

Portfolio Sponsor Meeting

Date of Meeting	Thursday, 7 January 2021
Time	13:00 – 14:00
Location	Remotely

Attendees

Present

Stephen Kerr (SK)	Director of Social Security (Portfolio Sponsor) and Chair
David Wallace (DW)	Chief Executive, Social Security Scotland
James Wallace (JW)	Deputy Director of Finance and Corporate Services
Miriam Craven (MC)	Deputy Director of Strategy and Client Experience
Paul Knight (PK)	Head of Clinical Operations
Janet Richardson (JR)	Deputy Director of Operations and Local Delivery
Andy McClintock (AM)	Chief Digital Officer

Secretariat

David Perkins (DP)	Governance Team Leader
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Apologies

Kirsten Sweeney (KS)	Strategic Communications Lead
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1. Welcome

- 1.1. SK wished everyone a Happy New Year and welcomed everyone to the first Portfolio Sponsor meeting of 2021.

2. Minutes of previous meeting

- 2.1. The minutes from the previous meeting of November 23 2020, were approved and the chair noted that actions from the previous meeting would be addressed as part of the substantive agenda item on business planning for 2021.

3. Scottish Government update from the Chair

- 3.1. SK gave an update on key activity across Scottish Government, including updated timescales for the Scottish Budget and a detailed update on the latest position in relation to COVID-19 and its impact. SK reminded those present of the latest Scottish Government 'Lockdown' Guidance and the need to observe the current rules. SK highlighted the ongoing need for quality assurance, at Deputy Director level, of any briefing going to the First Minister.

4. Social Security Scotland Updates: Chief Executive and the (Agency) Executive Team

- 4.1. The Chief Executive began by setting out the audit and assurance regime that is in place for Social Security Scotland, proportionate to a delivery agency of its size and scale.
- 4.2. PK provided an update on preparations for Child Disability Benefit, including the plans for recruitment to the clinical function.
- 4.3. MC highlighted activity within the Corporate Services function including a range of governance improvement activity.
- 4.4. JR provided an overview of operations and performance over the Christmas period across all of the current live benefits.
- 4.5. JW updated the meeting on readiness for Scottish Child Payment including technical systems of control and accurate maintenance of the accounting records.

5. Business planning for 2021

- 5.1. Building on DW's earlier update on the ongoing programme of agency audit and assurance, SK recognised the need as Portfolio Sponsor to have regular sight of current and ongoing audit activity. (ACTION – Build in regular standing item on audit and assurance into the Portfolio Sponsor meeting calendars, synchronised with the audit and assurance committee business cycle)
- 5.2. There was a consensus on the need to further develop the existing balanced scorecard system of reporting. (ACTION – DP to arrange meeting with SK and analytical colleagues to develop reporting requirements. New reporting arrangements to begin June 2021)
- 5.3. The discussion identified the following substantive items for discussion at Portfolio Sponsor meetings: recruitment and agency growth over the next 12-18 months (workforce planning) and interactions with Scottish Government HR in the context of shared services re-design. (ACTION – DP to update the Portfolio Sponsor Calendar of Business)

6. Update on Agency communications

- 6.1. MC provided an update on Social Security Scotland's communications activity including the planned all staff call on 19 January and a planned session with colleagues in the Chief Digital Office on transition.

7. Any other business

- 7.1. None.

Date of next meeting: 22 February 2021