



Senior Management Team Meeting

Minutes of meeting on Wednesday 14 July 2021

9am – 11am, Microsoft Teams

In attendance:

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

Present:

Executive Assistant (minutes)

1. Welcome and apologies

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and there were no apologies.

2. Minutes from previous meeting

SMT approved the minutes of the previous meeting. There were no outstanding actions.

3. Risk register

This is complete for this reporting year. SMT have reviewed and agreed.

4. Finance

The Head of Corporate Services provided an update. The current position is in line with SMT's projections. The office is currently underspent on the main project lines. In terms of cost for any adjustments for the return to the office when it is safe to do SMT agreed to hold a separate meeting to discuss budget for those. It was noted that SPCB have confirmed that it has no contingency for this year so officeholders are not able to make a claim for any additional cost as a result of COVID-19, for example, adapting the office for return. Any costs have to come from our underspend.

5. Governance Group Meeting

The next meeting of the Governance Group is on Thursday 29 July 2021. SMT reviewed the actions from the previous meeting. The majority of those are complete. The two outstanding actions relate to procurement of executive coaching services for each member of SMT, and the method of absence reporting during COVID-19. Both of those actions are in progress, and SMT agreed can provide an update to the Commissioner on those outside of the Governance Group meeting, rather than remaining as open actions.

SMT reviewed the Governance Meetings annual agenda items, and the draft agenda for the next Governance Group meeting. SMT agreed the agenda.

ACTIONS:

- Head of Corporate Services to circulate Register of Interests to all staff in advance of Governance Group meeting for any updates
- Head of Corporate Services to circulate quarterly finance report to SMT in advance of meeting for SMT to review budget phasing, project movement, agree underspend and any recommendations to Commissioner for decision.
- Executive Assistant to circulate draft procurement proposal and specification to Head of Strategy for final comments before commencing procurement process.

6. Delivery plan and projects

- **Corporate Services:**

- **IT – consideration of new database and software**

The Head of Corporate Services has a meeting with independent IT consultant to discuss a full upgrade of the existing software used for the advice and investigations function to obtain advice on cost, risk mitigation and performance improvements of upgrading the existing software compared with developing a new specification and procuring an alternative IT solution. This will include considering the need to update any contractual arrangements to ensure those reflect current legislative requirements, particularly in relation to data protection.

- In terms of wider IT requirements to support the office, that is likely to require a new bespoke IT solution. In terms of timeline ideally teams will provide input on the draft specification by the end of September. It was noted that in terms of resources and cost for this project it is likely that it will need to take place in the next financial year.
- The Head of Corporate Services will also meet with our IT support consultants to discuss whether it would be more cost effective to develop one new system for both of the above IT needs rather than updating existing software.
- The Head of Corporate Services noted that due to external circumstances outside CYPCS' control there has been a delay to the planned move to the new payroll provider.

- **Strategy:**

The Head of Strategy updated SMT on plans for a new research project funded as part of our incorporation work. SMT's initial view is that there is some flexibility in the budget to think about where to obtain most value for children and young people

from our projects, and it was noted that this proposal relates to skills and resource that would need to be sourced from outside the office. A business case is being developed, which will consider procurement policies and any other relevant policies.

- **Communications:**

The Head of Corporate Services noted that there is a proposal in relation to project audit of the website.

- **Advice and Investigations:**

The Head of Advice and Investigations updated SMT on a proposal that is being developed in conjunction with the University of Nottingham seeking funding for a project from the Economic and Social Research Council Impact Acceleration Account. The work would focus on the additional legal powers the Commissioner would have as set out in the UNCRC (Incorporation) (Scotland) Bill by developing a tool that would allow the office to prioritise and make decisions about cases with a mechanism to ensure children and young people are involved in the process. CYPCS role is to specify the outputs we want from the project and how we would like to involve our Young Adviser's Governance Group in the project given that they have an understanding of our work and how legal powers fit into our role. The current thinking is to request one or two workshops to ensure that is built into the process. In terms of time period for the workshops involving the Young Advisers Governance Group, it would likely be between September and January.

7. Participation

- **Young Advisers Group update**

The European Network of Young Advisers (ENYA) Group have completed the majority of their work. The annual ENYA conference was earlier this month and it went really well. We are now looking at developing a programme of activities for the ENYA Group to provide the young advisers with as much value as possible from being part of ENYA, including opportunities for them to engage with the Scottish Parliament COVID-19 Committee. There may also be other opportunities for them, whether this is if they would like to join another of our Young Advisers Groups, or to participate in discrete projects.

The Governance Group of Young Advisers now have a well developed programme of work, including all different teams of the office meeting with them to explain the roles and responsibilities, and consult with the Young Advisers on ways we could improve the work of the office. The Head of Strategy and the Head of Advice and Investigations are meeting to discuss ideas for how to ensure the Governance Group of Young Advisers are involved in the process for developing our strategic plan for 2022/23, and 2023/24.

The Mental Health Investigators Group of Young Advisers work has now been scoped and a project plan is in place. The project is due to commence in August.

SMT discussed the proposed training for staff and young advisers to support their work focusing on wellbeing. The current proposal is to run three separate training sessions:

- Two sessions for staff
- One session for our Young Advisers.

SMT are currently obtaining training proposals and quotes from providers for training that will help support both staff and young advisers in our work. SMT agreed that it is important to ensure the sessions are bespoke with specific outcomes and including practical examples of scenarios that may arise so that the session is focused, and relevant to our work.

The Head of Corporate Services has sent out diary holds to all staff for wellbeing training noting that more information to follow. This will be provided to all staff once SMT have agreed training proposals and details of those.

8. COVID-19 Update

- Recent developments with easing of restrictions
- **For decision:** SMT to agree when opening the office

SMT agreed to take this agenda item in private.

9. Health and Safety

The matters to be discussed under this agenda item linked to agenda item and would be taken in private.

10. Any other business

None.

11. Matters for discussion by SMT in private

12. Next meeting – Wednesday 11 August, 9am – 11am.