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EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 28 JUNE 2017

CONFERENCE ROOM, PFO, ABERDEEN

Present: (Chair) David Harvie Crown Agent
John Logue Deputy Crown Agent, Operational Support
John Dunn Deputy Crown Agent, Local Court
Ian Walford Deputy Chief Executive
Lindsey Miller Deputy Crown Agent, Serious Casework

In attendance: Andy Shanks PF, Grampian, Highlands and Islands
Coleen Foster Business Manager, Grampian
Ann Marie Henderson Personal Assistant to Crown Agent

Apologies: Lesslie Young Non-Executive Director
Douglas Hutchens Non-Executive Director
Stephen Woodhouse Finance Director
Maria Kicinski Legal Assistant to Crown Agent

Agenda Item 1 - Welcome

1. The Crown Agent opened and welcomed everyone to the meeting, including Andy Shanks as PF for Grampian, Highlands and Islands and Coleen Foster as Business Manager for Grampian.
2. Apologies were noted from Douglas Hutchens, Lesslie Young, Stephen Woodhouse and Maria Kicinski. In the absence of any non-executive directors it was agreed that the preparation of the minutes of this meeting would be expedited and shared with the non-executive directors for comment. The Board noted that the advert for 3 non-executive directors will be published at the end of this week.
3. Members confirmed that there were no conflicts of interest.
4. Audit and Risk Committee minutes of 22 May will feature on the agenda at the next Executive Board meeting.

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

5. The minutes of 31 May 2017 were agreed and can be published. The Board agreed that the minutes of 22 March 2017 and 04 May 2017 can be published.
6. Outstanding Action: HR to provide advice on the policies and numbers on long term absences in other departments. HR provided an analysis which reflects that COPFS

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long term sickness levels are at 64%, which is slightly higher than some other organisations. Most long term absences relate to serious illness or mental health.

7. Optima took over as the OH provider in April 2017. Referrals are now reducing. The Board recognised that there was a downward trend in sickness levels.
8. DCE to confirm whether Optima consult with staff exclusively by telephone or whether face to face meetings are an option.

Agenda Item 3 – Justice Committee

9. The Crown Agent provided an update on the Parliamentary Debate on the the Justice Committee Inquiry into COPFS which took place on 06 June 2017.
10. As set out in the message to staff the Lord Advocate praised staff in COPFS for all their hard work.
11. The Executive Board welcomed the praise for staff by all parties during the debate.
12. The Board discussed the key issues arising from the Inquiry.

Agenda Item 4 – Operational Performance Update

13. The Committee met on 20 June 2017.
14. High Court are currently monitoring a spike in sexual crime petitions.
15. From next month Internal Audit will be looking at KPI's. The OPC is working on KPI's. Proposals will be submitted to the Committee, with an update being provided to the Board at the September meeting.
16. There are 14,608 unmarked cases which reflects 4 weeks working in hand; 3,700 cases on average a month are received. The Committee will consider, at their next meeting in August, whether the "red flag" trigger requires to be recalibrated. There is likely to be an increase in the number of unmarked cases due to annual leave.
17. The Board was pleased to note that only 7% of Sheriff and Jury cases are now over 7 months old. This figure is expected to drop to 2% over the next few months.
18. There has not been any significant reduction in new petitions following the Prosecution Policy Review. The PPR Board are keeping a close eye on this, with further analysis at Local Court level.
19. Work is continuing to develop more consistent management information for Specialist Casework.
20. The Board were provided with an update on the current Pathology and Mortuary contracts and noted there are currently staffing difficulties in two provider areas.

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21. All current providers have been given notice that their contracts will be terminated as of April 2018 and new contracts negotiated.

Agenda Item 5 – Resources Update

22. The Committee have not met since the last Board meeting on 31 May 2017.

Balanced Scorecard and Absence Information

23. The Board noted the figures provided up to the end of May 2017. The balanced scorecard and absence information will feature as an agenda item on a quarterly basis.

24. The Board noted a downward trend in short term absences.

Finance Update

25. Audit Scotland have completed their accounts, which will be formally signed off at the Audit & Risk Committee meeting on 07 July.

26. The staffing position is now stabilising as a result of recent promotion boards and the appointment of staff to permanent rather than fixed term contracts.

27. The Board noted that the £100,000 tolerance set by the previous Lord Advocate has been removed

Estates Strategy Project Board

28. The Board considered the Estates Strategy Mandate, noting that the timescales were dictated by the expiry of leases and/or lease breaks.

29. The Sub Group will make recommendations on each of the 15 offices over the next 5 years.

30. The first decisions will be required at the next Executive Board.

31. Local Court will lead on implementing the decisions made by the Board, working collaboratively with other Functions.

Agenda Item 6 – Business Improvement Update

32. The Business Improvement Committee have not met since the last Board meeting on 31 May.

**Crown Agent's Office
July 2017**