

**Note of the Senior Management Team Meeting  
held on Tuesday 28 March 2017**

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*Present:*

Jim Martin	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 10:30 with no apologies. The note of the meeting held on Tuesday 7 February 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 current expenditure against budget. The Director confirmed that budget spend and the year-end cash position are in line with expectations and early projections.

**3. Risk, Incidents and Issues Management Report**

The SMT noted the high risks have remained stable with no new risks emerging to the end of the business year, and discussed emerging issues for the coming business year which will be considered during the planning process.

**4. Performance report**

The SMT were updated on significant actions undertaken since the previous update. In particular, the following was noted:

*SO1: Complaints and investigations*

The Director informed the SMT that the slowdown in closures is in line with the 8% reduction in FTE CRs this year. The critical PI-1.2 measure is expected to be available for year-end when the formula issue is resolved by the contractor. The Director went on to confirm that following the overtime initiative the year-end closures are expected to be in line with the projections.

The SMT discussed the increase in requests for reviews of decisions, and would like to see a breakdown of pre-investigation case requests and investigation case requests.

The SMT noted the QA Advice findings for Q1-3 2016-17.

*SO2: SWF*

The SMT noted the paper on SWF performance and were informed by the Director of the Sounding Board discussions. The Director confirmed that the numbers are currently in line with the previous system, but the breakdown between community care and crisis grants is different. The manager is monitoring closely the different practices across authorities.

*SO3: Simplification*

The SMT were updated on the response to the social work information workshops for CRs.

*SO4: Good Practice*

The SMT were informed of the message that will be taken to the Local Government Complaints Handlers Network meeting in April, urging them to improve the timeliness of the annual sectoral performance report.

*SO5: Accountability and Best Value*

The SMT approved the recommendations for taking forward the paper-lite and electronic sharing projects in the new business year.

*SO6: Engagement, learning and improvement*

The SMT noted the customer survey reports for Q1 and 2 and agreed the proposed plan to survey prisoners who have used our service to explore access and branding concerns.

The SMT praised the update of the Valuing Complaints website, and were informed that the main SPSO site will undergo a review in the new business year.

The SMT were informed of the positive feedback from the March conference from speakers and delegates. The Ombudsman thanked all the staff involved in delivering what he thought was an excellent and professional conference, where all the speakers were authoritative and relevant to the audience.

**5. Business Plan 2017-18**

The SMT requested additional time to give a final review of the business plan before it is published on the website.

**6. Any other business**

The SMT were informed of the items discussed at the Director's meeting and the Ombudsman Association Standards workgroup, where the BSI standards are now finalised.

***The meeting closed at 12:30***