



Senior Management Team Meeting
Minutes of meeting held on 29 November 2023
 14:00-17:00, Microsoft Teams

Attendees:

Nicola Vallance-Ross (NVR)	Head of Corporate Services – Chair
Ezmie McCutcheon (EMc)	Head of Communications
Nick Hobbs (NH)	Head of Advice and Investigations
Judith Chisholm (JC)	Executive Assistant - Minutes

1.	Welcome and apologies	
	The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were received from Gina Wilson, Head of Strategy.	
2.	Review of minutes from previous meeting and actions	
	<p>The minutes of the Senior Management Team meeting held on 25 October 2023 were approved.</p> <p>Actions from the previous meeting were reviewed and the following actions were carried over:</p> <p>ACTION – SMT to approve revised Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.</p>	SMT
3.	Finance	
	<p>The Finance Officer joined the meeting for this agenda item.</p> <p>Finance Report</p> <p>The Finance Officer referred to the budget-holder finance report for October and provided a high-level summary to SMT of spend against budget for October. SMT thanked the Finance Officer for the update and had no questions on the report.</p>	

	<p>Budget phasing and decisions</p> <p>The Finance Officer presented on the budget reforecast phasing document for November 2023 – March 2024. SMT noted areas of expenditure where spend is to be revised based on anticipated work over that period. This budget phasing reforecast to be submitted to Scottish Parliamentary Corporate Body (SPCB) on 14 December 2023.</p> <p>ACTION: NVR to follow up with Head of Strategy separately on strategy budget reforecast.</p> <p>ACTION: Finance Officer to update budget phasing and recirculate budget reforecast to SMT and the Commissioner for approval. Final budget rephasing to be provided to SPCB by 14 December.</p> <p>ACTION: Finance Officer to email staff team a reminder of Healthy Living Allowance.</p>	
4.	Governance	
	<p>Communications Internal Audit Workplan</p> <p>SMT noted that had introductory meeting with Wylie Bisset, our Internal Auditors, and we have uploaded various documents to their workspace. Next meeting is Wednesday 6 December 2023.</p>	
5.	Delivery Plan and Projects - Exceptions Reporting	
	<p>BINOCC</p> <p>SMT agreed that we could host this in person in February if that suited the Commissioners. Corporate Services to support.</p> <p>Strategy</p> <p>No updates in absence of Head of Strategy.</p> <p>Communications</p> <p>Internal audit has commenced. Website accessibility work is continuing.</p> <p>Advice and Investigations</p>	

	<p>The advice research required amendments to the specification before awarding the contract. The revisions did not relate to work that we were relying on.</p> <p>Corporate Services</p> <p>Governance Audit commences on 29 January. Procurement project is finished but the training has been postponed until March. The team is seeking quotes for advice on evaluation of projects and good practice on business planning to inform those aspects of the strategic plan.</p> <p>Strategic Plan Timescales</p> <p>If going to have a consultant advise on writing business plans and evaluation of projects need to consider when to build this into the process between January and March. It was agreed that this would need to take place in February.</p>	
6.	Participation	
	<p>SMT noted the wide range of strategic plan participation opportunities and agreed to make recommendations of opportunities for staff members to participate in.</p>	
7.	Policies for discussion / approval	
	<p>Team meetings</p> <p>It was agreed to keep team meetings on a Wednesday morning. These would be moved to 10-12 with a break so does not run into non-core hours of lunchtime as was agreed for meetings in 2019. It was agreed that the all staff team meetings should be attended in person where possible.</p> <p>ACTION: Head of Corporate Services to communicate arrangements for all staff meetings to all staff team.</p> <p>Recording completion of Contribution Management Plans – central record to be kept in Governance folder. For 2024 due to new strategic plan those should be completed by mid-May, for subsequent years mid-February.</p> <p>ACTION: JC to create a document for recording when Contribution Management Plans are complete for next year.</p>	

	<p>Complaints Policy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - SMT reviewed the draft complaints policy. Revisions were agreed. Subject to those amendments the policy was approved. In terms of complaints regarding the Commissioner those are to be dealt with by an Officeholders Code of Conduct. <p>ACTION: Head of Corporate Services to develop Officeholders Code of Conduct</p>	
	Date of next meeting:	
7.	Matters in private	
8.	Summary of actions:	
	<p>ACTION – SMT to approve revised Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.</p> <p>ACTION: NVR to follow up with Head of Strategy separately on strategy budget reforecast.</p> <p>ACTION: Finance Officer to update budget phasing and recirculate budget reforecast to SMT and the Commissioner for approval. Final budget rephasing to be provided to SPCB by 14 December.</p> <p>ACTION: Finance Officer to email staff team a reminder of Healthy Living Allowance.</p> <p>ACTION: NVR to communicate arrangements for all staff meetings to all staff team.</p> <p>ACTION: JC to create a document for recording when Contribution Management Plans are complete for next year.</p> <p>ACTION: NVR to develop Officeholders Code of Conduct</p>	