

## Portfolio Sponsor Meeting

<b>Date of Meeting</b>	Tuesday, 26 October 2021
<b>Time</b>	14:10 – 13:25
<b>Location</b>	Ground Floor Conference Room, High Street/ MS Teams

### Attendees

#### Present

Stephen Kerr (SK)	Director of Social Security (Portfolio Sponsor) and Chair
David Wallace (DW)	Chief Executive, Social Security Scotland
Nicola Bennet* (NB)	Head of Finance, deputising for Deputy Director of Finance and Corporate Services
Paul Knight (PK)	Chief Officer, Health and Social Care Operations
Miriam Craven (MC)	Deputy Director Strategy, Change, Data & Engagement
Janet Richardson (JR)	Deputy Director Client Services Delivery
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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#### Apologies

Andy McClintock (AMC)	Chief Digital Officer
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\* joined by MS Teams

### 1. Welcome

- 1.1. SK welcomed everyone to today's meeting, the first Portfolio Sponsor meeting held in person for some 18 months.

### 2. Minutes and action from previous meeting

- 2.1. SK noted that approved minutes from the previous meeting of 19 August 2021 had been published and confirmed the action point from this meeting was still pending, awaiting the release of the official Quarter Two workforce statistics. SK suggested that the deferred item on ways of working should be added to the agenda for the next (December) meeting. [ACTION – DP to add a discussion on ways of working to the December 8 2021 agenda].

### 3. Scottish Government update from the Chair

- 3.1. SK summarised the latest updates on key events, including the Budget for 22-23 and the upcoming COP26 Climate Change Conference in Glasgow.

- 3.2. SK updated members on ministerial preferences for meetings and correspondence and the respective roles of Mr MacPherson, Minister for Social Security and Local Government and the Cabinet Secretary, Ms Robison, in relation to social security following the portfolio split.

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

- 4.1. DW updated Portfolio Sponsor that the 2020-21 Social Security Scotland Annual Report and Accounts had been signed by Ministers and were on course to be laid in the Scottish Parliament in the week commencing 1 November 2021. The Annual Report and accounts will be accompanied by publication of the latest Charter Measurement Framework and Client Survey results. [ACTION: Update DG Communities following publication of these key documents]
- 4.2. DW updated Portfolio Sponsor on preparations for the visit by members of the Social Security Committee of the Scottish Parliament to our Dundee Headquarters, Agnes Husband House, on 1 November 2021. MC also flagged the forthcoming Social Security Committee appearance scheduled for 2 December 2021 and preparations for giving evidence.
- 4.3. DW set out the latest position with case transfer from the Department of Work and Pensions in preparation for disability benefit rollout. Additional supporting information was provided by JR.
- 4.4. PK provided an update on recruitment to clinical posts, including details of the soft marketing undertaken to raise interest in the roles advertised and noted there were encouraging levels of interest in these posts.
- 4.5. NB and AMP agreed to incorporate their general updates into their substantive business items on the agenda: the finance update and volume recruitment update respectively.

#### **5. Finance update**

- 5.1. NB provided a summary of the latest budget position within Social Security Scotland and facilitated a discussion around pressures and savings approaching the mid-year stage.
- 5.2. NB summarised the position in relation to the current spending review and the allocation of resources across the Social Security Directorate and Social Security Scotland.

#### **6. Volume recruitment update**

- 6.1. AMP provided a detailed summary of the current exercise underway to recruit colleagues to Social Security Scotland at scale. The visit by First Minister to Social Security Scotland Headquarters, Agnes Husband House at the launch of the campaign had driven significant applications (of around 800) on the first day alone.

- 6.2. AMP reflected on initial feedback from applicants that this was a simple and inclusive application process and highlighted that Social Security Scotland will continue to monitor diversity information.
- 6.3. SK was supportive of the approach taken and AMP will look to share findings from this volume recruitment exercise with Scottish Government colleagues in due course.
- 6.4. SK was interested in a future discussion about talent management and succession planning within Social Security Scotland to seek assurance that Social Security Scotland was continuing to look to the future health of the organisation. [ACTION: To add a discussion on talent management and succession planning to the agenda for a future meeting].

## **7. Update on Agency communications**

- 7.1. KS drew attention to high levels of ministerial engagement with Agency communications through regular meetings with the Cabinet Secretary and Minister for Social Security. KS provided an overview of communications and marketing around each of the existing benefits, updating Portfolio Sponsor on the latest updates to both messaging and planning for new benefit launches.

Date of next meeting: 8 December 2021