

PPS Management Board

2.00pm Tuesday 25 January 2022

Via videoconferencing

Members: **Stephen Herron (Chair)**
Michael Agnew
Marianne O’Kane
Glenn Houston
David Best

In Attendance: **Tom Murphy (Private Office)**
Claire Harrison (Comms)
Head of RMT

Secretariat: **Policy and Information Unit**

1. Apologies.

Mr Hearst.

2. Welcome.

Mr Herron welcomed members to the January 2022 Management Board.

3. Declaration of Board Members’ Interests.

None.

4. Management Board Minutes.

The previous minutes were agreed.

5. Actions from the Management Board meeting of 30 November 2021.

AP 12-21/22 Ms O’Kane to review the Risk Register in January to ensure pressures in performance are accurately reflected.

Closed. Pressures in performance were discussed at the Corporate Planning event and it was agreed that this should be incorporated into a new risk for the 2022/23 Risk Register.

AP13-21/22 Mr Hearst to include information on requestors in the Complaints Update.

Closed. Information will be added to next report.

AP14-21/22 Ms McGoldrick to request RMT and NICSHR to include baseline staffing figure in their reports.

Closed. The Head of RMT to take forward.

AP15-21/22 Mr Agnew to provide a verbal update on the progress of cases listed on the planner.

Closed. See Item 13 – verbal update provided by Mr Agnew.

6. Reports from Management Board Committee.

Senior Management Group 20 January 2022.

Mr Agnew updated members on matters discussed and actions arising from the Senior Management Group meeting of 20 January 2022.

Ms O’Kane advised that there is sufficient resilience in counsel allocation for Omagh and Dungannon Crown Courts. There has been an increase in briefs in certain areas, however this is not necessarily an indication of an increase in workload. Further analysis will be conducted to determine whether reallocation of counsel is required. A meeting is also scheduled to consider extending the pool in Magistrates Court and may involve new panel.

Mr Herron enquired whether it would be possible to have a similar approach to the contest review lists replicated in the Crown Courts. Ms O’Kane outlined further discussions would be required however noted it may be considered for certain offences.

Ms O’Kane provided an overview of performance, including the SCU and members were advised of the emerging findings of the BCS Review.

People and Resources Committee – 17 December 2021

The Head of RMT provided an overview of the matters discussed at the People and Resources Committee meeting on 17 December 2021. He outlined the latest Performance Management figures, and members noted that 94% of end of year reviews have been completed. There has been an increase in long term sick absences.

An update was also provided on training, including advocacy training, which remains a priority and an action plan will be developed to sit alongside the Corporate Training Plan.

The Head of RMT outlined progress on the New Ways of Working Project. The mapping exercise is ongoing and further work is required to ensure consistency across the regions. A pilot is to be scheduled to establish rules to be adopted within the PPS going forward.

Performance and Delivery Committee – 13 December 2021

Ms O' Kane provided an overview of matters discussed at the Performance and Delivery Committee on 13 December.

The draft Internal Audit Report on Risk Management has been received, and it is noted that the findings are positive with no issues raised in respect of Risk Register.

Findings from analysis of performance statistics is still causing some concern. The review of the outlying cases report has indicated positive progress with the number of cases yet to be cleared reducing, however there are additional pressures with an increase in number of files falling into 365+ band.

Performance is being carefully monitored through PAMS. Ms O'Kane advised that a few persistent systematic issues have been identified, and to date actions and mitigation put in place to ensure performance meets the required standards are not proving effective.

Policy and Quality Committee – 15 December 2021.

Mr Agnew briefed members on discussions held at the Policy and Quality meeting held on 15 December 2021.

Discussions were held on legal training priorities for the remainder of 2021-22, with Induction and continuing development the two strands which are the focus of initial consideration.

Domestic Violence (DV) guidance was also discussed, and members were advised of several policies that have been revised and staff instructions issued in recent months.

7. Strategic Improvement Board

Mr Agnew advised that a meeting scheduled for the previous week was postponed and is now planned for late February.

Members noted the latest position of the various projects as outlined in the presentation at the Planning Event.

8. Performance Summary.

Weekly Statistical Report

Members reviewed and noted the Weekly Statistical Summary for 2-8 January 2022.

CJS Update Recovering the Justice System.

Mr Agnew highlighted the figures for the outstanding decisions, which are increasing in both categories 1-4 and 5-8. Members noted that further discussions are planned to consider the current operating model.

Ms O’Kane outlined ongoing pressures in SCU. BCS have released their emerging findings including resourcing recommendations from the recent SCU Review and it is intended that these will be considered at the next DRM.

Members were advised that following a recent meeting with Dr Scullion it has been agreed to remodel the presentation of performance data and this new format will be available for the next Board meeting.

9. Finance

Finance Update November 2021.

Members reviewed and discussed the key financial issues being managed by the Finance Team as at November 2021.

Members noted the issues raised in the finance presentation provided at the Planning Event and in particular advice provided against overspending.

10. People

RMT January Update

Members reviewed and noted the RMT update for January 2022, including the latest position on staffing levels, recruitment, training, health and wellbeing.

11. Governance Issues.

Corporate Risk Register 2021/22.

Members reviewed and discussed the 2021/22 risk register and noted the planned actions/ mitigations and status and rating of all the risks.

The rating of Risk 9, Delay and Change Management has been reviewed and the residual rating revised upwards to 4.

Following discussions at the Planning Event, it has been agreed to incorporate issues around performance into a risk to be captured in the 2022/23 Risk Register.

Members noted there were no significant issues identified in the findings of the Audit of Risk Registers.

CJINI Reports

Mr Agnew updated members on reviews on Disclosure and File Quality, with a few issues have been flagged in respect of Body worn Footage. Members were also advised of improvements in VWCU performance, particularly in completion of needs assessments.

12. AOB.

New Ways of Working

Members discussed the approached under consideration in the New Ways of Working, in particular the one desk per person policy and the policy in respect of attendance at the office. The Board were content to agree the one desk policy, subject to any future accommodation efficiency reviews. Members agreed that further discussions and evidence is required to make a decision on the policy of minimum attendance.

13. Papers for noting.

Communication Update.

Ms Harrison provided an overview of the key communication activities carried out in the recent months including media queries, stakeholder engagement, the Digital Strategy, intranet and internal communications.

Communication Planner.

The Board Members discussed and reviewed the communications planner and update.

Mr Agnew provided an overview of progress of a number of the legacy cases listed on the planner. Matters are progressing, with additional information requested in some instances and counsel opinion awaited in others. Mr Houston acknowledged these complexities and the relevance to the effective progress of the cases.

14. Next Meeting.

Video Conferencing 23 February 2022 at 10.00am.

Summary of Action Points arising from Management Board.

Meeting of 25 January 2022

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Action Points carried over from previous meetings.

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