

Note of the Executive Board Meeting held on 29 October 2008

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

Actions

1. The meeting opened at 14:00 with no apologies.
2. The minutes from the meetings held on 17 September and 8 October 2008 were agreed with minor amendments.
3. Action points held over from previous meetings were reviewed.

4. Strategic Activities Update

4.1. Scottish Government Scrutiny Review

The Ministerial announcement on this review is expected on Friday 6 November 2008. A staff update on what to expect from the announcement and the possible Government response will take place on Friday 31 October in conjunction with the launch of the Annual Report.

5. Business Plan and Projects Update

The Board noted the improved performance in meeting the objectives in the Business Plan for the first half of the year and the progress on projects.

The Board noted the lessons learned in the End Project Reports which demonstrated the importance of scoping a project properly from the beginning.

IL will prepare a draft summary of the general achievements for quarter two and the challenges/issues for quarter three for circulating to the EB and MT by Wednesday.

IL

The Board requested Managers to encourage all staff members to attend Tuesday Panel meetings. The quarterly update will be held on Tuesday 11 November.

ALL

5.1. SDC & Challenge to Decisions Process Review

The Board thanked KB, GP and EG for preparing the thought-provoking paper and annexes.

SDC Process

The Board agreed with replacing the current Standards and Commitments with an amended version of the suggested SDC explanation. Point 1 will be redrafted to reflect Commitment 12 more closely and the wording of point 3 will be adapted (including removing the 'but'). JS will draft a form of words that will incorporate the QA measures as a 5th point to address process failures. JS will also re-word the questions for the SDC form.

**EG
JS**

The Board agreed that there will only be two formal stages in the SDC process, preceded by local resolution (informal) by the CI or Manager. The Director of Policy will be the first formal stage for the SDC process, with the final stage being the Independent Assessor.

Challenge Process

The Board provided suggested amendments for the explanation for Challenges to Casework Decisions. **EG**

5.2. a. Casework Performance Measures

b. Organisation Performance Measures

The Board noted the two related papers and requested they be discussed in greater detail at the Discussion and Planning meeting on 30 October.

5.3. Criteria for SPSO participation in external events

The Board accepted the criteria for making all decisions about events including informing the annual business planning process from 2009-10. **ALL**

The Board agreed that all staff involved in Outreach events record the time spent preparing, delivering and communicating in each event. The Management Team will agree a method for recording this information. **MT**

5.4. Replacement of ICT Infrastructure and CHS

The Board noted the progress on these projects and the issues raised. In particular, the Board recognised the need to closely monitor ScotsLite's service delivery and is actively pursuing some particular issues with the contractor. The Head of Services will continue to review this position on a monthly basis.

6. Operational Report

The Board noted the issues raised in the paper and requested that Annex four be revisited and updated against actual figures for the first six-months. **ED & MT**

The Board requested that further discussion on specific issues identified will be discussed at the Discussion and Planning meeting on 30 October 2008.

6.1. Service Delivery Complaints

The Board requested that consideration be given to ways of feeding back learning from these complaints more widely to the organisation, in conjunction with challenges and QA findings. **MT**

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

The Board noted the additional paper and requested that the paper include the rationale/explanation for why collecting this data is required. **AW**

The Board requested that a similar explanation be recorded for the Fast-track process. **MT**

The Board requested a diagram to illustrate the process be included and further investigation of how this information may be stored on the CHAS file to eliminate the separate record keeping. **FP**

The meeting closed at 16:30 and reconvened at 09:00 on 30 October 2008

7. Financial Performance

The Board noted the current financial position 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 accompanying annex of the 2008-09 Programme of Technical Updates.

The Board approved the staff survey with clarification of some questions. NM will inform members of how the respondents will be grouped. **NM**

9. Review of Risks

The Board noted the paper outlining key risk areas and the updated Draft Business Continuity Plan. The Board were informed that a further draft will be prepared following the resignation of the Office Manager.

10. AOB

There was no other business.

The meeting closed at 09:20 on 30 October 2008 and the reserved annex for the People and Human Resources Report will be covered during an extra-ordinary EB meeting on 6 November.