



Executive Advisory Body Meeting

Date of Meeting	24 January 2023
Subject	Collective Board Effectiveness Update
Agenda No.	34
Paper No.	34.2
Prepared By	Governance Team
Purpose	Decide

1. Background

- 1.1. The Executive Advisory Body provide strategic advice and constructive challenge to our Executive Team and senior leaders, and is made up of our Executive Team and Non-Executive members.
- 1.2. The Non-Executive members play an important role as our 'critical friend', offering constructive challenge and advice to our Chief Executive and Executive Team members on our overall strategy and effective governance.
- 1.3. During the latter part of 2022, the Social Security Scotland governance team took forward a series of reviews relating to collective board effectiveness within the Executive Advisory Body. This included gathering feedback on what is and is not working well within Executive Advisory Body, the Buddy scheme, Non-Executive appointment terms ending in 2023, and any potential skills gaps or requirement for further Non-Executive recruitment.

2. Key Points

2.1 Executive Advisory Body – Collective Learning and Reflections

Feedback was gathered during a Collective Board Effectiveness deep dive session in September from Executive Advisory Body members on processes which were operating effectively and any suggested areas of improvement. Based on the feedback received, we believe that a review of the current 'Buddy' scheme is required to ensure optimum strategic engagement between Non-Executive members, the Executive Team and the wider organisation.

Discussion at a recent Executive Team meeting also focused on the possibility of moving from a one-to-one 'Buddy' relationship between Non-Executives and Executive Team members and instead, adopt a broader approach focusing on organisational priorities and a more function based approach for each Non-Executive member.



2.2 The Buddy Scheme - Background

In 2020, it was decided that the role of our Non-Executive members be further developed with the creation of a Buddy system. This Buddy system was designed to take into account a Non-Executive member's specific skills, experience and interest and pair them with a member of our Executive Team, to provide advice and input into various strategic projects. Details of the current assignments are as follows:-

Executive Team member	Non-Executive member
David Wallace	Laura Brennan-Whitefield
Alastair MacPhail	Naghat Ahmed
James Wallace	N/A – Was previously Elaine Noad who left in September 2022
Janet Richardson	Barry Matheson
Andy McClintock	Russell Frith
Paul Knight	Chris Creegan

A review of current Non-Executive project and governance involvement was also completed by the governance team in December 2022. Pending some final confirmations, latest information is shown below:-

- Chris Creegan
 - Member of Social Security Programme Board
 - Chair of Executive Advisory Body meeting
 - Involvement with Organisational Design review
 - Previous involvement with Scottish Commission on Social Security (SCOSS) review
- Laura Brennan-Whitefield
 - Wave 2 Benefits Project Board (to be confirmed)
- Russell Frith
 - Annual Accounts Process and Accounting Policies
 - Chair of Audit and Assurance Committee
- Barry Matheson
 - Our Ways of Working project board – project now closed



- New December 2022 - Corporate Transformation Programme Senior Oversight Board
- Naghat Ahmed
 - Initially suggested projects for possible involvement included the Estates Project and Client Experience relating specifically to tribunals

In order to gain insight into other organisation's approach to Non-Executive involvement, the governance team consulted with various external governance groups to ascertain best practice. We have included this feedback in Appendix A – Feedback from external Governance areas for discussion.

We recognise that Non-Executives involved in work across core Scottish Government operate differently. We will further explore the SG approach, but at this time would ask you as a group to discuss your preferred principles and parameters with a view to replacing our current Buddy System.

2.3 Non-Executive appointments / 2023 recruitment

When Social Security Scotland was established in 2018, we originally had six Non-Executive members who formed the Executive Advisory Body along with our Executive Team. In September 2022, one of our Non-Executive members (Elaine Noad) left Social Security Scotland, leaving five remaining Non-Executives.

We have just extended the contract of Chris Creegan and are currently extending the contract of Laura Brennan-Whitefield, meaning we will retain all existing five Non-Executives until at least 30 September 2024.

Taking into account our future strategic objectives and priorities, we believe it would be prudent at this time to recruit for an additional Non-Executive. This would allow us to further complement our Non-Executive skillset, particularly in area's such as Digital experience in a large delivery environment. Details of our current Non-Executive skills are included in Appendix B – Non Executive Skills Matrix.

3. Conclusion

- 3.1 Based on previous feedback and seeing what other bodies do, are Executive Advisory Body content to discuss options to replace the existing Buddy scheme and reshape the scope and exposure of the Non Executives in the organisation?
- 3.2 Feedback is required from Executive Advisory Body members on the proposed recruitment of an additional Non-Executive member.



Appendix A – Feedback from External Governance areas

[Redacted]



Appendix B – Non-Executive Skills Matrix

[Redacted]



Governance Tables – To be Completed by Authors

An Impact Assessment must be carried out during the development of all new Agency policies and services and when making significant changes to policies and services. The Corporate Assurance team should be involved from an early stage to provide guidance and advice relating to completing impact assessments.

[Impact Assessment Saltire Page](#)

Impact Assessment Queries: Corporateassuranceteam@socialsecurity.gov.scot

Please complete the below table.

Type of Impact Assessment	Required (Y/N)	If No - briefly state reason e.g. Not relevant/Not eligible – agreed with Deputy Director	If yes – briefly state progress to date, highlight any significant issues.
Business and Regulatory Impact Assessment (BRIA)	N	Not relevant	N/A
Child Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessment (CRWIA)	N	Not relevant	N/A
Data Protection Impact Assessment	N	Not relevant	N/A
Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA)	N	Not relevant	N/A
Fairer Scotland Duty assessment	N	Not relevant	N/A
Future proofing legislation	N	Not relevant	N/A
Human rights in policy making	N	Not relevant	N/A
Islands Communities Impact Assessment (ICIA)	N	Not relevant	N/A
Strategic Environment Assessment (SEA)	N	Not relevant	N/A



Before submitting please ensure that you detail how the paper contributes to the Corporate Plan Strategic Objectives below. These strategic considerations should be use to assist you with the content of your paper.

Strategic Objective	Contribution
Helping to deliver a social security system with dignity, fairness and respect.	We want to make sure our Non-Executives become actively involved in providing constructive advice and scrutiny to our strategic objectives and allow them to operate as our 'critical friends'.
Supporting people in Scotland to access devolved benefits that they are entitled to.	
Running our service in a responsible way	Ensuring we have effective Non-Executive input into our business priorities will allow us to improve our service and make a difference to our people and clients.

State here any consultation undertaken in the agency

Strategic Involvement/ Consultation	Input
Service Development	N/A
Data	N/A
Communications	We would require communication team support for both the redesign of the buddy system (minimal) and potential recruitment (moderate).
Business Support Network	Redesigning the Buddy system and running a recruitment campaign will require Executive Team input and ongoing involvement. This will impact business support in terms of co-ordination of resources.
Workforce Planning & People	Resource within Executive Team, business support, governance team, communications and resourcing will be required if we recruit for additional Non-Executive. This will need to tie in with current business planning and prioritisation.
Accommodation	N/A
Finance	There are budget considerations if decision is taken to recruit for additional Non-Executive, i.e., internal resources, targeted advertising, recruitment costs.
Procurement	N/A
Operations	N/A
Health & Social Care	N/A
Local Delivery	N/A

Please confirm the governance this paper/ information within this paper has been through already, and what the next steps are.

Paper/ Information within Paper Reviewed by e.g. Executive Advisory Body, Non-Executive, Deputy Director for Finance and Corporate Services, etc.		Next Steps after this Meeting e.g. Agency Leadership Team, Executive Team, Executive Advisory Body, etc.	
Reviewed By	Date/ Decision	To be Reviewed by	Date Scheduled
[Redacted]	14 December 2022	Executive Advisory Body	January 2023
[Redacted]	December 2022		
Ally MacPhail	December 2022		
Executive Team	January 2023		