



Executive Advisory Body

Date of Meeting	Tuesday 03 November 2020
Time	10.00 – 12:30
Location	Video conference

Attendees

Present

David Wallace (DW)	Chief Executive, Social Security Scotland (Chair)
Laura Brennan-Whitefield (LBW)	Non-Executive Member
Jessica Burns (JB)	Non-Executive Member
Chris Creegan (CC)	Non-Executive Member
Ewan Gurr (EG)	Non-Executive Member
Douglas Hutchens (DH)	Non-Executive Member
Elaine Noad (EN)	Non-Executive Member
Russell Frith (RF)	Independent Chair of Audit & Assurance Committee
Andy McClintock (AM)	Chief Digital Officer
James Wallace (JW)	Deputy Director of Finance and Corporate Services
Paul Knight (PK)	Head of Clinical Operations
Janet Richardson (JR)	Deputy Director of Operations and Local Delivery

In Attendance

DP	Governance Team Leader
NM	Corporate Assurance Lead (Item 3)
ML	Organisational Strategy Manager (Equalities) (Item 3)
RM	Head of Client Experience (Item 4)
AB	Inclusive Communications Expert Advisor (Item 4)

Observing

GD	Head of Corporate Strategy and Communications
DS	Business Support Manager for James Wallace
OB	Business Support Officer for James Wallace
LJR	Operations Manager



NC Operational Guidance Co-ordinator

Secretariat Governance and Business Co-ordinator

Apologies

Miriam Craven (MC) Deputy Director of Strategy and Client Experience

1. Welcome and Conflicts of Interest

- 1.1. The Chair, David Wallace (DW), welcomed and thanked everyone for their attendance.
- 1.2. Members did not highlight any potential conflicts of interest.
- 1.3. The Executive Advisory Body formally congratulated DW on securing the position of Chief Executive of Social Security Scotland.
- 1.4. The Executive Advisory Body endorsed the minutes of the last meeting. In line with our commitment to proactively publish the agenda, meeting papers, minutes and action tracker, we will publish these on the Social Security Scotland website within twelve weeks of this meeting.

2. Chair's Update

- 2.1. DW noted Dundee entered level 3 of the new tiered approach to COVID-19. Janet Richardson (JR) advised that support remains in place for staff, using a tailored approach for those returning to the office environment.
- 2.2. DW advised the members of senior structure changes within the Scottish Government. The Permanent Secretary has created an additional Director-General post. Social Security Scotland will sit under a new Director-General Communities post with Paul Johnson taking over as that DG and our Portfolio Accountable Officer. The change would happen early in 2021. The Social Security Directorate will also transfer and Stephen Kerr, SG Director Social Security, will continue as our Portfolio Sponsor.

DW reminded members that the Chief Digital Office will transfer to Social Security Scotland as of 1 April 2021. The Chief Digital Office will continue to provide support to the Social Security Programme.

Action	-	No actions noted from this item.
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3. Social Security Scotland Approach to Equality



- 3.1. DW invited NM to introduce the Social Security Scotland Approach to Equality.
- 3.2. NM provided an overview of the paper and the intention to publish three equality publications in the spring of 2021.
 - Equality Strategy.
 - Mainstreaming Equalities Report.
 - Set of Equality outcomes.

The aim of this paper is to seek advice from the members to inform the final strategic direction of these publications.

NM introduced ML to lead on the four key questions noted in the paper. ML opened for questions and comments.

- The Executive Advisory Body discussed and noted the content of the report. A member of Executive Advisory Body was volunteered as a ‘critical friend’ for the work.

Action	Decision	Elaine Noad nominated as critical friend to support the development of the equality framework.
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4. Social Security Scotland Inclusive Communications Update

- 4.1. DW invited RM to provide the Social Security Scotland Inclusive Communications Update.
- 4.2. RM advised the members that the update follows on from the session held on the 18 August 2020. RM highlighted that there is a keen desire to improve inclusive communications across Social Security Scotland and include colleagues within the Social Security Directorate. RM reflected on the need to actively test our approach with people who communicate in different ways. This will help to understand and address barriers, and embed inclusive communication as a key part of organisational culture. RM noted the key activities and assets outlined in the paper and introduced AB to the members.
- 4.3. AB advised members of the activities being taken forward to ensure that Social Security Scotland’s workforce is skilled and knowledgeable about inclusive communication. This includes development of training and guidance.
- 4.4. Members noted the following;
 - A real interest in the work underway to develop Social Security Scotland’s unacceptable actions policy. Technology barriers – need to consider suitable ways to signpost people who may need additional support.
 - Project Board on Estates – inclusive communications should be actively integrated.
- 4.5. The Executive Advisory Body noted the contents and were encouraged by all the work taking place on this topic. The members agreed they would like another update scheduled.



Action	Secretariat	To schedule an Inclusive Communications Update in 2021.
Action	Miriam Craven	To share more information about unacceptable actions.

5. Social Security Scotland Audit and Assurance Committee Annual Report 2019-20

- 5.1. DW invited Russell Frith (RF) to update Members on the Audit and Assurance Committee Annual Report 2019-20.
- 5.2. RF was pleased to present the 2019-20 Annual Report and Accounts to the Executive Advisory Body. The accounts have a regularity qualification for Carer's Allowance delivered by the DWP.
- 5.3. The Executive Advisory Body noted the contents of the Audit and Assurance Committee Annual Report 2019-20.

Action	-	No actions noted from this item.
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6. Any other Business

- 6.1. JR provided an update on Scottish Child Payment and Child Disability Payment readiness, noting the following;
 - Child Winter Heating Assistance to start with the first payments going out from Friday 27 November and to be completed by Friday 11 December.
 - Scottish Child Payment opens for applications on 9 November 2020. Payments would be made in 2021. Phone lines are operational and will be open Monday to Friday from 0800 – 1800.
- 6.2. The members noted the following papers included as below the line items.
 - Social Security Scotland Freedom of Information Performance Update – August – October 2020
 - Social Security Scotland Finance Report – Half Year to end September 2020
 - Social Security Scotland Balanced Scorecard - October 2019 – September 2020
- 6.3. DW thanked everybody for attending the meeting.

Date of next meeting: Tuesday 26 January 2021



Action(AP)/Decision(DP)	Detail	Owner	Due Date	Status
AP – 07/07/2020 - 02	Circulate the final draft of the People Strategy with the Executive Advisory Body members once completed.	James Wallace	February 2021	The People Plan is going to the Executive Team on the 22 December and will follow to Executive Advisory Body thereafter.
DP – 03/11/2020 – 01	Elaine Noad nominated as critical friend to support the development of the equality framework.	The Executive Advisory Body	-	Noted and Agreed
AP – 03/11/2020 - 01	To schedule an Inclusive Communications Update in 2021	Secretariat	-	Completed
AP – 03/11/2020 - 01	To share more information about unacceptable actions.	Miriam Craven	9 March 2021	Miriam Craven to share information once collated.