

# Senior Management Team Meeting

## Minutes of meeting held on 1 September 2025

14:30 – 17:00

In person and via Microsoft Teams

### Attendees:

- Nicola Vallance-Ross, Head of Corporate Services - Chair
- Ezmie McCutcheon, Head of Communications
- Nick Hobbs, Head of Legal
- Gina Wilson, Head of Strategy
- Judith Chisholm, Executive Assistant - minutes

**Guest Attendees:** None

**Apologies:** None

| Agenda Item              | Notes and actions                                                    | Action owner |
|--------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|
| 1. Welcome and apologies | The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. There were no apologies. |              |
|                          |                                                                      |              |
| 2. Approval of Minutes   | Approved.                                                            |              |
|                          |                                                                      |              |
| 3. Review of actions     | Reviewed and status updated as appropriate. Actions on track.        |              |
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| 4. Finance               | Budget bid has been submitted to SPCB.                               |              |

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|                                                       | <p>The Head of Corporate Services provided an update on the finance report up to end of July. Tracking as expected.</p> <p>Corporate cards: Corporate Services are implementing some improvements to the control process. This will involve a quarterly report on reconciliation of transactions with follow up from Finance colleagues where required.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |  |
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| 5. Governance                                         | <p><b>Sift Paper:</b></p> <p>The Head of Legal had committed to review the sift process for strategic litigation after 12 months and bring it back to SMT as part of our Governance process. The Sift paper details the legal provisions around decision making for whether a case falls within our statutory jurisdiction. This sits alongside the strategic litigation toolkit which is based on high level principles of whether we would take a case based on strategic priority, resources etc.</p> <p>SMT reviewed the Sift paper and approved it subject to minor amendments.</p> <p><b>ACTION:</b> Legal team to make minor amendments. Finance and Administration Assistant to then ensure document is accessible.</p> |  |
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| 6. Delivery Plan and Projects<br>Exceptions Reporting | <p><b>Delivery Plan Quarterly update:</b></p> <p>Reminder to go out to teams unless already done so to update this in advance of the September Governance meeting.</p> <p><b>Exceptions reporting:</b></p> <p><b>Communications:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Storylines project is slightly over budget due to the increased cost of working with a new partner but otherwise it is on track.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |  |

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|                                    | <p><b>Strategy:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- One of our Young Advisors was invited to give evidence to the UN in Geneva on an Optional Protocol in relation to education. This was an excellent piece of work but it was not planned so it has resulted in having to rephase some other project work in relation to education. It has only resulted in minor amendments to timelines.</li> </ul> <p><b>Legal:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The recruitment process for a new Legal Officer has been slightly delayed.</li> <li>- The case we are intervening in in relation to eviction is expanding beyond its initial scope and it is exceeding initial budget. This is being monitored closely.</li> </ul> <p><b>Corporate Services:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The Information Governance project is complex and involves a lot of challenges as the project develops. As a result it is taking more time and capacity.</li> <li>- Reviewing risk register in light of the Information Governance project.</li> <li>- <b>ACTION:</b> The project by exception will be added to the agenda for the next SMT meeting to update SMT on impact for staff and teams.</li> <li>- The Human Resources project is complete.</li> </ul> |  |
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| 7. Policies for Noting or Approval | <p><b>Data protection appropriate policy document:</b></p> <p>Approved by SMT.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |  |
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| 8. Participation                   | <p>As mentioned as part of Strategy update, one of our Young Advisors gave evidence to the UN in Geneva. We have another Young Advisor going to Romania later this month for the European Network of Ombudsperson for Children Conference. We had a</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |  |

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|                                | session with our Young Advisors regarding projects and training across the year. We are planning the recruitment process for new Young Advisors following a few of our Young Advisors turning 18. |  |
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| 9. Annual Planner              | SMT noted any key dates on the horizon. <b>ACTION:</b> Head of Corporate Services to renew travel insurance policy.                                                                               |  |
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| 10. Health, Safety and Welfare | No updates for this meeting.                                                                                                                                                                      |  |
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| 11. Matters in private         |                                                                                                                                                                                                   |  |
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| 12. Date of next meeting       | Next meeting: 1 September 2025                                                                                                                                                                    |  |
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