



Senior Management Team Meeting

Minutes of meeting on 21 April 2021

10am – 12pm, Microsoft Teams

Present:

- Head of Corporate Services (Chair)
- Head of Communications
- Head of Strategy
- Head of Advice and Investigations

In attendance:

- Executive Assistant (Minutes)

1. Welcome and apologies

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. There were no apologies.

2. Minutes of previous meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed.

3. Governance meeting

The next Governance meeting is on 5 May 2021. SMT reviewed the action log from the previous Governance meeting noting those that were complete and those that were outstanding actions to be considered at the meeting on 5 May 2021. SMT will meet the week before the Governance meeting to agree agenda and papers.

It was noted that one recommendation from the auditors was for training on the public sector financial reporting manual (FReM) to be provided to the Commissioner and SMT. It was agreed that the Head of Corporate Services would deliver this as part of the agenda for the next Governance meeting.

4. Finance

- Budget for 2021/22

It was noted that this month there was not a finance report as it was the end of the financial year process. The report at the next meeting of SMT in May would cover the two month period up to the date of that meeting.

SMT discussed the SPCB monthly phasing document. This provides SPCB with an indication of estimated drawdown to inform SPCB's cash flow predictions. CYPCS can revert to SPCB to update the phasing document if any material changes, for example, due to COVID-19 or recent developments resulting in a change to strategic priorities. it



was agreed that due to ongoing challenges on predicting spend due to COVID-19 that would submit on basis equal drawdown each month but keep this under review and keep SPCB updated .

5. Delivery plan and key project updates

- **2021/2022 delivery planning**

The Office continues as a result of the impact of COVID-19 on children and young people, for example, in relation to education, to have to prioritise reactive work in light of the rapidly changing developments. As a result there are significant challenges to finalising the Delivery Plan. Project planning and the associated delivery work for projects across each of Corporate Services, Strategy, Advice and Investigations and Communications have been advanced. The next stage is to bring those together and ensure aligned into one Delivery Plan agreed by the SMT and the Commissioner. SMT plan to hold additional meetings as SMT and with the Commissioner to finalise this as a priority albeit recognising the ongoing capacity constraints of urgent delivery deadlines continue to present challenges to this process.

SMT highlighted that the aspiration in the long term remains to develop a two-year delivery plan to try to align that process with the process for budget submissions to SPCB. This will be kept under review by SMT, and SMT are continuing to work towards developing best practice for future reporting years.

SMT agreed that should try to build space into the delivery plan for dedicated time for all staff training, continued professional development and team building for example, by hosting a 'summer school'.

- **Corporate Services**

The Head of Corporate Services noted that the Audit and Audit Advisory Board process and the IT Infrastructure upgrade remain key priorities. Those require input from across teams and would keep Heads of Departments up to date on those as likely require additional staff resources from outside Corporate Services.

- **Strategy**

- The Strategy team together with Advice and Investigations are currently prioritising planning the impact of the incorporation of the UNCRC into Scots law on the Office's work by mapping those new duties and powers that CYPCS will have and how each of those new roles, services, functions that the Office will be empowered with under the Act should be treated in delivery planning as it will have an impact on the work of the whole Office. This is an urgent and substantial piece of work. The Scottish Government are planning on the basis that the Incorporation Bill will be enacted at the end of October. This is subject to the UK Government appeal to the Supreme Court.

- **Communications:**

Public information requirements

- As part of the ongoing project of transferring information from the previous website to the new website, the Head of Communications put forward for decision by SMT the information that should be published on the new website. SMT agreed that all annual reports, strategic plans, and reports relating to the core functions of the Office should be transferred to the new website. Consultation responses that relate to the previous and current parliamentary term should also be published.

- **Advice and Investigations**

The Head of Advice and Investigations noted that a current priority is to review the scope of the children in conflict with the law project in order to minimise risk. Discussions around delivery planning will help achieve this. The volume of requests for advice remains higher than historical levels although there has been a slight reduction recently.

- **Commissioner**

SMT discussed that this year is the 18th birthday of Scotland first appointing the Children and Young People's Commissioner. It was agreed that it would be nice to mark the occasion and that this could be done in November in combination with planning of celebration of the incorporation of the UNCRC, and participation activities related to that.

6. Participation

The three new Young Adviser Groups have now all met for the first time.

7. COVID-19 Update

No updates from previous meeting with exception to health and safety, which was covered under agenda item 9.

8. Data Protection

ACTION: Head of Corporate Services to circulate templates provided by SPCB to SMT.

9. Health and Safety

- COVID-19 risk assessment

In light of the easing of restrictions, SMT agreed to review capacity in office for essential work. That review would be done in conjunction with the Union, PCS.

SMT will continue to develop plans for a return to office, reflecting and recognising the changes to ways of working as a result of COVID-19 both in terms of individual staff but



also what will the office space be used for and does it need a redesign to reflect that meetings may be more frequently online, or staff may work from home more.

ACTION: Head of Corporate Services will produce a survey for staff. This will be prepared in consultation with PCS.

10. Any other business

None.

11. Next meeting – Wednesday 19 May 2021, 10-12pm