

# Senior Management Team Meeting

## Minutes of meeting held on 24 March 2026

14:00 – 17:00

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
- Caitlin Paterson, Finance and Administration 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. No apologies. GW joined at 10:41 |              |
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| 2. Approval of minutes   | Approved.                                                                    |              |
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| 3. Review of actions     | Action log reviewed and updated. Actions on track.                           |              |
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| 4. Finance               | <b>Finance Report:</b><br><br>SMT reviewed JTS email with finance update.    |              |

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|                               | <p>Feb month end finance report subject to spend updates. Didn't ask for further drawdown of funds as discussed in different meeting with SMT. Budgets were predicted appropriately. Breakdown of expenditure for rest of financial year in IT &amp; Admin, Strategy and Participation, Comms and Legal reviewed. Nothing further to be discussed with JTS around expenditure as nothing else expecting to be spent between now and 31<sup>st</sup> of March.</p> <p>Discussion had around vacant Legal Officer post saving and how best to proceed, budget wise. To be ring fenced and left for now. NH advised provisional date of September for draw down of budget. This will be discussed again after the end of April.</p> <p>Nothing else to discuss in finance. NVR thanked SMT for continuous meetings between CS and SMT to help with budget management across teams.</p> |  |
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| 5. Governance                 | <p><b>Delivery plan years 3 and 4 process:</b></p> <p>SMT spoke about plans for operational discussions with their own teams as well as collectively. This will be done in 3 stages:</p> <p><b>March</b> – SMT to collate feedback from teams through team building days or other discussions such as 1:1s</p> <p><b>April</b> – SMT and Commissioner to meet to discuss feedback from teams and prioritise focus for office, including achievable outcomes.</p> <p><b>May</b> – Team planning days to be held to discuss new priorities and operational plans for the office.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |  |
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| 6. Delivery Plan and Projects | Capacity still down in Comms which has had an impact on projects and delivery plan.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |  |

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| Exceptions Reporting               | <p>Capacity remains low in Legal due to vacant post and inability to recruit. Positive judgment in Stringfellow case and taken decision to delay publication of police investigation so it lands in the new parliament.</p> <p>Capacity in CS has been low because of leave to be taken by end of year. However, because of increased asks from internal audit for the past two years planning for CS work has been difficult. NVR to try and push back with SPCB in terms of ITT for new internal auditors due to capacity. If continued to have additional asks placed on the team, the question needs to be asked around capacity within the team.</p> <p>Strategy team: None. GW back up to full capacity. MF no longer acting up in GWs absence.</p> <p><b>IT project:</b></p> <p>Change freeze for ERDM and moving to the cloud which derailed project around moving to SCOTS. Meeting with other Head of Corporates around why they moved on or off to SCOTS (pros and cons) to add to options appraisal for Commissioner. Also to include pros and cons for staying with a commercial provider in the appraisal. SMT to review options appraisal before Commissioner.</p> <p>Dunedin contract has been extended until August and likely to be extended again. There is no recommendation to move to SCOTS at the minute, but NVR will keep SMT posted. NVR would prefer appraisal goes through SMT first to back any recommendations. This appraisal not expected to be given to SMT before July/August.</p> |  |
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| 7. Policies for Noting or Approval | <p><b>FOI Policy and Procedures:</b></p> <p>Due for review on annual planner. Next review Feb 2028. No changes to policy. Happy to approve.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |  |

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| 8. Participation               | <p>New YAG group coming in for first meeting Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> March. Most are able to make it in person.</p> <p>Education visits (Fife) have begun. It has been a very busy period in March and will continue into April. The participation team are trying to put things in ahead of school holidays and the exam period. The organisation is conscious that this has been a very busy time for the YAG. Need to continue to keep a check on balance of opportunities being offered to YAG to ensure they are not being overwhelmed and to get that balance right over the rest of the year.</p> <p>Acknowledged that office as a whole needs to be mindful and to check with the participation team that we're not asking too much of them.</p> |  |
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| 9. Annual Planner              | Annual Planner reviewed and updated. Actions on track. CHJ to remind NVR to look at insurance for May Hiscox.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |  |
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| 10. Health, Safety and Welfare | None.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |  |
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| 11. Private session            |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |  |
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| 12. Date of next meeting       | Date of next meeting: April 2026                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |  |
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