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Scottish Information Commissioner

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4 June 2019

Dear Daren

SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT ACTION PLAN

Thank you for meeting me on 30 May 2019 to discuss the Scottish Government's progress with implementation of our Action Plan.

I wanted to follow up those discussions with a written update on the roll out of the plan. In January 2019, we agreed our new Criteria for Decision-Making, Roles and Responsibilities. This has provided the foundation for improvements we are making to help all staff to get the handling of information requests right first time, on time.

Implementation has gathered pace in recent months with the development of our test triage process, the preparation of core skills training for case handlers and the completion of our first phase of improvement workshops.

Our first cohort of designated case handlers has now been identified and will be trained in core skills for case handling this month. I am grateful to your team for the support in quality assuring the training materials. In addition, I am pleased that your team has noted that our case handlers are highly engaged in conversations about improvement and development of their skills through our new FOI Network.

As we have discussed, the implementation of the Action Plan requires a significant change programme involving all our Directorates and Agencies. The timescales set out for individual actions were necessarily indicative, and our improvement work continues to be iterative. The FOI Improvement Project anticipates that the most significant changes – the designation and training of all our case handlers, and the roll out of our new triage process – will be in place by end November 2019.

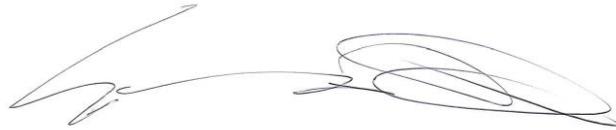
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I am sure you will share my view that it is fundamentally important that we take time to engage with our staff in making the right changes to deliver a new case handling system capable of improving both performance and quality. Supporting our staff to become confident and able case handlers, valued for their knowledge and skills, is key to our improvement journey.

I do share your disappointment that performance continues to be an issue for some parts of our organisation. I have noted that performance for responding to requests within statutory timescales was around 91% in the first four months of this year; it will be challenging to meet this year's target of 95% at the same time as delivering our change programme. I am grateful for your recognition that it will take time for the changes to have the full impact on performance and quality. I will continue to stress the need for compliance with statutory timescales while we implement the Action Plan.

I hope that this is of assistance and I would like to thank your team for the support it continues to provide to the Scottish Government.

Yours sincerely



GRAEME DEY

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