

**Releasable under Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 after the next meeting of the Executive Board**

**EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING**

**MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 14 MARCH 2018**

**CONFERENCE ROOM 1 CROWN OFFICE**

<b>Present:</b> (Chair)	David Harvie John Logue John Dunn Lindsey Miller Ian Walford John Cooper Douglas Hutchens Fiona McLean Lesslie Young	Crown Agent Deputy Crown Agent, Operational Support Deputy Crown Agent, Local Court Deputy Crown Agent, Serious Casework Deputy Chief Executive Non-executive director Non-executive director Non-executive director Non-executive director
<b>In attendance:</b>	Mairi Boyle Stephen Woodhouse	Legal Assistant to Crown Agent Director of Finance
<b>Apologies:</b>	Rob Tinlin	Non-executive director

**Agenda Item 1 - Welcome**

1. As the Crown Agent had been detained in another meeting Lindsey Miller opened the meeting and welcomed everyone.
2. Members confirmed that there were no conflicts of interest.
3. The Crown Agent joined the meeting and said that the next meeting on 11 April would be held at the Procurator Fiscal Office, Dumbarton, as part of the board programme of visiting offices around the country.

**Agenda Item 2 - Minutes of Previous Meeting, Matters Arising / Updates**

4. The minutes of 07 February 2018 were agreed and can be published.
5. DCA Local Court provided the Board with information about the "Keeping the Conversation Going" roadshows he was leading to engage with staff about current issues, including Fair Futures, and to listen to staff feedback, for example about opportunities for rotation. DCA Serious Casework plans to carry out a similar exercise.
6. In relation to Item 2 the DCE explained that staff who had left the organisation had been contacted and asked to complete a questionnaire. Their responses will be collated.
7. In respect of Item 11 DCA Operational Support explained that a draft Strategic Plan and background material would be distributed after the meeting. Various developments in recent months had impacted the timing of this.

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**Agenda Item 3 – Resources update**

8. The Resources Committee last met on 02 March 2018.
9. There had been a discussion about agile working at the Committee. There will be an exercise to assess the extent to which alternative working patterns are being used and to make proposals about how we develop these whilst meeting business needs.
10. Though COPFS is not required to report on gender pay gap figures in 2018 figures had been presented at the Committee.

**Action: DCA Operational Support to provide a further update to the Board in advance of COPFS reporting its figures in 2019.**

11. The Board noted that Estates work was on budget and on time.

**Agenda Item 4 – Finance update**

12. There was discussion about the 2017/18 Overview in relation to ongoing civil litigation for which provision may have to be made and post mortem examination funding. DCA Serious Casework explained the interim measures in place with pathology providers and the discussions underway to ensure appropriate contracts are in place from May 2018 and for FY 2019/20.

**Agenda Item 5 – Budget planning**

13. The DCE talked through the budget planning paper and clarified a number of points raised by the non-executive directors. The non-executive directors commented on the budget being presented in isolation from a strategic or business plan. During debate it was agreed that COPFS would aim to move to a system that produced a plan, possibly on a rolling basis and from which the budget would be set based on objectives set within the plan.
14. Debate then moved on to the details of the budget paper under discussion. Based on assumptions about budget for the coming 2 FYs COPFS would be able to retain staff at the current level even taking into account the increase to public sector pay. Investment is now being delegated to the 3 Functions to control. The Functions will also take responsibility for making decisions about temporary promotions. This will be monitored by the Resources Committee and Workforce Planning Group.
15. DCA Operational Support provided an update on the transfer of staff from Local Court to Serious Casework. The analysis of the resources that would require to be reallocated was a significant piece of work that went beyond the immediate needs of the Sexual Offence Teams.

**Action: DCA Operational Support to provide update and analysis at the April meeting of the Board.**

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**Agenda Item 6 – Balanced scorecard and absence figures**

16. The Board noted the continued reduction in numbers of staff on long term sickness absence and the high figures for service delivery in areas such as FOISA requests. It was agreed that in future figures for service delivery could be presented in such a way that shows comparison with previous years.

**Agenda Items 7 and 10 – Business improvement update; CMiC**

17. DCA Local Court provided an update on the last meeting of the Business Improvement Committee on 27 February. He highlighted the progress with CMiC which will start to roll out in summer 2018.

**Agenda Item 8 – Operational performance update**

18. The Operational Performance Committee met on 27 February. DCA Serious Casework indicated that, since then, there had been an unexpectedly high number of suspicious deaths reported, most of which are clearly homicide, and some of which are of particular complexity.

19. All published targets for case processing will be met.

20. Sheriff & Jury reform has had a positive impact and has affected the amount of court time required. By contrast there is a proposal to reduce the High Court programme when COPFS estimate that additional trial time will be required in 2018.

**Action: Crown Agent to address this at the SCTS Board meeting.**

**Agenda Item 9 – Audit and Risk update**

21. The Board noted that Internal Audit are moving to address strategic as well as operational issues. The Committee had had a helpful update from Anthony McGeehan on risks associated with Brexit and an assurance that COPFS is managing these risks as far as possible. COPFS is likely to require dedicated resource to deal with this issue.

**AOB**

22. The Board were advised that COPFS had been named the top public sector employee in Scotland by Stonewall for the fifth year in a row.

23. The Crown Agent noted that this was the last board that Douglas would attend and thanked him for his thoughtful advice and contribution.

**Crown Agent's Office  
April 2018**