

Executive Advisory Body

Date of Meeting	Tuesday 11 December
Time	13:00-14:50
Location	Meeting Room 6.5, Dundee House

Attendees

Present

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

In attendance

KS	-	Strategic Communications Manager (Communications Paper)
Cheryl B	-	Social Researcher (People Survey and Management Information Paper)
Chris B	-	Organisational Strategy and Operational Policy Team Leader (Risk Management Strategy Paper)

Observers

SM	-	Model Office Product Lead
TC	-	Learning & Development Manager

Secretariat

CAH	-	Governance and Business Manager
AP	-	Governance and Business Support Officer



1. Welcome

- 1.1. The Chair welcomed and thanked all Members for their attendance. Brief introductions were made around the table.
- 1.2. It was noted that Social Security Scotland's critical friend is now standing down, and she was thanked for her time in the position, and contribution to the development of Social Security Scotland.

2. Previous Minutes and Actions

- 2.1. The minutes of the Executive Advisory Body held on 23 October 2018 were discussed and approved. There were no outstanding action points.
- 2.2. DH requested that for consistency across all corporate minutes, Advisory Body Members be listed as present, and that those presenting to the meeting be noted as in attendance.
- 2.3. The minutes will be published on the Social Security Scotland website.

3. Conflicts of interest

- 3.1. The Chair enquired whether any Members required to declare any potential conflicts of interest in relation to any agenda items. None were expressed.

4. Chair's Update

- 4.1. The Chair highlighted that the Best Start Grant launched on Monday 10 December, with all three application channels (Digital, phone and paper) going live and committed to provide a fuller outline of the launch under the agenda item later in the meeting.

5. Role of the Executive Advisory Body

- 5.1. MR presented the Terms of Reference and Code of Conduct to the Executive Advisory Body and invited Members to approve the drafts ahead of publication on the Social Security Scotland website.
- 5.2. MR highlighted a few small changes to the draft Terms of Reference presented at the previous meeting, noting that the updated version focuses more keenly on the advisory nature of the Non-Executive Member role.

- 5.3. Members recommended some minor changes to the document which were that:
- The ‘Corporate Plan’ item should come to the Executive Advisory Body more regularly than quarterly during the consultation on the Interim Corporate Plan;
 - Remove the number of Non-Executive Members in the Membership section to enable simple edits if adding to or removing Members.
- 5.4. Subject to these amendments, the Terms of Reference were approved by the Executive Advisory Body.
- 5.5. MR presented an overview of the Code of Conduct highlighting that this aimed to marry the Nolan Committee's seven principles of standards in public life with the Agency's values of Fairness, Dignity and Respect.
- 5.6. EN noted that she had previously sent feedback to the Business Support Office, which will be reflected through minor adjustments to the draft.
- 5.7. Again, the Executive Advisory Body were content to approve the Code subject to the amendments of:
- Lowering the threshold value for isolated gifts, in the Gifts and Hospitality Register, from £50 to £15;
 - Clarification in the Conflicts of Interests section, to prevent any perceived conflicts of interest which could lead to unintentional criticism;
 - Ensuring wording in paragraph 6.7 makes express reference to lobbying the Agency.

Decision	All	Updated Terms of Reference Approved
Decision	All	Code of Conduct Approved
Action	MR	Make minor changes to Terms of Reference as recommended by Members
Action	MR	Make minor changes to Code of Conduct as recommended by Members

6. Communication with Non-Executive Members

- 6.1. KS gave an overview of the proposals in the Communications paper and sought feedback from the Executive Advisory Body.
- 6.2. The “Media Summary” proposal was discussed, with Members highlighting that some context behind the articles would be helpful, with JB suggesting that this

would help clarify public and media perception of social security issues. KS confirmed that an appendix with additional context would be included.

- 6.3. Members agreed to the proposals in the paper and to begin their implementation as soon as possible and monitor their ongoing effectiveness.

Action	KS	Move forward with proposals in Communications document.
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KS left the meeting.

7. Risk Management Strategy

- 7.1. Chris B joined the meeting to present the Risk Management Strategy. Chris highlighted that this Strategy was discussed at the first meeting of the Audit and Assurance Committee on 13 November. He explained the Strategy aims to be an enabler for a positive risk management culture across the Agency.
- 7.2. Chris provided an overview of the Strategy explaining that this focuses on 3 levels of risk (business unit-level risks, project risks and strategic risks) in order to assist the Agency in the implementation and management of its functions.
- 7.3. He noted that work is currently on going to refine the Risk Register e.g. a series of workshops and consultation across the Directorate, and confirmed that some risks have now been transferred to the Agency from the Programme.
- 7.4. Chris went on to highlight that a key piece of information likely to be of interest to the EAB will be Risk Appetite scoring and confirmed that the Agency's will follow Scottish Government's risk guidance for its development.
- 7.5. JB noted that the effectiveness of this paper in practise may be related to the Agency's profiling ability. A discussion on the ownership of risk followed this, wherein Chris explained that a large number of risks still sit with the Programme and have not yet been transferred. DW added that although some risks may sit with the Programme, they could still be owned by the Agency as he, as a Social Security Programme Board member, could still be a 'risk owner' on the Programme Risk Register.
- 7.6. TM explained that the Agency Risk Register will be refined over time.
- 7.7. Members were content with the Strategy.

Chris B left the meeting.

8. People Survey

- 8.1. Cheryl B joined the meeting to present initial results from this year's Agency People Survey. Cheryl gave some background on the People Survey, noting that Agency people completed a standalone survey which mirrored to the Scottish Government approach.



- 8.2. The Executive Advisory Body were invited to note that the response rate for the survey was 97%, with an engagement index which was 85% positive, likely due to the launch as a new Agency.
- 8.3. Cheryl explained that as a result it is difficult to draw comparisons with findings from the last Divisional survey due to the Agency not being in existence at that point, and that work will be going on to establish the baseline position for the Agency.
- 8.4. A discussion over the questions included in the survey took place, with Cheryl explaining that the majority of questions were taken from the Scottish Government survey, with an additional section for Agency specific questions. EN noted that establishing Agency specific questions will enable a meaningful baseline to be in place by year three.
- 8.5. MC stated that there is a lot of positive findings to be taken from these results, primarily, confirmation of what works within the Agency. Cheryl explained that results of note are already emerging, highlighting for example, that people reported a very positive feeling of a sense of belonging within the Agency.
- 8.6. DW asked if results would be published, Cheryl confirmed that they won't be this year as it is a standalone.
- 8.7. DH asked about overall people engagement within the Agency and suggested, for example, a staff annual conference. This was discussed by the Executive Advisory Body
- 8.8. DW welcomed the advice of Non-Executive Members on this, drawing on their wealth of experience of different organisations.
- 8.9. AM concluded the item by explaining that the People Strategy, including future engagement, is currently at consultation stage and will come to a future meeting of the Executive Advisory Body.



9. Management Information

- 9.1. Cheryl gave a brief overview of the Management Information paper and invited the Executive Advisory Body to comment.
- 9.2. TM suggested that it would be valuable to provide the context behind some of the data in the form of an Appendix to the paper, or via a verbal update at the Executive Advisory Body meeting.
- 9.3. AM raised that People Information may not always be updated. The information is released quarterly, so if it is reported to the EAB every six weeks the data will be static until the next quarter.
- 9.4. DW suggested that Management Information should be presented on a regular enough basis to allow Executive Advisory Body Members to become familiar with the information.
- 9.5. It was agreed that the report should continue to be tabled at meetings, supplemented by a quarterly report to enable a 'deep dive' into specific issues, for example, feedback. Cheryl suggested that the agenda item could then be presented by both the MI team and the feedback team who would be able to provide the context.
- 9.6. Further suggestions were made around the table in relation to the presentation of the information. Cheryl agreed to feed comments back to the Management Information team.

Cheryl B left the meeting.

10. Best Start Grant Go Live

- 10.1. DW lead this item, giving an update to Members on the launch of Scotland's first standalone devolved benefit; the Best Start Grant.
- 10.2. DW confirmed that all three systems went live as planned at midnight 9 Dec and that clients are able to submit applications via the three mechanisms of online, telephony and paper.
- 10.3. The overall volumes of applications have been higher than expected which has tested systems. Analysis is showing that the peak in the volume of applications has passed and is now levelling out. It is anticipated that the first payments will be made ahead of Christmas as planned.
- 10.4. TM drew attention to the huge effort from Operations, Learning and Development and Client Experience Teams, who have all come together to ensure that applications are being processed and highlighted the pride within the Agency by the response of its people.
- 10.5. DW acknowledged and praised the monumental effort from everyone involved.



10.6. DW concluded the item by confirming a formal Lessons Learned paper will be brought to the Executive Advisory Body in the near future, and that he will link up with the Transformation and Change Manager to arrange this.

Action	DW	Discuss Best Start Grant Lessons Learned paper with Transformation and Change Manager.
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11. Any Other Business

11.1. No other business was recorded.

Date of next meeting: Wednesday 23 January 2019

