



Executive Advisory Body

Date of Meeting	Tuesday 5 October 2021
Time	10.00 – 12:30
Location	Video conference

Attendees

Present

David Wallace (DW)	Chief Executive, Social Security Scotland
Chris Creegan (CC)	Non-Executive Member (Chair)
Laura Brennan-Whitefield (LBW)	Non-Executive Member
Elaine Noad (EN)	Non-Executive Member
Barry Matheson	Non-Executive Member
Naghat Ahmed	Non-Executive Member
Russell Frith	Non-Executive Member
Andy McClintock (AMC)	Chief Digital Officer
James Wallace (JW)	Deputy Director of Finance and Corporate Services
Miriam Craven (MC)	Deputy Director of Strategy, Change, Data and Engagement
Janet Richardson (JR)	Deputy Director of Client Services Delivery
AM	Head of Corporate Services

In Attendance

CE	Principle Research Officer
FC	Social Researcher
NR	Head of Organisational Design, Human Resources, Business Partnering and People Engagement
MG	Strategic People Engagement Lead
AM	Governance Manager

Observing

CM	Operations Support Lead
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MB Corporate Assurance Manager

Apologies

Paul Knight (PK) Health and Social Care Division

Secretariat Assistant Governance Manager

1. Welcome and Conflicts of Interest

- 1.1. The Chair, Chris Creegan (CC), welcomed and thanked everyone for their attendance.
- 1.2. CC formally welcomed the new Non-Executives, Naghat Ahmed (NA), Barry Matheson (BM) and Russell Frith (RF) to their first meeting of the Executive Advisory Body.
- 1.3. CC noted apologies from Paul Knight (PK) and welcomed CM and MB invited as observers for today's meeting.
- 1.4. Members did not highlight any potential conflicts of interest.
- 1.5. The Executive Advisory Body endorsed the minutes from the last meeting on the 8 June 2021.
- 1.6. EN asked for closed action to be removed from the tracker.

Action	Secretariat	To remove closed actions from the tracker.
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2. Chief Executive's Update

- 2.1. DW noted the following;
 - DW welcomed NA, BM and RF to Social Security Scotland, noting he was delighted to have them join the Executive Advisory Body.
 - Programme for Government – DW noted the [Programme for Government](#) has been published and sets out the actions to be taken in the coming year and beyond, including the legislative programme for the next Parliamentary year.
 - Growth of Social Security Scotland – DW noted the launch of our volume recruitment process as announced by First Minister in Agnes Husband House, providing an economic benefit to Scotland. AM provided a brief update, noting the first tranche of recruitment launched on the 29 September 2021. The

Executive Advisory Body requested a future session to discuss the new recruitment process in addition to sharing post recruitment diversity and demographics with the Executive Advisory Body.

- People Survey– DW noted the annual People Survey is now live. Results will be shared with the Executive Advisory Body in the new year.
- DW advised we are starting to welcome more staff back into our buildings, including Agnes Husband House, for essential preparations for the national launch of Child Disability Payment. Numbers are restricted by on-going fit out work and social distancing requirements. DW noted we are not planning a more general return to buildings until 2022 and we will continue to follow the COVID-19 guidance issued by Scottish Government.
- DW noted we will soon be starting pilots with different parts of the business to trial different working arrangements along with how we best use our accommodation and facilities as part of the Our Ways of Working Project. These will be designed to help us understand the hybrid working model that best fits our client, business and staff needs.
- Independent Advocacy Service – DW noted the Independent Advocacy Service for disabled people, accessing Scottish Social Security benefits, has now been awarded. The service will be operational in the new year and is independent of Social Security Scotland.

Action	AM	To arrange a deep-dive session to discuss the new recruitment process.
Action	AM	Once recruitment is complete the demographics and diversity data are to be shared with the Executive Advisory Body.
Action	Secretariat	To share the People Survey results with the Executive Advisory Body in the new year 2022.

3. Social Security Scotland Child Disability Payment Progress

- 3.1. CC invited Janet Richardson (JR) to provide the verbal update on the progress of Social Security Scotland Child Disability Payment Pilot. JR noted the update provided progress from the 26 July 2021 ahead of the national launch on the 22 November 2021.
- 3.2. JR advised applications are being accepted from the three pilot areas, Dundee, Perth and Kinross and the Western Isles and highlighted the following:-

- The majority of applications have been made through digital channels with a smaller proportion via paper application and over the phone.
- The majority of denied or withdrawn claims are due to applicants already in receipt of Disability Living Allowance Child from the Department for Work and Pensions. Those in receipt of Disability Living Allowance for Children will be transferred over to Child Disability Payment in due course.
- Work continues with Social Security Programme colleagues to ensure appropriate information gathering takes place during the application process, to help support the outcome of the application.

3.3. The Executive Advisory Body noted the following:

- The need to ensure clear communication with clients where applications have been withdrawn/denied due to receipt of Disability Living Allowance for Children. Social Security Scotland should ensure clients are made aware of the process when migrating clients from the Department for Work and Pensions to Social Security Scotland and the timescales associated with this.
- A request for additional detail on the number of applications from clients who have been previously denied a claim from the Department for Work and Pensions.
- Further breakdown of what people are claiming for, for example, auto immune diseases or mental health conditions.

3.4. JR advised a further update will come to the Executive Advisory Body which will cover the additional detail as noted above.

Action	JR	More detailed Child Disability Payment progress update for the Executive Advisory Body including the points noted in the minutes.
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4. Social Security Scotland Charter Measurement Framework – First Look

- 4.1. CC invited (MC) to introduce the Social Security Scotland Charter Measurement Framework item. MC advised the Charter Measurement Framework is a key piece of work for Social Security Scotland. The results of the Charter Measurement Framework will be published in full alongside the Annual Report and Accounts once approved by the Audit and Assurance Committee.
- 4.2. MC noted the purpose of the Charter Measurement Framework is to set out what people should expect from us, in doing so upholding the principles outlined in the Social Security Scotland (Scotland) Act 2018 and [Our Charter](#).

- 4.3. MC invited CE and FC to speak to the rest of the item. CE and FC presented an overview of the contents of the Charter Measurement Framework 2020-21 shared with the Executive Advisory Body ahead of today's meeting. This included data from a range of sources including the Client Surveys, conducted from the start of Social Security Scotland in 2018 up to March 2021, official statistics, the People Survey and bespoke research with clients, staff and partner organisations.
- 4.4. CE noted Our Charter was co-designed in 2018 with the people with lived experience of the relevant benefits and the Charter Measurement Framework was co-designed in 2019 with a smaller group of individuals. The framework tracks people's experiences of Social Security Scotland against the commitments in Our Charter.
- 4.5. CE noted the Research Team publish the framework annually. There was no research conducted in the spring and summer of 2021 due to the pandemic. So this is the first framework publication with findings from the Client Survey and bespoke research with clients, staff and partner organisations.
- 4.6. The Executive Advisory Body noted the following:
 - Lessons learned and changes in response, Social Security Scotland should provide more information on how the findings will be used for improvement. MC noted the results provide early sight, we will share the information and work this into the service design.
 - The large number of measures and lack of context could make it hard to draw conclusions. CE noted the measures were co-designed with those with lived experience, and the Charter and framework will be reviewed at the 5 year point, changes to the number and content of the measures will be considered then. CE also noted that the annual report draws on the framework to tell the performance story. And subsequent years will give trends over time.
- 4.7. The Executive Advisory Body noted the results overall look good and were pleased with the contents of the report.

Action	-	No actions noted for this item.
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5. Social Security Scotland Our Ways of Working Pulse Survey Results – Performance of the Organisation

- 5.1. CC invited JR to introduce the Social Security Scotland Our Ways of Working Pulse Survey Results. JR noted the Our Ways of Working project has been running for a couple of months and a pulse survey was conducted earlier this year to gather specific views from staff regarding their return to work.
- 5.2. JR noted COVID-19 has provided an opportunity to move to a different and more modern and agile way of working. There has been strong engagement with staff to gather their views on future ways of working, whilst ensuring that

we can continue to deliver Social Security Scotland priorities. JR advised it would be useful to involve an Executive Advisory Body member with the project to move this work forward. Non-Executives are invited to volunteer their support following the meeting.

5.3. JR noted the following points before inviting MG and NR to speak to the item.

- The pulse survey is a snapshot of a specific point in time, there will be a need to review and conduct additional work to make sure we are consistent and adapt to any changes.
- The need to consider what we are trying to achieve – Social Security Scotland is 3 years old and as our staff numbers grow, we need to take this into account when considering our future ways of working.
- Some staff are already working in the office environments, although numbers are small. The majority of new staff who joined since March 2020 have never been in an office.

5.4. The Executive Advisory Body highlighted the following:

- Overall the results highlight staff feel they have a good work/life balance, albeit there is a question around how much validity can be given to the figures when some staff have never been in an office environment. Equally some staff may not want to disclose information in regards to their mental health.
- Risk - Health and Safety Regulations – the need to ensure staff are well supported in areas where the general public have mutual access.
- To avoid making any assumptions – disabled colleagues or those with caring responsibilities may not be happy working from home, we should be making reasonable adjustments for all colleagues.
- Young people – what are the issues that may affect them working at home or in the office.
- The need to manage expectations of staff which should be balanced against organisational needs. NR advised good communications, input and support from line managers will help support this. MG noted focus groups will allow us to hear individuals and gather future team requirements/business needs..
- Culture – flexibility will need to work both ways. The cultural message should be that the framework is not rigid.
- Part of the development of the framework should include monitoring of performance and staff wellbeing.

5.5. The Executive Advisory Body thanked MG and NR for a very helpful presentation and requested they return in due course to provide an update.

Action	Secretariat	Non-Executives are invited to volunteer their support following the meeting, via email to the secretariat.
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Action	JR/Secretariat	To schedule another Our Ways of Working update.
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6. Social Security Scotland Audit and Assurance Committee Minutes from 18 May 2021

- 6.1. CC invited Russell Frith (RF) to update Members on the discussion at the most recent Audit and Assurance Committee meeting and provide a brief summary.
- 6.2. RF advised that notes of the meeting were accurately recorded in the minutes.
- 6.3. The Executive Advisory Body noted and agreed for the record the Audit and Assurance Committee Minutes from 18 May 2021

Decision	-	The Executive Advisory Body noted for the record the Audit and Assurance Committee Minutes from 18 May 2021
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7. Any other Business

- 7.1. The members noted receipt of the Social Security Scotland Freedom of Information Update, June – August 2021, paper which had been included as below the line items for information.
- 7.2. No further business was noted.
- 7.3. CC thanked everybody for attending the meeting.

Date of next meeting: Tuesday 16 November 2021



Action(AP)/Decision(DP)	Detail	Owner	Due Date	Status
AP – 05/10/2021 – 01	Remove closed actions from the tracker.	Secretariat	5 October 2021	Closed
AP – 05/10/2021 – 02	To arrange a deep-dive session to discuss the new recruitment process.	AM	5 October 2021	Closed
AP – 05/10/2021 – 03	Once recruitment is complete the demographics on diversity are to be shared with the Executive Advisory Body.	AM	8 February 2022	Open
AP – 05/10/2021 – 04	To share the People Survey results with the Executive Advisory Body in the new year 2022.	Secretariat	8 February 2022	Open
AP – 05/10/2021 – 05	More detailed Child Disability Payment progress update for the Executive Advisory Body including the points noted in the minutes.	JR	8 February 2022	Open
AP – 05/10/2021 - 06	Non-Executives are invited to volunteer their support following the meeting, via email to the secretariat.	Secretariat	5 October 2021	Closed
AP – 05/20/2021 - 07	To schedule an Our Ways of Working update.	JR / Secretariat	5 October 2021	Closed
DP – 05/10/2021 – 01	The Executive Advisory Body noted and formally agreed for the record the Audit and	-	-	Noted



	Assurance Committee Minutes from 18 May 2021			
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