

**RESOURCES COMMITTEE
MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 30 AUGUST 2019
CROWN OFFICE, 25 CHAMBERS STREET, EDINBURGH**

Present:

Members

John Logue	Deputy Crown Agent (Operational Support)(Chair)
Ian Walford	Deputy Chief Executive
Douglas Taylor	Head of Management Accounting and Planning
Graham Kerr	Director of Support Services/HBM
Mark Howells	Director of Finance and Procurement
Catriona Dalrymple	Procurator Fiscal (Local Court North and East Scotland)
Doreen Crawford	Head of Workforce Planning & Reward

In attendance

Sharon Davies	Secretariat
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Apologies

Paulina Mejer	Secretariat
Bill Comrie	Head of Business Management (Serious Casework)
John Cooper	Non-Executive Director

Welcome

1. The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Minutes from meetings held on 27 July

2. The minutes were agreed with one small typo in para 15 to be corrected to include the word "being".

Actions

3. Action two has been closed, following submission of paper to July's meeting, Action Tracker to be updated.
4. All other actions are still open.

HR MI Update

5. The Committee was provided with a high level summary of the key HR management information (MI), providing detailed analysis of current staff absence levels and reasons for absence. Whilst acknowledged that there is a recent increasing trend in sickness absence it was also acknowledged that long term absence within a small team could distort the information. Head of Workforce Planning and Reward (WP&R) indicated that the HR advisers are working closely with line managers to review sick absences and offer support to staff. It was also suggested to the committee that there could be an increase in absence figures due to better reporting using corporate apps. One area was

reporting lower than expected absence levels and the Head of WP&R agreed that further analysis would be carried out to ensure that all absences are being reported. This would also be raised by the Deputy Chief Executive (DCE) at the Corporate Health & Wellbeing Committee (H&WC) later in the day.

6. It was also noted that the Head of WP&R would be carrying out further investigations into "new staff" absences.

7. Stress related absence was discussed in detail and in particular why it had increased when staff numbers had increased over the year. It was agreed that this should also be raised at the H&WC in order to discuss further support for staff and ask Heads of Business Management (HBMs) for feedback on possible reasons. The committee also asked to see the financial implications of this illness and it was suggested that this information should be produced but handled sensitively as the first priority was staff wellbeing.

Action: DCE to discuss at H&WC meeting and ask HBMs for feedback.

Action: HR to calculate the financial impact of stress-related absences.

Finance and Procurement Update

8. Director of Finance and Procurement (DFP) provided the Committee with the summary of the latest developments within the department and confirmed that the main assumptions made when a balanced budget was set for 2019-20 have not changed. He added that while the maximum permissible underspend limit of £100k had been removed this will still be carefully monitored at year end.

9. DFP also stated that, contrary to what was said in the update paper, HBM for Local Court has since indicated that there is a potential full year overspend on staffing in Local Court albeit that this is reducing. It was acknowledged that the potential overspend had been noted elsewhere but not communicated to Finance staff. Discussions are to be held on why this was not communicated between the function and Finance to avoid any last minute changes to the finance update in the future. It was highlighted that the main areas for concern would be staffing forecasts as well as litigation costs, and that contingency plans were being developed in the event that any risk of an overspend became more likely.

Action: DFP and Douglas Taylor (DT) to meet with HBMs to discuss potential pressures prior to Q2 reporting and next meeting to provide assurance to the chair that the forecasts are robust.

10. DCE assured the committee that through discussions with the Director of Support Services (DSS) and the Chief Digital Officer that there will not be a capital overspend at year end.

11. Toxicology delivery from 2020 was discussed and it was agreed that Steve Scott should be invited to the Resources Committee meeting to give an update

on the position in relation to toxicology in particular and on savings more generally.

Action: Secretariat to invite Steve Scott to attend next meeting to update the Committee.

12. The analysis of overtime that had been provided as part of the Finance report was discussed and the Committee requested that going forward the information be a standard attachment to the monthly Corporate Finance Report (including the 15 members of staff claiming most overtime).

13. DSS asked for further analysis to be carried out to ascertain if weekday overtime claimed is by part-time staff, and whether they regularly work more than their contracted hours. It was also agreed that DT would supply the names of the staff who worked the most hours for HBM to review.

Action: Finance to carry out further analysis on weekday overtime and send to HBMs with names of regular overtime workers.

14. The Central Procurement Team is continuing to deliver a significant amount of work and, with the arrival of Collette Weir, they are starting to proactively look at specific areas, initially expert witness costs and interim staffing costs where they are anticipating being able to put in place processes which deliver greater compliance and potentially some savings in these areas.

Spending review/Finance Strategy Update

15. DFP advised the Committee the spending review (SR19) is in progress and COPFS's latest submission is being discussed with the Lord Advocate later today with a response to Scottish Government due early next week.

16. The Committee noted the Finance Strategy is in preparation; it will underpin the new COPFS strategic plan and is supported by a Medium Term Financial plan.

Estates Update

17. The Resources Committee was provided with an update on the current position in relation to work undertaken.

18. The highlights included:

Estates Strategy – In relation to the delay in moving to the new premises in Dundee the DSS confirmed that ISD were fully engaged with Virgin Media and have received assurances from them that either the full circuit installation or a temporary contingency arrangement will be in place by the 30th Sept allowing the move to take place in Oct. The Inverness Justice Centre continues to be on track for delivery in March 2020 and the actual move arrangements are being considered by local management in Inverness.

- Expansion Plan – Edinburgh PFO work is now complete and the staff moves have all taken place. Hamilton work is currently at scoping stage, this can be taken forward subject to the availability of funds. Kirkcaldy alterations will be undertaken this month.
- Maintenance – Costings for Crown Office heating are still awaited and the matter will be considered further once they have been received. Hamilton fire stopping works will commence in August. Re-roofing work is currently being carried out at Dumbarton.

19. The Director of Support Services (DSS) informed the committee that the draft Estate Transformation Strategy would be provided for review at the September meeting. In addition to that, the DSS would be reviewing the SLA for the shared service currently provided by SCTS with other HBM's and a paper will be provided to a future Committee meeting.

20. The Chair noted the paper and thanked the DSS for the work done on the estate.

LDD Strategy

21. The committee were presented with the finished L&D strategy and were asked for comments. It was confirmed that updates on this roadmap would be presented to this Committee each quarter. The L&D budget was discussed and the Committee was assured that any potential overspend would be monitored and covered within the overall Operational Support budget.

22. It was asked if service delivery improvements could be included within the strategy going forward as a separate strand.

Action: LDD strategy document and roadmap to be amended to reflect this change.

Risk Register

23. DFP provided an update on the current risks and assured the committee that the risks were being managed appropriately.

24. The chair asked for assurance the current risks scored at 12 are included within the function risk register and are being managed appropriately at the function level. It was agreed that this would be referred to the Risk Management Group.

Action: DCE to refer this to the RMG at its next meeting.

AOB

25. There was no AoB.

Date of next meeting: 25 September 2019