

Meeting	Advisory Board
Date	06/07/2022
Time	10:00 – 13:00
Venue	MS Teams

Minute

Members	In attendance
Gayle Gorman (Chair)	Andrew Duncan (Item 11)
Craig Clement	
Gillian Hamilton	Governance
Janie McManus	Roz McCracken
Gillian Ritchie	Clare Connor (secretariat)
Patricia Watson	
John Fyffe	Apologies
David Gemmell	Kevin Kelman
Aileen Ponton	Lyndsay McRoberts
	Ollie Bray
	Ray McCowan

1. Welcome and apologies

- 1.1 The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were noted from Kevin Kelman, Lyndsay McRoberts, Ollie Bray and Ray McCowan.

2. Previous meeting

- 2.1 The minutes of 28 March 2022 and 25 May 2022 were agreed to be an accurate record of discussions.
- 2.2 AB 11/21-22 The Board agreed to close
 AB 12/21-22 The Board agreed to close
 AB 13/21-22 The Board agreed to close
 AB 15/21-22 The Board agreed to close
 AB 09/21-22 The Board agreed to close and split this into two new actions, one concentrating on developing our KPIs and one about how to measure impact of intensive activity work with Local Authorities (see new actions below).
 AB 14/21-22 The Board agreed to reforecast to 28 September 2022

New Action 01/22-23 Address Audit Scotland recommendations for KPIs

New Action 02/22-23 How ES measures impact when working with Local Authorities.

3. Declarations of Interest

- 3.1 There were no declarations or conflicts of interest to note.

4. Chair's Update

- 4.1 The Chair updated members on developments regarding internal and external business activities since the last meeting on 25 May.

- 4.2 In relation to external activities, particular points to note included the Chair's thanks to Non-Executives for meeting with the Cabinet Secretary in May regarding education reform; changes to Leadership Team remits; and an update on the Scottish attainment challenge.
- 4.3 As part of the Chair's internal activities update, it was noted that the feedback from the 2022 staff conference was currently being finalised by the Corporate Performance Team; that the initial feedback from staff on hybrid working highlighted the importance of flexibility and the need to look at our work spaces; the recent work of the Great Place to Work team and the ongoing development of the Corporate Plan.

5. Education Reform

- 5.1 Gillian Hamilton introduced the item, outlining the Scottish Government's approach to governance of education reform which had now been finalised and approved. The external membership of the Programme Delivery Board was still being developed, and noted that the Board would include Education Scotland union representation.
- 5.2 Board members thanked Gillian for the update and discussed the internal operationalising of the reform work and potential risks in relation to staff capacity, especially in light of the known budget pressures. Members discussed the SG response thus far to the Agency's business case for additional resource, with members flagging the need to ensure a shared understanding and agreement about what "proceed at risk" means. They also pointed out the need for the business case to clearly articulate the level of work and resource already being absorbed by the Agency in relation to education reform.
- 5.3 Members also highlighted the need to ensure colleagues with change experience are part of the internal operationalisation. It was noted that Education Scotland are looking into sourcing a Programme Manager with experience in change management.
- 5.4 Gillian Hamilton thanked members of the Board for their feedback and agreed to invite Clare Hicks, Director for Education Reform, to attend a future Advisory Board meeting.

New Action 03/22-23 Gillian Hamilton to invite Clare Hicks to a future Advisory Board meeting.

6. Audit and Risk Committee (ARC)

- 6.1 The Chair tabled the Committee's Annual Report and Assurance to the Accountable Officer which included a high level summary of the activity and scrutiny undertaken by members over the course of 2021-22. In particular, members noted the ARC's positive view of the Agency's internal control environment.
- 6.2 Members also noted the high end reasonable assurance opinion from Internal Audit and the unmodified audit opinion from Audit Scotland.

6.3 Following discussions, the Chair thanked members of ARC for their continued support of the Leadership Team.

7. Annual Report and Accounts

7.1 Gillian Hamilton provided a brief overview of the draft 2021-22 Annual Report and Accounts, noting that the outstanding pension information had now been provided.

7.2 Board members agreed that they were satisfied with the content of the Annual Report and Accounts and that the range of assurances and evidence on the effectiveness of the internal controls were sufficiently reliable to provide overall assurance and support to the Accountable Officer in her financial stewardship responsibilities. They therefore recommended that the Accountable Officer sign the 2021-22 Annual Report and Accounts.

7.3 The Chair expressed her thanks to all colleagues involved for the hard work that had gone in to the development of the report.

8. Change in ways of working – Universal, Targeted and Intensive support

8.1 Craig Clement introduced the tabled paper, and provided an overview of how the Agency is evolving our ways of working, not least to take account of the responsibilities outlined within the refreshed SAC Framework for Recovery and the need to accelerate progress.

8.2 Board members discussed the potential benefits and challenges of the new ways of working.

8.3 Following discussions, the Chair thanked Craig Clement and Patricia Watson for the paper and extended the Board's thanks to colleagues working in the Regional Improvement Teams.

9. Management Information Quarter 4 Report

9.1 Craig Clement introduced the Management Information Report for Quarter 4 2021-22.

9.2 Particular points to note included the overall average working days lost increase; the improved overall annual leave balances; increased engagement across social media channels; and an increase in page views across Corporate, National Improvement Hub and Parentzone websites.

9.3 The Advisory Board welcomed the update and in particular welcomed the reduction in the level of overall annual leave balances. It was noted that as a by-product of long-term absences there was higher levels in the number of days leave still to be taken.

9.4 Following discussions, Craig Clement thanked the Board for their feedback.

10. Transformation Programme

- 10.1 Craig Clement also provided an update on the Transformation Programme and advised members that the two recommendations contained within the digital assurance outcome letter were still in the process of being developed and would come back to the Board in due course.
- 10.2 Members discussed the road map for transitioning the programme to business as usual activity and the removal of technical support from CIVICA.
- 10.3 Members welcomed the update and extended thanks to the Transformation Programme Team.
- 10.4 Andrew Duncan joined the meeting.

New Action 04/21-22 Craig Clement to bring a substantive paper to the next meeting on progress of recommendations from the digital assurance outcome letter.

11. Finance Update

- 11.1 Andrew Duncan provided a brief financial update, which detailed the Agency's latest financial position, highlighting that budgets for 2022-23 had now been delegated to Strategic Directors and were subject to an assumption of a 15% slippage.
- 11.2 Members discussed the budget pressure and non-executives asked for information about previous year slippage levels. It was agreed that this information would be provided following the meeting.
- 11.3 The Chair extended thanks to the Finance Team.

New Action 05/21-22 Andrew Duncan to share information with Non-Executives before the next meeting on overall financial position from previous years.

- 11.4 Andrew Duncan left the meeting.

12. Education Scotland Risk Register

- 12.1 Roz McCracken provided an overview of the risk papers, detailing the new 2022-23 risk register, and noting that a number of risks are currently in the process of being assessed around: finance, data mitigation, digital and education reform. It was further noted that once this work is complete and appropriate controls are identified, the risks and mitigating actions would be added to the new risk register.
- 12.2 A brief discussion took place about the heat map and it was confirmed that a blind spot session on risk was being scheduled to take place with LT and members of ARC in August.
- 12.3 The Board was content with the risk papers provided and the Chair extended thanks to the Head of Governance.

13. Scrutiny Activity Report

- 13.1 Janie McManus introduced the scrutiny activity paper, highlighting the scrutiny activity currently undertaken to deliver the public and Ministerial commitments set out in the Annual Programme of Scrutiny 2021-22 and the preparation for the resumption of inspections in August 2022.
- 13.2 Board members welcomed the update before discussing the staffing levels and recruitment challenges within the Scrutiny directorate. It was noted from discussions some amendments would be made to the future reporting structure to provide a more detailed overview of the headcount within the inspection teams.

14. For awareness

- 14.1 The Procurement Performance Annual Report 2020-21 was tabled for awareness.

15. Any Other Business

- 15.1 The Board agreed the following key messages to convey to staff:
- ARC assurance and support to the Accountable Officer in her financial stewardship responsibilities;
 - the Chair's thanks to all involved in producing the 2021-22 Annual Reports and Accounts;
 - the Board's thanks to the Regional Improvement Teams for their continued partnership working;
 - the Board's thanks to the Transformation Programme Team for their success with the programme.

Date of next meeting

The next meeting was noted as scheduled for 28 September 2022, 10:00 – 13:00.

Clare Connor

Secretary

6 July 2022