

PPS Management Board

10.00am Thursday 6 September 2018

Board Room, Belfast Chambers

Members: Stephen Herron (Chair)
Michael Agnew
Christopher Welford
David Hughes Hallett
Ian Hearst
Roger Davison

In Attendance: Tom Murphy
Libby Kinney
Head of Finance – Item 5

Secretariat: Policy and Information Unit

1. Apologies

2. Welcome

The Director welcomed members to the September 2018 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 June 2018

AP 3-18/19: The Data Protection Officer to provide the September 2018 Board meeting with an action plan outlining the approach to implement the retention and disposal policy.

Ongoing. The DPO is awaiting returns from several business areas.

AP 13-17/18: Mr Herron to provide the Board with the communications strategy and indicative costing of the proposals.

Ongoing. Mr Hearst is now taking this forward with the Head of Communications and will update the Board accordingly.

AP 17-17/18: Mr Hearst to request the Resource Management Team to benchmark against the CPS RASSO team in respect of resources, processes and productivity.

Ongoing. RMT are liaising with BCS to assist with the review and it is anticipated they will consult with the CPS RASSO in respect of formulation of options for the way forward.

AP 18-17/18: Board to be provided with an update in respect of challenges raised about the findings of Criminal Justice Inspection's on the handling of Sexual Violence and Abuse cases.

Ongoing. See Item 12.

6. Reports from Management Board Committees

Senior Management Group – 19 June 2018

Mr Agnew provided a verbal update on matters discussed at the Senior Management Group meeting of 4 September 2018.

People & Resources Committee – 23 August 2018

Mr Hearst updated members on the action plan produced following the Performance Management Workshop in August 2018. A range of actions have been introduced to reduce the backlogs and personal workloads, including the reallocation of files to F&D and the creation of a temporary support role to assist SPPs in Foyle.

Performance & Delivery Committee – 19 June 2018

No meeting has been held since last Board meeting.

Policy & Quality Committee – 24 July and 1 August 2018

Members noted the matters discussed and actions arising from the extraordinary Policy & Quality Committee meetings on 24 July and 1 August 2018. Mr Agnew updated members on the current position of the Road Traffic Policy and Youth Prosecution Policy. The Diversions Policy has been drafted and will be issued for consultation in the coming weeks.

7. Change Management Board

No meeting has been held since last Board meeting.

8. Performance Issues

Performance Summary

Members discussed and reviewed the caseload figures and noted that there has been a decrease of 0.9% in overall caseloads in comparison with the same period last year. However, there has also been an increase in case numbers in the categories 1-4 across the regions with Southern having the most significant increase.

Members discussed the comparison of decisions taken to the number of files and noted the figures for the overall regional work queues and performance against timeliness targets. SCU oldest cases are now 120 days.

Members discussed the need for a timeline of key milestones / core priorities for the organisation over the next few years. A date for the Corporate Planning event will be agreed at the October 2018 Board meeting.

AP 4-18/19 A date for Corporate Planning event to be agreed at the October Board.

9. Finance

Finance Report June 2018

Board members reviewed the paper outlining the latest PPS financial position. Members discussed and noted the financial outturn figures as of 30 June 2018, the financial impact of the use of counsel, pressures in respect of the 2018 budget, the in-year monitoring arrangements and the management of the Incentivisation Funds.

The Head of Finance updated members on the outcome of the June Monitoring Round which was allocated in August. PPS secured £331k of Fresh Start monies and £526k of additional funds to meet operational pressures. The two main areas of the PPS budget that present difficulties in managing are staff costs and counsel fees. The Board agreed that RMT can manage easements in the salaries budget of £21M through the use of overtime and noted the detailed work on counsel fees in order to produce a year end forecast in advance of the October 2018 monitoring round. Members also discussed costs in respect of legacy work and costs awarded against the PPS. A detailed paper will be circulated in advance of the October 2018 Board meeting.

Briefing of Counsel

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

Procurement Report

Members reviewed the key issues in the July 2018 Procurement Report, including the PPS procurement plan update 2018/19 and the contract compliance report year to date 2018/19.

10. People Issues

NICSHR Update August 2018

Members reviewed the NICS Information and Analysis Update Report.

Board Members noted the information provided on resourcing, recruitment and promotion and performance management.

There are 37 vacancies in the PPS with a significant number of these in the administrative grades, members noted plans to fill these via elective transfers. Members discussed the impact that these vacancies would have on the administrative functions and requested an update for the next Management Board.

Members reviewed and discussed the performance management figures. The PPS completion rate for end year appraisals is 75.2% against the overall NICS figure of 88.7%, with 65.8% of PPA/PDPs agreed against the overall figure of 84.2%. Mr Hearst advised that the report has been issued and a meeting is scheduled between NICSHR and PPS Grade 5 staff. The Board noted this issue and agreed the need for positive steps to be taken for improvements by the next Board meeting.

AP 5-18/19 Mr Hearst to obtain an update from RMT and NICSHR on plan for dealing with vacancies in the administrative grade vacancies.

RMT Update August 2018

Board Members discussed the RMT report, including current staffing levels, the health and well-being update, corporate social responsibility and training analysis.

Members noted RMT have been liaising with NICSHR in respect of recruitment of staff for forthcoming legacy work.

Members reviewed the figures for the PPS salary spend and projections for the year and noted the actions and initiatives that will have an impact on the budget.

IIP Update

Mr Hearst updated members on progress with the reaccreditation process. An online survey to capture views was completed in June. The IIP Convenor is scheduled to conduct meetings with a cross section of staff in Autumn 2018.

People Plan

Members discussed and noted the draft PPS People Plan 2018-21. The final draft will be brought before the next Board meeting for consideration.

AP 6-18/19 Mr Hearst to provide the Board with the final draft of the PPS People Plan 2018-21.

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.

Complaints Management

Members reviewed the update provided on complaints, reviews AQs and general correspondence. Members discussed the complaints update and noted that based on the analysis the process in operation provided a strong indication that these were being handled effectively and efficiently.

12. Criminal Justice Inspection

The Director advised that a response challenging some recommendations and findings of the draft report has been submitted to CJINI. A final accuracy check will be completed before the final report is published.

13. Any other Business

Update on the Serious Crime Unit

Members discussed and reviewed the SCU update report. There has been a spike in the number of files received during the summer as a result of a significant increase in the number of police officers dealing with SCU files.

Mr Davison provided members with an update on the number of files received, unallocated/allocated work queues, the number of decisions taken, progress to date, training and resourcing.

Mr Davison advised that the new project team is on course to deliver its objectives. By the end of September 2018 the number of files in the Unit will be reduced from 577 to 477 and all staff are meeting their targets with the average number of decisions taken across the Unit at 2.9 per day.

Members noted the positive progress, but given the major investment in resources it was important that the project plan was delivered on time. It was also agreed that the Board needed to receive more regular and structured reporting and therefore SCU was tasked with ensuring a fortnightly update report was issued to Board members.

AP 7-18/19 Management Board to be provided with regular updates on SCU project.

Update on Communications Strategy and Website/Intranet development.

Mr. Hearst updated the Board on the work being undertaken to complete the website/intranet refresh. It was noted that:

- The Board agreed the website was the priority and a target date of 31 March 2019 for completion was set
- The Director has asked Mr. Hearst to assume the role of SRO for the project
- The Board confirmed that the NI Direct solution would be adopted and there were no 'independence' issues for the Director in adopting a NICS style.

Following an assurance regarding social media capability, currency of the technical solution and flexibility to manage content it was agreed that the standard government website would be adopted.

Independent Assessor of Complaints Annual Report.

Members discussed and noted the positive Annual Report provided by the Independent Assessor, Mr Alan Henry OBE. Mr Henry found that the PPS has a relatively low volume of complaints and that they are dealt with professionally. A number of actions have been recommended and will be taken forward over the next few months. The Board noted and thanked Mr Henry for his report.

Business Cases for Server Refresh.

Mr Hearst introduced the business case to refresh and update the Servers to ensure that they are able to operate effectively. Having fully reviewed the submission, the Board approved the investment plan.

Board Thanks

On behalf of the Board, Mr Herron paid a warm tribute to Mr Hughes Hallett who is stepping down as a non-executive Director of the Management Board after seven years. He thanked him for his support, guidance and dedication to the PPS, acknowledging his helpful contribution to the Board and wished him well for the future.

Correspondence.

Members discussed correspondence from the former Director, Mr McGrory, and agreed response to be taken forward by Mr Herron.

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 next Management Board will take place on the 18 October 2018 in Belfast Chambers.

Summary of Action Points arising from Management Board

Meeting of 7 September 2018

AP 4-18/19	A date for Corporate Planning event to be agreed at the October Board.
AP 5-18/19	Mr Hearst to obtain an update from RMT and NICSHR on plan for dealing with vacancies in the administrative grade vacancies.
AP 6-18/19	AP 6-18/19 Mr Hearst to provide the Board with the final draft of the PPS People Plan 2018-21.
AP 7-18/19	Management Board to be provided with regular updates on SCU project.

Summary of Action Points arising from previous Management Board Meetings

AP 3-18/19	The Data Protection Officer to provide the September 2018 Board meeting with an action plan of the approach to implement the retention and disposal policy.
AP 13-17/18	Mr Herron to provide the Board with the draft communications strategy and the indicative costings of the proposals.
AP 17-17/18	Mr Hearst to request the Resource Management Team to benchmark against the CPS RASSO team in respect of resources, processes and productivity.
AP 18-17/18	Board to be provided with an update in respect of challenges raised about the findings of Criminal Justice Inspection's on the handling of Sexual Violence and Abuse cases.