Senior Management Team Meeting

Minutes of meeting held on 1 July 2026

14:00 – 15:30

via Microsoft Teams

Attendees:

- Nick Hobbs, Head of Legal (Chair)
- Ezmie McCutcheon, Head of Communications
- Gina Wilson, Head of Strategy
- Judith Chisholm, Executive Assistant - minutes

Guest Attendees:

- None

Apologies: Nicola Vallance-Ross, Head of Corporate Services

Agenda Item	Notes and actions	Action owner
1. Welcome and apologies	The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were received from the Head of Corporate Services.	
2. Approval of minutes	Approved.	
3. Review of actions	Action log reviewed and updated at June Governance meeting. Actions on track.	
4. Finance	No updates since June Governance meeting.	

5. Governance	No specific matters to discuss for this meeting apart from those discussed at June Governance meeting.	
6. Delivery Plan and Projects Exceptions Reporting	**Delivery plan** **Early years** – agreed that this year should focus on planning. Consider whether there is additional activity we can do around Let's Explore Our Rights. The book has received a lot of good feedback from early years practitioners. **BSL plan 2024 - 30 –** SMT agreed areas of work that would align and incorporate our BSL Plan into our delivery plan 2026-28. Held a whole staff team session which SMT reviewed as part of the planning. **Delivery plan project updates:** **Legal:** Highlights: - Restraint and Seclusion in Schools (Scotland) Act 2026 passing. This is an important issue which has involved a lot of work as an office - Legal function review of the last 18 months and going out to recruitment - Outsourcing Edinburgh Agency work with three providers now on list - Stringfellow case continues and procedural hearing in August. - Protected expenses order case – it is a narrow case but an important issue. - Police use of force investigation is near completion. Challenges: - Capacity continues to be a challenge in the team.	

	- Political environment and operating around public sector reform. **Comms:** Highlights: - Media work in relation to the social media ban. - Storylines project completed and videos launched - Briefing to MSPs for before end of parliamentary term - Working with new Young Advisors starting who have a lot of energy and enthusiasm and a wide range of interests. Challenge: - Ongoing capacity issues in the small team which impacts on delivery. Together with the wider capacity issues across the office. **Strategy:** Highlights: - Our new Young Advisors starting is a highlight. We have held two in person sessions and online sessions. There are a diverse range of interests. - Pilot for digital engagement group with children and young people. If this is a success then intend to expand it. - New Parliament – monitoring this to get an idea of shape of new communications and priorities. Programme for Government is not due until September. - Child Rights Impact Assessment in relation to the proposal for an online ban for social media. - Consultation work is ongoing. It is a very busy period with the Scottish Government issuing many consultations	

	before the end of the previous Parliament. - Engagement work around the cost of being a young person. - Policy work in relation to the UNCRC is ongoing including around the Children's Scheme, the Norrie review and Scottish Government priority review. - SMT have been doing a lot of work around budget planning not just for this year but future projections to align with our statutory functions. Challenge: - Capacity remains an issue. - New Parliament is a highlight but also a challenge given the public sector reform agenda. This is helpful but will take a lot of focus to engage and add value to it. **Corporate Services:** Noted capacity is an issue while we are preparing our annual report and accounts. This is having an impact on the capacity of SMT.	
7. Policies for Noting or Approval	**Visitor policy:** Policy approved and to be circulated to staff by Head of Legal. Executive Assistant to take practical steps that are required for the policy.	HofL. EA
8. Annual Planner	Reviewed at June Governance meeting and on track.	
9. Health, Safety and Welfare	**First aiders:** We currently have five first aiders. There are also first aiders across the offices at Bridgeside House that can assist. Head of Corporate Services is scheduled for training in	EA

	August. SMT agreed Commissioner would be a helpful role for first aid training.	
10. Date of next meeting	26 August 2026	