

Note of the Senior Management Group Meeting held on 5 September 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)
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1. The meeting opened at 10:00 with no apologies.
2. The note of the meeting held on 4 July 2012 was agreed with minor amendments. There were no outstanding actions for review.

3. Audit and Advisory Committee Meeting papers

The Group reviewed the papers prepared for the meeting on Thursday 6 September and noted any progress against points raised. The Ombudsman informed the group of the points he would be discussing with the Committee.

4. Casework Performance Update

The Group noted the additional points that were not raised in the papers for the A&AC including the casework performance for August and the upcoming resourcing changes to the complaint handling teams.

5. Corporate Services Update

The Group noted the additional points and papers that were not raised in the papers for the A&AC. The Group approved the recommendation to separate post into 1st and 2nd class to reduce the expenditure in this area.

The Group were updated on the archiving practices of the Welsh and Northern Ireland Ombudsman. The Group will consider the discussion points as raised and will return to the policy in the new year as part of the Records Management Policy.

The Group noted the possible delay to implementing the archiving policy to casework over the coming two months due to the short-term increase in workload for the Compendium Officer.

The meeting closed at 11:00

Note of the Senior Management Group Meetings held on 20 & 25 September 2012

By Emma Gray

1. 10 year Anniversary

The Ombudsman has decided that we will not hold an event at the Scottish Parliament on the occasion of our ten year anniversary, on cost grounds. The SMT have decided on an afternoon event in the office on Thursday 25 October.

2. Liaison officer/cross-sectoral conference update

Following this morning's useful discussion about a cross-sectoral conference, we discussed at SMT today the pros and cons of holding such an event in Q3. SMT decided we would not hold the event. The reasons are timing (the phased model CHP implementation in different sectors), the stretch on resources especially in Q3, and that we have significantly enhanced the level of communication we have with bodies through the CSA work and there is support on the improving complaints standards area on an ongoing basis through Valuing Complaints (forum, networks etc) and training.

What we agreed may be missing though, from the point of view of liaison officers, is an insight into how the SPSO looks at cases and an update from Jim/Niki on the direction of the organisation. I also think there's benefit for our SPSO staff especially CRs in meeting liaison officers face-to-face and vice versa.

At the first meeting of the LA network on Friday, Paul and John will ask the members for their views on us not holding an event. As a policy team, we'll discuss that feedback and decide if an event focussing on just the LA sector and SPSO complaints handling is required. We can then make a recommendation to SMT.