Senior Management Team Meeting
Minutes of meeting held on 20 March 2024
14:00-16:30
via Microsoft Teams

Attendees:	Nick Hobbs (NH)	Head of Advice and Investigations - Chair
	Ezmie McCutcheon (EMc)	Head of Communications
	Gina Wilson (GW)	Head of Strategy
	Judith Chisholm (JC)	Executive Assistant - Minutes
Guest Attendees:	Jane Thornton-Smith (JTS)	Finance Officer
Apologies:	Nicola Vallance-Ross	Head of Corporate Services

1.	**Welcome and apologies**	
	The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were received from Nicola Vallance-Ross, Head of Corporate Services.	
2.	**Review of previous minute and actions**	
	The minutes from the previous meeting were approved. Actions carried forward: - The Head of Corporate Services to investigate Advice Line without a physical phone line. - The Head of Corporate Services to develop Officeholders Code of Conduct for May SMT meeting	NVR NVR

3.	**Finance**	
	The Finance Officer joined the meeting for this agenda item. **Finance update:** The Finance Officer provided an overview of the SMT Finance Reports highlighting areas of overspend and underspend. The financial position is as expected and looking like will be under budget for the financial year. SMT reviewed and updated where necessary the anticipated spend for the remainder of the financial year. **Draft credit card pre-authorisation process and credit card policy:** The Finance Officer provided an overview of the updated credit card policy and the flowchart of pre-authorisation process. SMT provided comments on aspects of the policy. ACTION Finance Officer to discuss comments on credit card policy with Head of Corporate Services. Final version of policy to go to next SMT meeting for approval. It was raised if we have considered prepaid cards for people who have large expenditure rather than relying on expenses policy. Finance Officer will discuss with Head of Corporate Services.	JTS/NVR JTS
4.	**Governance**	
	Register of interests and conflict of interest policy: SMT reviewed the conflict of interest policy and updated it to reflect broader category of potential areas of conflict in terms of relationships and reputational risk. Subject to those changes it was approved. **Annual report timescales and staff needed to input:** The Head of Communications will email staff to be involved with the agreed decisions on process for the annual report this week.	EMc
5	**Management statistics by exception**	
	None to report.	
6.	**Delivery Plans and Projects Exceptions Reporting**	
	Strategy	

	No exceptions to report. **Communications** Scouts Explorer resources are completing this week. Some of the creative outputs from the strategic plan consultation are delayed. **Advice and Investigations** The advice research output is delayed by a couple of weeks but this does not have any impact on when we want to make the decision. **Corporate Services** No update in absence of Head of Corporate Services.	
7.	**Participation**	
	We are very excited about our new Young Advisors Group meeting for the first time this week. SMT thanked our current Young Advisors for their involvement in recruitment of the new Young Advisors. The Young Advisors Group are involved in the creation of the strategic plan video. Young Advisors have been supported by the office to take part in a Parliamentary reception as part of the UN Geneva reporting work.	
8	**Policies for approval**	
	Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy: The Head of Strategy provided an overview of the key updates to the policy from the previous version mainly around the risk assessment process. SMT agreed that it would be good to run an all staff risk assessment training. Subject to a minor amend in relation to whistleblowing SMT approved the policy. **Credit card policy:** covered under Finance on the agenda	
9	**Staff training / development**	
	Risk assessment training to be provided by Participation Officer and Legal Officer to the all staff team. Data Protection Impact Assessment training to be provided to SMT by the Information Officer. SMT are considering an all team day in June. The all staff team have completed accessible documents training and the Communications team have completed social comms accessibility training.	

10	**Health and Safety**	
	Due to the set-up of the cables the bank of four desks needs to be reduced or moved. SMT reviewing situation and solutions. ACTION: JC to put meeting in diary for SMT in office to agree solution to desk locations.	**JC**
11	**Wellbeing monitoring**	
	To be discussed under matters in private.	
12	**Accessible Documents**	
	The Head of Corporate Services and the Head of Communications to meet to discuss next steps in relation to creating templates and other actions.	**EMC/NVR**
13.	**AOB**	
	BSL plan: this is due to be submitted by 6 May 2024. We have completed a draft which now needs to be aligned with the strategic plan. We have asked Solar Bear if they will do one more session that is about how we should communicate, accessibility, information about their rights, where they find this. We are also meeting with the National Deaf Children's Society. **Strategic Plan**: SMT reviewed the final draft proof of design for the strategic plan and approved it subject to some amends.	
	Date of next meeting: Wednesday 20 March 2024	
12.	**Summary of actions:**	
	- The Head of Corporate Services to investigate Advice Line without a physical phone line. - The Head of Corporate Services to develop Officeholders Code of Conduct for May SMT meeting - Finance Officer to discuss comments on credit card policy with Head of Corporate Services. Final version of policy to go to next SMT meeting for approval. - The Head of Communications will email staff to be involved with the agreed decisions on process for the annual report this week. - JC to put meeting in diary for SMT in office to agree solution to desk locations.	**NVR** **NVR** **JTS/NVR** **EMc** **JC**