has secured a 9-month secondment with the Scottish Housing Regulator. The Board noted the SPSO was now carrying the maximum number of outward secondments.

The Board approved the recommendation to create, as a matter of urgency, a 9-month inward secondment opportunity for an experienced investigator/complaints handler, ideally with a local government background.

**NM**

The Board were verbally informed of a Complaint Investigator's request to reduce hours to 31.5 hours per week and approved this as a 6-month pilot.

The Board noted and thanked the HR Officer for the comprehensive Annual HR Statistics report.

The Board noted the report on the first exit interviews conducted by the HR Officer, commented on the usefulness of the exercise and agreed this should be an ongoing practice. The Board requested that a similar exercise be carried out to gain first impressions on entering the organisation.

**NM**

**9. Review of Risks**

The Board noted the key risk areas and audit issues.

**10. Business Plan 2008-09 Quarter 1 update**

The Board agreed to meet with the MT separately to review progress against the quarterly objectives.

**All**

**11. AOB**

The Managers requested an update on the old cases in the Executive Board caseload, particularly two cases in the Deputies' names. The Director of Investigations informed the meeting on the progress of these cases and that it is expected both cases currently in the Deputies' caseloads will be cleared by November.

**There were no reserved items of business.**

The meeting closed at 12:30.