

RESOURCES COMMITTEE
MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 29 JUNE 2020
HELD VIA TEAMS

Present:

Members

John Logue	Deputy Crown Agent (Operational Support) (Chair)
Ian Walford	Deputy Chief Executive
Graham Kerr	Head of Business Management (Local Court)
Bill Comrie	Head of Business Management (Serious Casework)
John Cooper	Non-Executive Director
Mark Howells	Director of Finance and Procurement
Douglas Taylor	Head of Management Accounting and Planning
Marlene Anderson	Head of Finance
Jonathan Shebioba	Director of Support Services
Doreen Crawford	Head of Workforce Planning & Reward

In attendance

Carla Meechan	Secretariat
Colette Weir	Secretariat
Richard Brown	Legal Assistant to DCA, Operational Support

Apologies

Sarah Carter	HR Director
Kathy Brown	Secretariat

Welcome

1. The chair welcomed everyone to the meeting which, due to the current Coronavirus outbreak, was conducted via Teams.

Minutes from meeting held on 27 May 2020

2. The Committee agreed the minutes as an accurate record of the meeting.

Action Log

3. The Committee agreed the following amendments to the Action Log and noted progress with the remaining actions.

Actions 2, 3, 5, 11, 12 13 & 14 are all closed.

Actions 6, 7 & 10 carried forward to 28 July 2020.

HR Update

Staff Report

4. The Head of Workforce Planning & Reward (HWPR) provided an updated Staff Report showing Management Information (MI) as at 31 May 2020. The figures showed signs of a stable workforce with a slight reduction in people leaving and also a reduction in sickness rates. The Committee noted this was possibly due to the new ways of working and the wider impact of the pandemic on the job market.

5. The Committee discussed the paper with regards to why Band Bs made up approximately 50% of COPFS leavers. They noted that several were due to a number of fixed term contracts coming to an end but were content that enough was being done in relation to Pay Band C opportunities. They agreed that going-forward, the focus should be on feedback received through Exit Interviews but overall there were no areas of concern.

Action: HR to monitor Pay Band B exit interviews and feedback to the Committee quarterly starting from October 2020

Depute Recruitment

6. The Committee had previously agreed recruitment and internal promotion boards should generally be put on hold until after the in-year budget and workforce planning review. However, in respect of the legal trainees, after considering options put forward from the Workforce Planning Group (WPG), the Committee agreed to advertise internally amongst the trainees for permanent deputes. Due to the tight timescales the Committee dealt with this item via email.

Finance Update

COVID-19 Expenditure 2019-20 and 2020-21

7. The Director of Finance and Procurement (DFP) presented a joint paper from Finance and HR advising the Committee of the financial impact of Covid-19 on COPFS. The paper is part of an ongoing initiative to increase joint working between the directorates.

8. The Committee considered the paper in particular noting the costs of overtime both financially and also on staff welfare. DCE advised a Workshop had been arranged in August to review current and future spend in 2020/21. The Committee were satisfied a system for all COVID-19 expenditure was now in place which will be monitored throughout the year.

2019/2020 Annual Accounts

9. The DFP reported that the feedback from Audit Scotland had been positive and the Audit and Risk Committee meeting, that will approve the signing of the accounts by the Crown Agent subject to one issue under consideration, is scheduled for 3 July 2020. The Committee thanked all those involved.

2020/2021 Budget

10. The Committee noted the various risks and uncertainties regarding COVID-19 and the difficulties of allocating budgets at function level at the moment. The Head of Business Management SCG was in favour of indicative budgets being issued to the Functions at this stage but the Committee agreed that they should be confirmed following the budget workshop on 13 August and the Quarter 1 forecasts.

11. COPFS has recently received an additional £2.8m Capital funding from SG. COPFS would continue to seek additional resource and capital funding to meet operational needs which were arising in the course of the year and to increase the pace and scope of digital improvements.

Pathology & Mortuary Update

12. Discussion on this item forms a confidential annex to the minutes.

AOB

13. The Director of Support Services updated the Committee on the renewal of the windows in Crown Office. He advised that due to COVID -19 with few staff in the office savings had been achieved as work could be carried out in normal office hours. A full estates update will be provided at the July meeting.

14. The Head of Business Management Local Court (HoBM LC) asked if the Committee would consider taking on Summer Casuals for a period of 6-8 weeks. This is due to the speed with which courts are reopening, the current rota principal and the holiday season. The Committee asked that we should look at opportunities for existing experienced COPFS staff in the first instance. HoBM LC will look at this in more detail and report back at the next meeting.

15. The Committee thanked Doug Taylor, Head of Management Accounting and Planning for guiding COPFS through the last year and wished him well on his travels and for a safe journey home to Australia.

Actions: HOBM LC to look at extra resource required during summer and opportunities for current staff.

Date of the next meeting: 28th July 2020