



Executive Advisory Body

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| Date of Meeting | Tuesday 20 August 2019 |
| Time | 12:30 – 15:00 |
| Location | Meeting Room 4.7, Dundee House |

Attendees

Present

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| David Wallace (DW) | Chief Executive, Social Security Scotland (Chair) |
| Chris Creegan (CC) | Non-Executive Body Member (by phone) |
| Douglas Hutchens (DHU) | Non-Executive Body Member (by phone) |
| Elaine Noad (EN) | Non-Executive Body Member |
| Ewan Gurr (EG) | Non-Executive Body Member |
| Jessica Burns (JB) | Non-Executive Body Member |
| Laura Brennan-Whitefield (LBW) | Non-Executive Body Member |
| Ally McPhail (AM) | Head of Corporate Services |
| James Wallace (JW) | Head of Finance |
| Miriam Craven (MC) | Head of Local Delivery and Client Experience |
| Mo Rooney (MR) | Head of Governance and Strategy |
| Tracy McIntyre (TM) | Head of Operations |

In attendance

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| Russell Frith (RF) | Non-Executive Chair of the Audit and Assurance Committee |
| NB | Deputy Head of Finance (Item 4-7) |
| ML | Assistant Governance & Business Manager (Item 8) |

Observers

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| AC | Transformation & Change Co-ordinator |
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Secretariat

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| AP | Governance and Business Co-ordinator |
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1. Welcome & Conflicts of Interest

- 1.1. The Chair welcomed and thanked Members for their attendance, no conflicts of interest were expressed.

2. Previous Minutes and Actions

- 2.1. The minutes of the meeting held on 09 July 2019 were discussed and approved and will now be published on the Social Security Scotland website.
- 2.2. The continued engagement, learning and development of Non-Executive Members was discussed as an action was raised at the last meeting. It was agreed that this should be carried over to a future meeting.

3. Chair's Update

- 3.1. The Chair provided an update on key developments since the last meeting of the Executive Advisory Body.
- 3.2. The recruitment exercise for Deputy Directors posts is now complete. DW advised that he is expecting ~~offers to be made to successful~~ candidates to be informed shortly.
- 3.3. TM then gave a brief update on the delivery of Social Security Scotland's first recurring benefit; Best Start Grant Foods.

4. Finance Report

- 4.1. NB joined the meeting to discuss the Finance Report, detailing the first quarter of this year.
- 4.2. Executive Advisory Body members then discussed the Report, some seeking clarification on figures listed in the Annex.

5. Balanced Scorecard

- 5.1. MR presented July's Balanced Scorecard.
- 5.2. Executive Advisory Body Members were invited to comment on the Balanced Scorecard. Comments received related to the presentation of data and how the data presented was defined, collated and explained.
- 5.3. When discussing HR data represented in the Scorecard, AM noted that the People Report will be presented to the Executive Advisory Body at a later date, and additional more detailed HR measures would be included in that report. AM



emphasised that HR data was extracted from existing Scottish Government systems and we could only report on what those systems currently held. He was happy to receive suggestions on what specific HR measures Executive Advisory Body members would find useful.

Decision Members to consider what should be included in the People Report and send any suggestions to the Secretariat.

6. Benefits Update

6.1. The Funeral Support Payment - TM advised that work had started around training for staff. MC highlighted that information roadshows are being run, jointly between Agency and Scottish Government Policy colleagues with stakeholders, and that the teams are engaging with people through Webinars and other means to promote this benefit.

6.2. Scottish Child Payment - Work on-going to assess full impact, refine volume and staffing numbers with Analysts.

6.2-6.3. ~~Client and recruitment~~ Adviser recruitment had started in Glasgow ~~for staff.~~

6.3-6.4. Members agreed that this is a useful standing agenda item, and that discussion might helpfully be supported by a paper.

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| Action | MR | Supporting paper to be provided going forward. |
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7. Annual Report and Accounts

7.1. JW gave an overview of the process to date.

7.2. JW asked members to approve the delegation of the formal recommendation on the accounts to the Accountable Officer to the Audit and Assurance Committee. It was noted that this aligns with the approval process used by Scottish Government.

7.3. DW brought the item to a close by asking if the Executive Advisory Body were content to delegate to the Audit and Assurance Committee: Members agreed with this approach.

Decision Formal recommendation on the accounts to the Accountable Officer delegated to the Audit and Assurance Committee



8. Freedom of Information Improvement Plan

- 8.1. ML joined the meeting to present Social Security Scotland's Freedom of Information (FOI) Improvement Plan.
- 8.2. ML gave an overview of the paper and provided some explanation of it.
- 8.3. MR explained that tactical short term measures were being deployed alongside the planning and development of a wider, strategic approach to improvement.
- 8.4. ML gave specific examples of actions being taken to improve FOI performance within the Agency. This included the plan to establish a central FOI team, with dedicated case handlers in place across the organisation.
- 8.5. The Executive Advisory Body were then invited to comment on the plan.
- 8.6. It was suggested that more information on FOI should come to the Executive Advisory Body such as:
 - The volume of requests received;
 - Where requests are coming from; and
 - The nature of requests received.
- 8.7. This will encourage a broader and more informed discussion going forward.
- 8.8. The Executive Advisory Body agreed that this should come to a future meeting alongside an update on the Improvement Plan.

Decision Freedom of Information item to be brought to meetings more regularly and with more detail.

9. EAB Forward Planner

- 9.1. The Forward Planner was discussed, and Members were invited to add items.
- 9.2. MC noted that her team are going to look at the timings of publications and local delivery dates and will update in due course.

10. Any Other Business

- 10.1. AM gave an update on the process of procuring both additional interim and permanent accommodation for Social Security Scotland's Glasgow and Dundee offices.



Date of next meeting: Tuesday 01 October 2019