

**Note of the Senior Management Team Meeting
held on Tuesday 23 May 2017**

Present:

Rosemary Agnew	Ombudsman (Chair)
Niki Maclean	Director
Emma Gray	Head of Communications and Engagement
John Stevenson	Head of Complaints Standards

In attendance:

Fiona Paterson	Senior Personal Assistant (Secretary)
Jamie McGrandles	Executive Casework Officer
Rachel Nicholson	Executive Casework Officer

Apologies:

None

1. The meeting opened at 10:00 with no apologies. The note of the meeting held on Tuesday 25 April 2017 was approved for publication with minor amendments. The actions held over from previous meetings, including AAC, internal audit and external audit, were reviewed and progress noted.

2. Financial Monitoring Report

The SMT reviewed the final year-end outturn, and noted the final adjustments would be made for the AAC meeting. The SMT discussed the 2017-18 budget and possible in year requirements for contingency funding, and other funding options currently being explored.

The Ombudsman requested corrections to the draft External Auditor's Planning Report before finalising for the AAC meeting.

3. Risk, Incidents and Issues Management Report

The SMT discussed the 2017-18 business plan risk register and approved it for circulating to all staff for comment. The following points were noted in addition to the tabled papers:

4. Performance report

The SMT were updated on significant actions undertaken since the previous update.

SO1: Complaints and investigations

The Director informed the SMT that the main focus in Q1 will continue to be the age of investigation cases on transfer from the Early Resolution Team to the Investigation Team. This will be addressed through the further embedding of activity levels, ensuring cases are fast tracked where identified to be Activity Level 3.

The Director also informed the SMT that DCR letters will now be considered as preliminary decisions, with an option for the complainant to return for a full decision, rather than accessing the review process at an inappropriate stage of the investigation. Only the final decision stage will signpost to the review process.

SMT discussed the premature rate in the Local Government sector; and noted the quality assurance reports for Q3 casework and Q4 professional advice.

S02: SWF

The Head of Communications and Engagement confirmed that the SWF annual report and annual letters are finalised and awaiting SMT review and comment by 31 May. The SWF annual report is planned for publication in June.

S03 Simplification

Nothing of note outside of the tabled paper required recording.

S04: Good Practice

The SMT discussed revising the information collected from CSA contacts. The review will focus on what we want to know from these records and then devise the best way to record this information. The SMT noted that the Ombudsman and Director will be invited to relevant sector meetings.

S05: Accountability and Best Value

The Ombudsman requested that further business measures covering information requests be included in the 2017-18 business plan, reflecting on her previous role and the expectations this brings with it.

S06: Engagement, learning and improvement

The SMT noted the customer service complaints reports for Q4 and annual summary and discussed the appropriate measure for the business plan.

The meeting closed at 12:30