

PPS Management Board

10.00 Thursday 28 February 2019

Board Room, Belfast Chambers

Members:

**Stephen Herron (Chair)
Michael Agnew
Ian Hearst
Marianne O’Kane
Christopher Welford**

In Attendance:

Libby Kinney

Secretariat:

Policy and Information Unit

1. Apologies

Glenn Houston and David Best.

2. Welcome

The Director welcomed members to the February 2019 Management Board.

3. Declaration of Board Members’ Interests

Interests declared by members were noted.

4. Management Board Minutes

The previous minutes were agreed.

5. Actions from the Management Board meeting of 6 January 2019

AP 10-18/19: Mr Agnew to commission a briefing paper on quality assurance mechanisms to submit a report to the PQC.

See Item 11.

AP 14-18/19: IH to obtain clarification on the ownership of police material.

See Item 11.

AP 15-18/19: Ms O’Kane to explore options in respect of extending working practice initiatives and potential redistribution of resources and discuss with RMT.

Cleared – Ms O’Kane provided an update and advised this matter will be progressed through the PDC.

AP 16-18/19: Ms O’Kane to raise issues regarding standards and quality of files with PSNI.

Cleared - A meeting is to be scheduled with PSNI to raise these issues. This matter will then be taken forward by the PDC.

6. Reports from Management Board Committees

Senior Management Group – 14 February 2019

Members noted matters discussed and actions arising from the Senior Management Group meeting of 14 February 2019. Mr Agnew outlined plans to draft requirements for consideration in respect of performance briefing packs.

Members discussed the panel refresh, Higher Court Advocacy (HCA) staff and issues surrounding workload and capacity requirements. Gaps in advocacy monitoring and options to address this were also considered by members. Members were also advised that PQC will take forward the identification of a training programme and priorities with the Policy and Information Unit (PIU).

People & Resources Committee – 7 February 2019

IH provided members with an update on the matters and actions arising from the People and Resources Committee meeting of 7 February 2019. The Data Protection Officer (DPO) provided the Committee with an update on GDPR and the development of a PPS EDRMS and business case. The CMS Retention and Disposal Policy work needed by ICT will now be progressed as a priority due to the postponement of Committal reform.

Members noted that NICSHR has not as yet provided any detail on the work being taken forward centrally to develop a policy on agile working.

Performance & Delivery Committee – 8 February 2019

The Performance and Delivery Committee minutes and actions from the meeting of 20 December 2018 were reviewed and noted by members. Ms O’Kane advised

that the agenda has been restructured and will take forward matters such as new training, innovation, initiatives and processes.

Members noted discussions held on training and development opportunities to enable staff to perform in their current roles and to assist with career development.

Policy & Quality Committee – 12 February 2019

Mr Agnew provided an update on matters discussed at the meeting of 12 February. There are three policies currently being reviewed and it has been agreed a staff instruction will be issued in respect of recording of reasons for indictable decisions.

A post implementation review of the Case Management Procedures and risk registers will be completed by the PIU.

7. Change Management Board -26 February 2019.

Mr Hearst provided an overview of the progress of the various initiatives/projects discussed at the meeting.

8. Performance Issues

Performance Summary

The monthly performance summary for February was reviewed and discussed by members. Comparing the last 12 months the overall caseload has increased by 1.3%.

The overall work queue (unallocated files) has increased by 14.8% on the previous month and now stands at 2.1 weeks. The number of DIRs issued in the last three months has decreased by 8.6% compared to the previous three months.

The number of decisions issued during the last 12 months is slightly lower than the previous period down by 1.2% however the number of indictable decisions has risen by 19.4%. Of the ten regional timeliness targets, eight are being met over the financial year to date. Performance against the 50% and 80% indictable target are below the required level at 72.2%.

Ms O’Kane advised that members have been requested to produce a substantive report on cases on the 80/40 day report that are pending decisions in excess of 500 days, detailing the current position, reasons for delay and anticipated decision outcome. There are a number of cases with file quality issues in which multiple requests for further information have been submitted to the PSNI.

Members discussed the issues arising and potential measures to address this. It was agreed that Ms O’Kane will review and conduct a risk analysis to help inform a strategy for handling these cases.

AP 17-18/19 Ms O’Kane to report to the March Management Board on the latest position and progress to address cases with decisions pending in excess of 500 days.

9. Finance

Finance Update December 2018

Board members reviewed the paper outlining the key financial issues managed by the Finance Team as of 31 December 2018.

Members noted the key outturn figures, underspend, the financial impact of the use of counsel and incentivisation funds. Mr Hearst updated members on the latest information in respect of the budget for 2019/20. Members discussed the potential impact and implications for the PPS in managing and planning for the incoming financial year.

Briefing of Counsel January 2019.

Members discussed and noted the Briefing Report of the allocation of counsel to cases.

Procurement Report

Members noted the key issues in the December 2018 Procurement Report, in particular the CMS contract and the PPS Contract Compliance for the year to date.

10. People Issues

NICSHR Update February 2019

Members noted and expressed disappointment that no updated report had been made available.

RMT Update February 2019

Board Members noted and discussed the RMT report, including current staffing levels as of January 2019, management of vacancies, the health and well-being initiatives, corporate social responsibility, training analysis and IIP. Members noted the current salary spend and projected overall spend for year end.

In the absence of a policy document from NICS HR on agile working, RMT have agreed to provide a scoping document detailing the associated risks, checks and balances.

People Plan

Mr Hearst provided an update on the People Plan action and members expressed gratitude to staff for volunteering for the People Forum.

11. Governance Issues

Corporate Risk Register 2018/19

Members discussed and reviewed the 2018/19 Corporate Risk Register and noted the status and rating of all associated risks.

Draft PPS Purpose, Priorities and Corporate Risks

Members noted the draft and it was agreed that this should be further considered at the Directors Review Meeting. (DRM)

PPS Quality Measures.

Management Board discussed the revised legal quality assurance framework which details the means by which we monitor, manage and enhance the quality of our decision-making, case preparation and advocacy. Members agreed that this will be reviewed further at DRM/SMG.

Complaints Report

Members discussed and noted the contents of the Complaints/Reviews summary.

Requests for Information

Members noted the briefing paper and draft instruction regarding the ownership and approach to requests for material/information and agreed that Ms O'Kane will further consider the briefing paper and the instruction should be issued to staff.

12. Criminal Justice Reports Update

Ms O'Kane advised that responses have been submitted to both Sir John Gillen's Preliminary Report into the law and procedures in serious sexual offences in NI and the CJINI review on Domestic Violence.

13. Any Other Business

SCU Monitoring Report February 2019

Members reviewed progress made in respect of decisions taken, unallocated/allocated work queues, productivity and resourcing. The Director expressed concern that the measures taken to date have not been effective in addressing the issues.

Ms O’Kane advised that representations have been made to the PSNI in respect of having the SLA revised. Members discussed the options available including the Clinic Model and it was agreed that should be implemented immediately. There has also been steps in identifying resources to provide additional support to the Unit and it is noted that the recommendations of the BCS will inform the strategy going forward.

BCS Report

Members discussed the findings and recommendations of the BCS review of the Serious Crime Unit Operating Model. The Board have agreed to implement the model proposed. RMT will engage further with SCU staff in respect of the detailed out workings and will develop an implementation plan for consideration.

Website Project Update /Intranet development.

Mr Hearst provided members with an update on progress to complete the website/intranet refresh.

14. Papers for noting

Six Week Forward Planner/ Communication Update

Board Members noted the six week forward planner and communication update.

15. Next Meeting

The Management Board meeting will take place on the 21 March 2019 in Belfast Chambers.

Summary of Action Points arising from Management Board

Meeting of 28 February 2019

AP 17-18/19	Ms O’Kane to report to the March Management Board on the latest position and progress to address cases with decisions pending in excess of 500 days.
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Action Points carried over from previous meetings.

AP 10-18/19	Mr Agnew to commission a briefing paper on quality assurance mechanisms to submit a report to the PQC.
AP 14-18/19	IH to obtain clarification on the ownership of police material.