

MAY SMT MINUTES

MEETING: 10th May 2022, Progressive House, Belfast

In Attendance:

Margaret Kelly – Ombudsman; MK
 Sean Martin – Acting Deputy Ombudsman; SM
 Michaela McAleer – Acting Deputy Commissioner; MMcA
 Corinne Nelson – Director of Investigations; CN
 Andrew Ruston - Head of Communications; AR
 Julie Healy - Head of Improvement, Engagement & Impact, JH
 Sarah Sherry – Secretariat; SS

Agenda Item	Minutes	Action Required/ By Whom
1.	<p>Apologies and Conflicts of Interest</p> <p>Apologies – None Noted</p> <p>MK invited those present to register any actual or perceived conflicts of interest relevant to the agenda. No conflicts were noted.</p>	
2.	<p>Minutes of the last meeting</p> <p>Minutes from April 2022 were agreed as a true and accurate record</p>	
3.	<p>Outstanding Actions</p> <p><i>Review of the Retention and Disposal Schedule</i> - CAS has been notified of which records are to be retained. SM to contact CAS to see when the test will be completed. Destruction of paper records will then need to follow.</p> <p><i>Case handling System</i> – SM explained there are two issues – (1) Hosting of Workpro to IT Assist, and (2) Opening of documents on Workpro. In relation to point 2, SM indicated that corporate services were to check whether 100MB was being achieved. LD has arranged testing of the speed.</p> <p><i>Telephone recording</i> –CN to speak to LD to find the technical ability.</p> <p><i>HR System</i> –SM to speak to YK and bring it to June SMT for further discussion.</p> <p><i>Business Plan 22/23</i> – MK advised that she brought the new plan to ARC. SMT to look at the plan, and advise MK of any further changes needed. MK to look at phasing of the dates.</p>	<p>SS – Contact CAS for an update</p> <p>SM – Update on Hosting and costs</p> <p>SMT – final look at business plan</p>

	<i>Probation Policy</i> – MK spoke to YK and the policy has been changed for 9 months for new employees	
4	<p>Financial and Corporate Services Update</p> <p>MK agreed for the Ombudsman Report to be produced after the Annual Report. SM confirmed that a request has been sent out to CAS for statistics for the Ombudsman Report, but this has not yet been received.</p> <p>SS to arrange for FS to meet MMcG during his induction re Workpro.</p> <p>SM advised that the Information Governance Group will be designing the new structure and they will take part in the annual review of the Information Asset Register. YK has arranged 3 dates of GDPR training for all staff.</p>	<p>SS – set up meetings</p> <p>SS – circulate IT Audit Report to SMT</p>
5	<p>Equality, Diversity and Inclusion</p> <p>MK advised that she tabled this agenda item, as it came up strongly in the recent Customer Satisfaction Survey and she has included in the Business Plan that staff will have training on Dignity at Work and Fair Recruitment, for staff who will be involved in recruitment. MK has suggested creating an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion group, from across staff who will work with SMT on what that would look like accessing our services as well as internally. MK welcomed feedback.</p> <p>CN thought this was a good idea. AR suggested the Equality Commission could come to this group to discuss the issues that would need to be covered. MMcA commented that when she thinks of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, she thinks of the staff, primarily to promote the workplace, drive new processes and have diversity in the workplace</p> <p>MK to send out an email inviting staff to join the group. AR to lead this group.</p>	<p>MK – send out a staff email regarding the new staff group</p>
6	<p>Business Continuity Plan</p> <p>SMT to read the updated document and send comments to SS to have a possible agreement for June SMT.</p>	<p>SMT – send comments to SS</p>
7	<p>MAL and OI Update</p> <p><u>Assist</u></p> <p>At the end of year there were 1211 complaints received, up 30% on 20/21 and up 16% compared to 19/20 which was the highest previous year. Complaints have increased by 110% from 16/17 (575 complaints), and our staff numbers dealing with complaints have not kept pace with this increase.</p> <p>All targets met. The most significant pressure was felt at KPI2. The increased number of cases passed for further investigation will increase the pressure on the Investigation Team as we move through 2022/23 MK would like a discussion on the management of the pressure on the team.</p> <p>AR requested a list from CN of the cases closed at investigations for his information</p>	<p>SS – Agenda item for June SMT</p>

	<p><i>Services Standard</i> – CN advised that SS has been approached and has agreed to be the central administrator for Service Standard, and a meeting will be set up to discuss this further with CN, JMcGI and SS. MK expressed how important it was to have an independent reviewer for stage 2. SM to review this. CN stated that the new rewritten Services Standard document to come to SMT for agreement</p> <p><u>OI</u></p> <p>MK asked that OI Team Update Report be taken as read.</p> <p>MK reported that there was a meeting with DfC to discuss NIPSO's response to DfC identifying continued concerns with actions taken to date, including the delays in the provision of sampling evidence to support improvements.</p> <p><i>Waiting list</i> – a public announcement is planned for the w/c 16th May to encourage people to take part in the surveys.</p> <p>Work is being done on an OI information leaflet with JH and AR feeding into the process. MMcA to send MK a copy of the draft leaflet.</p> <p>OI process to be signed off – MMcA to recirculate document to SMT for final approval</p>	<p>SM – to speak to DT regarding the recruitment of an Independent Reviewer</p> <p>MMcA to send a draft of the leaflet to MK</p> <p>MMcA to recirculate OI process document</p>
8	<p>LGES Update</p> <p>8 Complaints received year to date (zero complaints in month 1 21/22)</p> <p>KPI 4 is 100% (3/3)</p> <p>KPI 5 no decisions taken</p> <p><i>Older cases</i> – 4 are to be closed this week, and another 1 had been agreed for alternative action.</p>	
9	<p>CS Update</p> <p>SM reported that JM has the strategic and operational networks for the local government sector established. In June she will commence engagement with focus groups and has already commenced collating information. In Autumn it is planned for MK and SM to speak to the Chief Executives to agree on the high level priorities</p> <p>A detailed analysis of the health and social care sector has been undertaken by the EII team. MK and SM to meet with the Permanent Secretary.</p>	
10	<p>Communications & External Engagement Update</p> <p>AR provided a summary of his report.</p> <p><i>New OI Investigation Launch</i> – is due to take place on the w/c 16th May</p> <p><i>Strategic Plan</i> – will be published and promoted this week</p>	
11	<p>Improvement, Engagement and Impact Report</p> <p>JH advised that with the new appointment of Policy and Engagement Officer starting on the 23rd May.</p> <p><i>Stakeholder Engagement Strategy Update</i> – several meetings have been completed and more are scheduled for the coming months including the organisations in West of NI. People are very keen to hear about the work of the office.</p> <p><i>Academics</i> – 4 meetings have been held with research leads in QUB and something similar will be done with the University of Ulster.</p>	<p>JH + CN to speak regarding</p>

	<p><i>Improvement</i> – JH would like a good communication system between the teams and will speak to CN</p> <p>The Consultation on Adult Social Care survey is closing on the 1st June and JH would like a small group to collate feedback. JH to liaise with SS to arrange feedback.</p>	<p>communicati on</p> <p>JH to liaise with SS re survey</p>
12.	<p>AOB –</p> <p><i>No AOB</i></p>	
	<p>DATE OF NEXT MEETING – Tuesday 7th June at 10.30 am at Progressive House</p>	