

**Note of the Senior Management Team (SMT) Meeting held on
Wednesday 13 November 2013**

Present:

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

In attendance:

Rachel Hall	Executive Casework Officer
Fiona Paterson	Senior Personal Assistant (Secretary)

Observer:

Pauline McIntyre	SCCYP
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1. The meeting opened at 10:00 with no apologies.
2. The note of the meeting held on 26 September 2013 was agreed with no amendments. The SMT reviewed the outstanding actions list and associated papers.

3. Team Managers' Updates

Advice Team

Carol Neill, Advice Team Manager, was invited to the meeting to provide the Q2 update on her area of the organisation. CN informed the SMT of the implications of the staff changes in her team in Q4.

CN updated the SMT on the various projects within her team. The SMT discussed the ongoing improved closure rates at Advice Stage from the Duty CR Project, and considered if further efficiencies may still be found using the same amount of resource in different ways. A paper from the DCR project will be presented to the SMT in the new year. The Complainant Journey Project Group will be presenting their findings and recommendations to the SMT in December following discussion with the Service Improvement Group in November. CN also shared the courtesy call pilot for review cases and noted that the initial findings are very positive and the additional customer service is appreciated. It is hoped to be passed to other staff members to continue in the near future. The Ombudsman thanked CN for providing the update to the Senior Management Team.

Early Resolution Team

Kathleen Steindl, Early Resolution Team Manager, was invited to the meeting to provide the Q2 update on her area of the organisation. KS highlighted two BUJs whose slow response times are causing significant delay. KS informed the SMT that various methods were being employed to improve PI-2 performance, including the monitoring of cases by the manager at 30 and 40 days for specific actions. This is having the required impact with the percentage of cases over PI-2 steadily reducing. KS shared some examples of the high standard of work evidenced in the last quarter and discussed methods of sharing these examples with the wider office. The Ombudsman thanked KS for providing the update to the senior management team.

Investigations Team

Judy Saddler, Investigations Team Manager, was invited to the meeting to provide an update on her area of the organisation for Q2. JS discussed the impact the impending retirement of a case reviewer in Q4 would have on the overall productivity of the team, and the knowledge base for planning complaints, as he has very high closure rates and an extensive knowledge of complex and difficult planning issues. The SMT discussed the likelihood of meeting the PI-3 target at the end of the year, and the Ombudsman stressed the importance of this target for the

whole office. The Ombudsman thanked JS for providing the update to the senior management team.

4. BUJ Project Report

EG and JS presented the findings and recommendations from the BUJ project scoping exercise. The findings and recommendations were noted by the SMT and would be taken forward for further consideration to the strategic planning session on 19 November.

5. A&AC Papers for meeting on 19 November

The SMT discussed points of note in the prepared papers for the A&AC meeting, including the Q2 SDC report for publication.

6. Complaints and Investigations Monthly Performance Update

The SMT noted the casework performance for October and discussed progress against the performance indicators, and in particular PI-2, in relation to the year-end position.

7. Service Improvement Quarterly Update

The SMT noted the results in the final Q1 reports for QA in the general assessment and the Advice Case assessment. The SMT were pleased to note the steady reduction in the number of open requests for reviews.

8. Corporate Services Update

Finance: The SMT noted expenditure against budget year-to-date. The Ombudsman and Director will ensure there is best use made of any forecast underspend to meet any resourcing requirements.

Human Resources: The SMT noted the staffing changes and recruitment requirements that will be undertaken in Q3.

ICT: The SMT were updated on the various IT projects that are now underway, including replacing laptops, introducing scanning of Advice closure cases, rolling out the HR IT system to staff and electronic records management.

FOI/DPA: The SMT noted the issues with our current courier provider and the tender process for these services.

Action 1: Electronic Communication with BUJs: The SMT agreed to take forward a project looking into methods and costs for bulk sharing of information using FTP on Scots.

9. AOCB

The SMT were informed of the HIS project to approach regulating bodies to discuss the sharing of information. We will be provided the terms of reference for consideration.

The meeting closed at 12:30