

Note of the Senior Management Group Meeting held on 8 August 2012

Present:

Jim Martin	Ombudsman (Chair)
Niki Maclean	Director
Emma Gray	Head of Policy and External Communications
Paul McFadden	Head of Complaints Standards
Gillian Lafferty	Executive Casework Assistant

In attendance:

Fiona Paterson	Senior Personal Assistant (Secretary)
Dorothy Armstrong	Internal Professional Adviser - Health

1. The meeting opened at 10:00 with no apologies.
2. The note of the meeting held on 4 July 2012 was agreed with no amendments. There were no outstanding actions for review.

3. Policy Group Update

The Group noted the good progress local authorities and RSLs are making towards the implementation of the model CHPs. The Group discussed the issues raised by the FE/HE sector and formed a considered response to these concerns.

The Group were informed that the annual letters to health and local government bodies have been issued and published. The second wave of annual letters for the three new sectors of Housing, Prisons, Water and Education will be issued at the end of August.

The management response to the user satisfaction survey was discussed and will be tabled at the next Service Improvement Group meeting.

The Group noted the website will be undergoing a review carried out by CIS. The outcomes of this review will inform further developments of the site.

The Group noted the developments in the training unit.

The Group agreed to the proposal to establish a social media protocol and trial a twitter account for 6 months.

Action 1: *Circulate the Craigforth survey and draft management response to the Service Improvement Group for discussion before publishing.*

4. Corporate Service Update

Finance

The Group noted the year-to-date expenditure against budget and known unbudgeted liabilities. The Group were informed that there were no significant issues with the first draft of the accounts and they will be signed off by the end of September. The Group were also informed that the submission for 2013-14 budget was due before the end of August.

HR

The Group were notified that while all the options were considered following the end of the IPA-GP's contract, short-term cover has been arranged with the previous IPA-GP.

The draft learning and development policy, strategy and 2012-13 plan were tabled for consideration. The Group approved the documents for circulation and noted they will be discussed at the next Service Improvement Group meeting.

Internal Audit

The Internal Auditor provided the annual assurance for 2011-12 and the audit report on the Business Continuity Plan.

Risks

The Group noted the two reported incidents and the action taken by staff to mitigate the situations.

The Group noted the results of the file location audit and, in particular, discussed the actions taken to find the one file that remained missing. The Group requested that further searches for this file be undertaken and the specific details of this file considered by the Information Officer to measure if it is of a serious or sensitive nature. FP confirmed that it was a case closed at Early Resolution 1.

Action 2: *The Ombudsman requests a full search of all office space to locate missing file.*

Archiving Policy Proposal

Action 3: The Group discussed the proposed change to the archiving policy and requested further information on the current practices of other Ombudsman's offices for the next meeting.

Upgrade of WorkPro to version 3

The Group were updated on discussion that took place between the stakeholders at the technical specification meeting and were informed that the first Quality Review meeting would take place on 16 August. It was noted that the SCOTS upgrade was essential for the installation of the new version of the application as it requires IE8 or 9 to perform optimally. SPSO has requested to be considered as an 'early adopter' by SCOTS for the MS Office 10 rollout.

MS Office 10 Upgrade

The Group were informed that staff self-assessment forms had been issued and a training program would be developed accordingly. A small group of users who require reports from WorkPro will be provided with SQL Server Report Builder training.

5. Casework Performance Update

The Group noted the casework performance for July, including the greater than predicted cases received. This will continue to be monitored closely by the management team.

The Group noted the first draft Service Improvement Report for comment and approval. The draft report will be tabled at the next Service Improvement Group meeting for discussion.

The accessibility and reasonable adjustments guidance was tabled for SMT approval prior to being included in the case-handling guidance document.

Action 4: The Group requested this guidance was issued immediately to all staff for information and confirmation of reading and understanding.

The meeting closed at 11:30