

**RESOURCES COMMITTEE
MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 26 MARCH
CROWN OFFICE, 25 CHAMBER STREET, EDINBURGH**

Present:

Members

Ian Walford	Deputy Chief Executive (Chair)
Doreen Crawford	Head of Workforce Planning and Reward
John Cooper	Non-Executive Director
Bill Comrie	Head of Business Management (Serious Casework)
Evelyn Aitken	Head of Management Accounting and Planning
Graham Kerr	Director of Support Services/HOBM
Mark Howells	Finance and Procurement Director

In attendance

Lesley Thomson	Secretariat
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Apologies

Catriona Dalrymple	Procurator Fiscal (Local Court North and East Scotland)
John Logue	Deputy Crown Agent (Operational Support)

Welcome

1. The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and passed on apologies from John and Catriona.

Minutes from meetings held on 28 February

2. The Head of Business Management requested that paragraph 29 be amended as he stated that he had not endorsed the decision to close the Estates Project Board, although he did accept the decision made by the Committee at the previous meeting.
3. The Finance and Procurement Director mentioned that regarding paragraph 6, Human Resources should be mentioned as they had put in a lot of work with the additional posts and tracking.

Actions

4. Actions 1, 2 and 3 are ongoing or are scheduled for a future meeting.
5. Actions 4, 5, 6 and 7 are closed.

2018-19 Finance and Procurement Update

6. The Head of Management Accounting and Planning provided an update on the 2018/19 forecast expenditure position. The forecasts provided to

Finance by the functions at the end of February had indicated a small overspend, however work continues to ensure that we utilise our budget as fully as possible while not overspending.

7. It was confirmed that the pay remit has been submitted to the Scottish Government who had asked for clarification on a small number of points. That clarification had been provided and we await approval of the remit. We can then begin formal negotiations with the Trade Unions. The issue which has yet to be resolved is the affordability given the uncertainty around funding for the increases in employer's superannuation contributions from 01 April 2019.
8. The Deputy Chief Executive (DCE) advised the committee that a workshop had been held on the 14 March, to explore how the significant non-staff savings that will be required will be delivered. This had been successful and work is in motion to take forward the output from the workshop.
9. The Committee was advised that all that could be done to set 2019-20 budgets had been done. Allocations were ready to be issued but this will not be possible until there is clarity about how much additional funding will be made available to COPFS to meet the increases in employer's superannuation contributions from 01 April 2019. It was agreed by the Committee that if clarification is not forthcoming within 2 weeks there will be discussion with heads of Business Management at Workforce Planning Group on 11 April.
10. The Finance and Procurement Director confirmed that the team had continued to deliver business as usual work. The SGPT project on identifying off Contract expenditure and Reviewing Contract Management practice across COPFS will be coming to an end on 31 March 2019. The report which SGPT had produced has highlighted work that will be required to be completed but which the CPT is not resourced to undertake. This would amount to between 1.8 and 2.0 FTE.
11. The Finance and Procurement Director confirmed that the Scottish Government had refused to reimburse any of the £100,000 for the shared service for regulated procurements and had also indicated that they would be ceasing to provide these services from 31 March 2019. Dialogue will continue at a senior and ministerial level.
12. Interviews had been held 25 March 2019 and that a Band E Procurement Specialist had been selected and that one person had been placed on a reserve list. This person would be suitable for the Procurement Business Partner IT role which is currently occupied by a contractor. This will reduce costs and provide a longer term solution and therefore stability. However a decision will be made once the position on funding is clearer.

Expansion Planning

13. The Chair confirmed that all but 30 of the additional posts had now been filled.

Pathology and Mortuary Update

14. An update was provided by the Senior Consultant on the progress. The Committee noted the contents of the report.

Human Resources Update

15. Human Resources (HR) provided a high level summary in respect of Staffing, Recruitment, and Management Information. Main highlights;

- Interviews have now concluded for the Trainee Solicitor posts and confirmation of the numbers and placements offered to be confirmed prior to the end of March.
- Interview for the Band D and Band C posts have now concluded with the successful applicants for the Band C posts informed.
- Learning and Development have recruited 2 Senior Procurator Fiscal Deputes in order to help ensure that the new recruits will have the necessary skills for their job role.
- HR also confirmed that they had launched the data gathering exercise and had invited members of staff to fill in the survey. The data that is gathered will form part of the Mainstreaming Report which will be published on the external COPFS website at the end of April
- The HR Management Information Team provided a report on Absences due to mental health within COPFS and it was noted that this information has been compiled using absence's which employees had certified.
- It was noted that although there had been a decrease in the number of days taken off due to mental ill health, there was an increase in the number of employees taking time off due to work related stress. This increase could be due to employees feeling more comfortable in stating the reason for their absences.
- Human Resources agreed to compile a quarterly update on mental ill health absences to the Committee.

Action: Secretariat to update agenda planner; HR will compile a quarterly update on mental ill health absences to the Committee.

Estates/Strategy Delivery Update

16. The Director of Support Services confirmed that approval had been received from the Finance Minister in respect of the move for Dundee PFO to Westport House – the proposed move-in date is still scheduled for late July/early August.

17. It was confirmed that the building works in Glasgow have now been completed. The installation of new desks will be completed by the first weekend of April. The installation of new desks in Glasgow has allowed the Aberdeen office to receive the old desks to provide more workstations.
18. The Committee was advised that plans are currently progressing in order to accommodate extra staff within the Edinburgh Office. The committee was advised that an update will be provided on Edinburgh PFO in June once proposals from the Scottish Courts Service regarding long term use for the site.
19. Additional desks are being provided in the Dundee office in order to provide extra workstations – this will enable the Dundee office to have the required number of workstations available. The extra workstations are expected to be in place by early April.
20. The feasibility study regarding the heating in Crown Office has been completed and a price for the works will be submitted by the supplier once the survey has been carried out.
21. The Director of Support Services said that consultation would continue on the next phase of the estates transformation plan and a paper would be brought to the Committee in the summer.
- 22. Action: Secretariat to update agenda planner; consultation will continue on the next phase of the estates transformation plan and a paper would be brought to the Committee in the summer.**

Other Business

23. The Chair thanked everyone for their contribution to the meeting.

Date of next meeting 25 April 2019