

Portfolio Sponsor Meeting

Date of Meeting	Tuesday, 18 May 2021
Time	15:45 – 17:10
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 Strategy, Change, Data & Engagement
Paul Knight (PK)	Chief Officer, Health and Social Care Operations
Janet Richardson (JR)	Deputy Director of Operations
Andy McClintock (AMC)	Chief Digital Officer
Ally MacPhail (AMP)	Head of Corporate Services
Kirsten Sweeney (KS)	Strategic Communications Lead

Secretariat

David Perkins (DP)	Governance and Strategy Team Leader
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1. Welcome

- 1.1. SK welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2. Minutes of previous meeting

- 2.1. SK noted that the approved minutes from the previous meeting of 29 March 2021 had been published and confirmed the two outstanding action points from this meeting had been addressed.

3. Scottish Government update from the Chair

- 3.1. SK gave an update on key activity across Scottish Government, including the announcement of the new First Minister. Pending announcements of a new cabinet and subsequent Ministerial appointments, SK reminded colleagues of the Parliamentary conventions relating to the appointment of new Ministers.
- 3.2. SK reiterated the focus of the new administration on the pace and delivery of its manifesto commitments.

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

- 4.1. AMP began by setting out the latest position in relation to Social Security Scotland recruitment and provided an overview of the fit out work underway at the new Dundee Headquarters, Agnes Husband House.
- 4.2. AMC provided an update to the Portfolio Sponsor on the new cloud-based telephony platform, including contract management.
- 4.3. JR set out the position in relation to the delivery of Scottish Child Payment, current performance and processing times. SK congratulated JR and her team on strong performance.
- 4.4. MC updated Portfolio Sponsor on the work of the Policy and Cases Forum in building strong links between the policy teams within the Social Security Directorate of Scottish Government, Scottish Government's legal teams and case decision-makers within Social Security Scotland.
- 4.5. PK provided an update on recruitment to the clinical teams necessary to support the Child Disability Payment, with the first starts for the pilot due in early June. SK explored the potential impact of virtual working on the introduction of a new team/ function to the agency.

5. Social Security Business Plan 2021-22 overview

- 5.1. DW provided a brief overview of the Business Plan for this financial year, structured around three key strategic themes and the priority attached to delivery, including delivery of new benefits.
- 5.2. DW highlighted the joint-working that had gone in to producing the document and the strong organisational ties that help ensure that Scottish Government priorities are reflected in the document. Once approved and published, the Portfolio Sponsor meetings would include progress against the priorities in the plan.

6. Social Security Finance update

- 6.1. JW led a discussion of the outline position for the financial year 2021/22. JW highlighted the volume and timing of staff joining the organisation this year as a potential budgetary risk given the sheer scale and growth in personnel, however this was being mitigated through detailed planning for the next six month period.
- 6.2. Previous techniques for planning have proven effective as evidenced by the reasonable assurance given to Social Security Scotland by auditors in the last financial year. ACTION POINT (DP to copy budget paper to SK)

7. Internal audit updates

- 7.1. MC set out the extensive work that goes into internal audit, the number of days with which we are engaged with internal audit as an organisation and the

complex role of our corporate assurance team in tracking any subsequent recommendations.

- 7.2. MC reflected on some of the previous learning from internal audit recommendations that is being taken into the launch and delivery of child and adult disability benefit payments.
- 7.3. SK commented on the breadth and scope of internal audit activity and highlighted the importance of developing wider links with the new DG Communities portfolio.

8. Update on Agency communications

- 8.1. KS provided a brief update on strategic communications.

Date of next meeting: 22 June 2021