

EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 18 NOVEMBER 2020

MS TEAMS

Present: (Chair)	David Harvie John Logue Lindsey Miller Stephen McGowan Ian Walford John Cooper Annie Gunnar Logan Fiona McLean Rob Tinlin	Crown Agent Deputy Crown Agent, Operational Support Deputy Crown Agent, Specialist Casework Deputy Crown Agent, Local Court Deputy Chief Executive Non-executive director Non-executive director Non-executive director Non-executive director
In attendance:	Mark Howells Alison McCluskey Mairi Boyle	Director of Finance and Procurement Corporate Transformation Change Manager Legal Assistant to Crown Agent (Secretariat)
Apologies:	Ann Marie Henderson	Personal Assistant to Crown Agent

Agenda Item 1 - Welcome

1. David Harvie, Crown Agent opened the meeting and welcomed all colleagues.
2. Members confirmed that there were no conflicts of interest.

Agenda Items 2 - Minutes of Previous Meeting, Matters Arising / Updates

3. The minutes of 16 September 2020 were agreed and can be published. There was an update from the DCA Operational Support on the action on wellbeing issues from the last meeting. In relation to the third action DCA Local Court reported that the summary Practice Note would be in force from 23 November. DCA Serious Casework provided an update on VT under OPC item. All actions closed.

Agenda Item 3 – Finance Update 20-21/Budget Process

4. Director of Finance and Procurement attended for this item and introduced paper EB20/21(25).
5. The Board were advised that it was anticipated that Audit Scotland would clear the 2019/20 accounts for publication by the end of the week. The DFP provided an update on the corporate budget for the current financial year, particularly the remaining uncertainties that affect the budget. Looking ahead to 2021/22 the DFP

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described the Scottish Government budget process which will include this year a commission to identify savings. As an operational delivery department there are limits on what COPFS is able to do in this regard. Noting that COPFS continues to contribute to submissions on the resource requirement for the court recovery programme which is system-wide and separate from the COPFS core budget. Discussion of the timing of recruitment to tackle the court backlog and how recruitment and training requires to be managed.

Agenda Item 4 – Future Ways of Working

6. Corporate Transformation Change Manager attended for this item and introduced paper EB20/21(26).
7. CTCM summarised progress on the project to date; explained the impact of the pandemic on our way of working and the direction of the project; and set out proposed next steps. There was wide-ranging discussion about next steps including consideration of staff morale and welfare; equalities issues; promoting a supportive culture; the need to assess productivity; the importance of ensuring COPFS can fulfil our key function and that expectations around alternative working arrangements are managed accordingly; the likelihood of a need for more staff to attend court to tackle the backlog; impact across the functions; level at which decisions on alternative working arrangements are made; employment law implications. There was a consensus that there was a need for further reflection on issues raised in the discussion. The provisional target date for FWOW going live is June 2021.

Agenda Item 5 – Resources Committee update

8. DCA Operational Support referred to paper EB20/21(27) and highlighted figures on staff absence. Absences categorised as relating to mental health issues increased slightly but within that group the proportion of absences characterised as relating to workplace stress has fallen by half, assessed as Covid-related rather than a long term trend.

Agenda Item 6 – Operational Performance Committee update

9. DCA Serious Casework reported that OPC will meet next month to discuss the review of KPIs. DCA explained how the backlog was affecting staff wellbeing. VT assessments are flagging the nature of work (often done at home) and volume of cases being issues. DCA will take forward work on VT in the new year. There was also discussion about the impact on staff welfare and morale of being separated from the team environment, and about productivity.

Action: DCA Serious Casework to report back to the Board in January on OPC consideration of KPIs.

Action: OPC to commission work on assessing productivity (DCA Serious Casework). Methodology being developed by Local Court to be shared with OPC (DCA Local Court).

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Agenda Item 7- Business Process Improvement Committee update

10. DCA Local Court introduced paper EB20/21(28) and gave a brief update on the work of the committee.

Agenda Item 8 – Any other business

11. The non-executive directors wished to acknowledge the tremendous work done in the Equalities Awards and commended the recent uplifting event and COPFS as a supportive organisation.

Crown Agent's Office

December 2020