

**Disclosure Scotland  
DS Board – Microsoft Teams  
Wednesday 27 January 2020  
10:00 to 13:00  
MINUTES**

**Present:** Gerard Hart (Chief Executive, Chair)  
Alan Eastwood (Director of Corporate Services)  
Neill Kemp (Director of Digital and Service Owner)  
Lynne McMinn (Director of Policy and Communications)  
Laura McCluskey (Director of Operations and Business Continuity)  
Douglas Hutchens (Non-Executive Board Member)  
Stuart Smith (Non-Executive Board Member)  
Christopher Wroath (Non-Executive Board Member)  
Keith Rosser (Non-Executive Board Member)  
Kavita Chetty (Non-Executive Board Member)  
Michael Chalmers (Director of Children and Families)

**Attending:** None

**Observers:** None

**Apologies:** [redacted] (Senior Communications Manager)

**Secretariat:** Fiona Price (Senior Governance Manager)

### **Welcome and Introductions**

1. The Chief Executive (CE) welcomed everyone to the meeting.
2. The Board congratulated Gerard on his successful appointment as Chief Executive.

### **Declaration of Interests**

3. None.

### **Previous Actions**

4. It was agreed that all actions, apart from the following could be closed:
  - **Action/04/Oct:** Deep dive on Future of DS and communications to staff;
  - **Action/04/Sep:** Senior Governance Manager develop appraisal process for NXBM; and

- **Action/01/Dec:** Senior Governance Manager to provide Performance Framework as a BTL paper with next Business Plan review

## **Chief Executive Update**

5. The Chief Executive provided an update on the following:
  - due to the Service Level Agreement (SLA) recovery plan, we are operationally back within our target SLA, which is positive news. The turnaround for Covid priority continues to be significantly quicker than BAU, performance has consistently held up in that important area;
  - there has been significant movement in the change teams and to ensure an agile change approach, LM has been appointed as Deputy Chief Executive to provide the strategic link between the leaders of the change teams and the Chief Executive. The Board agreed this was a positive appointment; and
  - constructive conversations have been had with VSDS around the online service. There has been significant uptake with other umbrella bodies taking note on how they can be part of the digital strategy.

## **Horizon Scanning**

6. The Chair noted the following:
  - business modelling and the economy are continually being affected by the pandemic, Ministers have agreed that we extend the removal of fees for Covid applications to 25 March 22;
  - we are taking formal steps to ensure service continuity as there has been no indication of when staff will be allowed back in the office. We have had successful conversations with the Union and have been assured all actions are in line with SG and the Union Partnership Agreement; and
  - with the mass vaccinations, DS are keeping in view a possible up surge in vaccinator applications. CW suggested he facilitate a collaboration with DS and NHS.
7. KR noted a predicted increase in applications as there is a rise in people out of work trying to find new jobs.

## **Feedback from the Governance Forums and Change Groups**

### Change Delivery Advisory Panel (CDAP)

8. The Chair of CDAP provided an update on the following:
  - some remedial work on technical debt has been done allowing costs to be reduced;

- NK provided an update on PVG online, which will be covered in the Digital update; and
  - the Act implementation requires a robust programme and road map which will be endorsed by LT and the CDAP. It is critical to ensure understanding of what is required for Minimum Viable Product (MVP) and to distinguish a timeline.
9. KR noted, from the minutes, the proximately column on risk and suggested this goes to the ARC. LM noted there is a risk development strategy for all departments, which will ensure all risk registers align with the Corporate profile.
10. SS highlighted the Strategic Finance Advisory Panel (SFAP) want to quantify the investment in digital and level of efficiency savings arising. NK noted platform re-engineering is primarily about system stability and addressing this will lead to future efficiency savings which need quantification. LM noted it is critical that the Finance Change Team have sight of the financial impact of all of this, and what is Act delivery cost and what is not.

**Action/01/Jan:** Director of Digital and Service Owner investigate digital investment and efficiency savings for the SFAP.

#### Legislation Implementation Advisory Panel (LIAP)

11. The chair of LIAP provided an update on the following:

- Head of Policy provided a read through of the latest highlight report. An implementation timeline will go to Ministers once cleared with the LT;
- a temporary Project Management Officer (PMO) has been appointed, which has made a significant difference and a number of the Act projects are now underway and a full project brief will be drafted and reviewed by the Disclosure Act Change Team (DACT);
- the panel are reviewing previous lessons learned in consideration for the Act's implementation; and
- the Chair had introductory discussion with Lynne McMinn on key challenges facing the DACT to ensure understanding and begin providing feedback.

#### Stakeholder Engagement Advisory Panel (SEAP)

12. The chair of the SEAP provided an update on the following:

- initial call of the group took place in December with a follow up discussion on 18/01 after the change team had met within DS;
- the panel had initial discussions on developing an overall Stakeholder Map which would expand to cover customer measures and DS strategic aims such as digital and national recruitment priorities for SG;
- the terms of reference was also discussed and amended;
- the panel has invited Scottish Government (Fair Work Directorate), Criminal Justice Voluntary Forum, WhoCares? Scotland, Tesco Bank, and TSB for potential co-opted members to join SEAP; and
- the first formal meeting of SEAP is scheduled for the last week of February.

### Business Innovation Advisory Panel (BIAP)

13. The chair of the BIAP provided an update on the following:

- a positive meeting was had, focussing on the Terms of Reference (ToR), the role of the panel, how it will operate and reporting arrangements; and
- the Chair shared his positive thoughts on the panel members and the contribution they can make.

14. The chair of the BIAP raised a slight caution concern around the panel blogs for the DS intranet site, that these do not tend to blur the line between executive and non-executive roles. The Chief Executive agreed this distinction was critical. He confirmed the blogs demonstrate to staff that DS are engaging in governance in a strategic way and involving the Non-Executive Board Members to ensure this is effective and impartial. The Board agreed the blogs need to be in support of this participation but carefully stay within Non-Executive territory.

### Strategic Finance Advisory Panel (SFAP)

15. The chair of the SFAP provided an update on the following:

- the second meeting of the SFAP took place on 08/01/2021. The three external members have already gained a good understanding of the strategic finance issues and are adding considerable value to discussions;
- the main points arising at the meeting were around the development of a financial monitoring template based on the Strategic Finance Plan, the incremental effect of reengineering and capital investment; and
- it was agreed that SFAP would receive updates from the Strategic Finance and Savings Change Team concerning efficiency measures and impact on budgets.

16. MC joined the meeting and congratulated GH on his appointment as CEO. MC also welcomed the strategic financial approach and stated it was great to see such pro-activity in this area.

### **Performance Review and Year to Date Projections**

17. The Director of Operations and Business Continuity provided an update on the following:

- to date we have received and completed around 350,000 applications of which approximately 40% have been Covid specific, average timescales for these priority applications have been significantly less than for routine;
- as we continue to prioritise such applications this has impacted our routine timescales in part. A dedicated Covid resource was created to support and expedite urgent response applications;

- unfortunately, due to a number of unforeseen circumstances, our service has been far below our customers' expectations and needs for the last 12 weeks; however
- our recovery plans have worked well, and whilst our SLA position is still reflecting only 55-60% of applications going out within target in the last 4 weeks, the majority of aged applications have now been cleared, with no more systemically falling out of SLA since mid-December;
- the Business Improvement Change Team have been issued the challenge of sustaining the SLA to identify continued business improvements; and
- a range of actions are underway, or are planned, to further improve our service readiness levels and will be reported to and reviewed through the new Change Governance Structures.

18. KR noted industry have recognised the on-going efforts and overall better position. KR asked if there was a clear route cause to the performance decline. LM noted there was a lessons learned to review the root cause, to which DS are content of the understanding and the actions taken.

19. KC commented on staffing, particularly with the progress of on-boarding and the possible increase in applications. LM noted we have temporary resource which gives an increased level of assurance and we have put in place business readiness for possible additional applications.

### **Strategic Finance Update**

20. The Director of Corporate Services provided an update on the following:

- the total resource (cash) budget pressure advised to SG for SBR is £7.1 million;
- outstanding capital commitments and future profile is being managed by the Digital Director. Although the position remains challenging, we are confident that spend can be contained within budget;
- DS has established robust governance to track progress against the Strategic Financial Plan (SFP) to ensure appropriate levels of assurance; and
- an update on a number of items contained in the SFP that influences funding need in FY 20/21 was provided.

21. MC commented, before leaving the meeting, that DS have played a pivotal role in the National response to Covid, have dealt with the challenge impressively and that it is important to reflect on this success. SS noted IA's assessment and interest in the new governance arrangements, with positive feedback and good practice being shared. MC confirmed pleased to see positive response.

### **Digital Update**

22. The Director of Digital and Service Owner provided an update on the following:

- some work around efficiency savings has been done and it still on-going;

- there have been some items of interest in the press around data deletion and cyber-attacks, DS are being increasing vigilant. In particular investigating whether potential vulnerabilities may need to be addressed more quickly than otherwise planned. Further information would be provided and considered by CDAP.
- the private Beta continues to make progress, to date (18 January 2021) we have on-boarded 62 organisations representing 229 counter signatories. PASS has received 5051 applications and our aim is to move to a public Beta towards the end of March 2021;
- we have started work to on-board a further 109 organisations and communications will be released to them during week commencing 18 January 2021;
- to date we have around a 20% drop-off rate. We are taking action to reduce this figure by increasing customer support and removing an unnecessary mandatory field in the application; and
- work on the Disclosure (Scotland) Act has commenced. Additionally, we have commenced work to improve the platform which is a critical factor in enabling us to deliver the minimum viable product for the Act.

23. The Board had a discussion around the standardisation of reporting across all of the panels to enable focussed discussion and provide the assurance that the CE needs.

**Action/02/Jan:** Director of Operations and Business Continuity review panel reporting arrangements.

## Corporate Risk

24. The Director of Operations and Business Continuity provided an update on the following:

- all Change Governance teams have now been established and Board reporting is now in place, the Change teams have all held their first meeting in November/December and have now been issued with the first round of Challenge Statements;
- each team shall be responsible for the creation and management of a change team risk register. The Change Delivery lead will report progress to their sponsor on a fortnightly basis and any risks deemed to need escalation, shall be escalated to the relevant Departmental Register or the Corporate Register;
- the next step in this process will be to interrogate departmental registers and re-calibrate key delivery risks, appropriate owners and strategic links / escalations;
- work is continuing on improving our risk management approach, define our risk strategy and articulation and management of risk throughout this financial year;
- the People Resilience and Support Team have cascaded suggested training options to relevant staff and training has commenced within the different risk groups; and

- the current position recommended by the CRRG is Amber.

25. The Board noted their agreement with the Amber status, due to the impact of mitigations and controls.

26. DH asked Board members to think about what they would like the ARC to focus on in the coming year.

**Action/03/Jan:** Board members to provide suggestions for ARC Calendar of Business to DH and/or Senior Governance Manager.

### **People Survey Results**

27. The People Resilience and Support Manager provided an update on the following:

- In May 2020 a Covid-19 Pulse Survey was carried out to determine the impact of coronavirus on our people, this allowed DS to focus on what our people needed to support them through the pandemic, then in October 2020 the DS People Survey was launched;
- the DS People Survey 2020 results were published on the 14/12/20. Notably, DS achieved a 90% completion rate, an increase of 2% on last year's results. This compares favourably with the 79% rate of the SG;
- five questions in the People Survey are used to measure employee engagement. Our overall employee engagement score has increased 4% from last year, to 61%; and
- a read out of the result highlights was provided.

28. The Board commented on the overall results as a positive foundation for incremental progress.

### **Hard Stop (Paper Applications)**

29. The Chair put forward a notional date of 31 March 2021 to have customer using the PVG online service. DS aspire to have all customers transitioned onto the online service and those who can't will have a plan to get onto service. An assisted digital route will be deployed for those who are unable to use the online service.

30. KC noted while it is important to make the move to the online service, the assisted digital channel is critical. LM highlighted the assisted digital service is specifically drawn out on the BIAP terms of reference and will be a priority.

### **AOB**

31. None

**Next Meeting Wednesday 10 March 2021**

Actions	Responsible	Due by	Status
<p><b>Action/04/Oct:</b> Deep dive on Future of DS and communications to staff.</p>	<p>CEO</p>	<p>May 2020</p>	<p><b>10/03/20:</b> Added to April away day agenda.</p> <p><b>23/06/20:</b> April away day cancelled due to Covid. Deep dive postponed.</p> <p><b>01/09/20:</b> Postponed. The Future of DS will link in with the Corporate planning which will begin at the end of the year. The Recovery Group are looking into future requirements and smarter working.</p> <p><b>19/01/2021:</b> Future office requirements project commenced with lead, Leanne Baillie, appointed. Corporate planning will begin in March 2021.</p>
<p><b>Action/05/Jun:</b> Chair of CDAP open conversation with Police Scotland CDAP member around DS only having access to Police system access through accredited sites.</p>	<p>Chair of CDAP</p>	<p>28 August 2020</p>	<p><b>01/09/20:</b> awaiting updated from Chair or CDAP.</p> <p><b>08/09/20:</b> Chair of CDAP speaking with Police Scotland member at the end of the week (w/e 11 September).</p> <p><b>27/09/20:</b> Brief discussion took place; more in depth discussion will be had at the CDAP on 28 October.</p> <p><b>08/12/2020:</b> a further detailed discussion is required in preparation for COP26.</p> <p><b>19/01/21:</b> awaiting update from Chair of CDAP.</p> <p><b>27/02/2021:</b> action transferred to Neill Kemp. This is ongoing and the digital team are looking in to. Any updates will be included in the digital update standing agenda item.</p>

<p><b>Action/04/Sep:</b> Senior Governance Manager develop appraisal process for NXBM.</p>	<p>Senior Governance Manager</p>	<p>30 September 2020</p>	<p><b>27/09/20:</b> on-going</p> <p><b>07/12/2020:</b> Due to competing priorities, this action is still in progress. Draft guidance and template currently being developed and will be available for CE sign off by 29 January 2021.</p> <p><b>19/01/2021:</b> Draft sent to CE for review.</p>
<p><b>Action/01/Dec:</b> Senior Governance Manager to provide Performance Framework as a BTL paper with next Business Plan review.</p>	<p>Senior Governance Manager</p>	<p>Board on 10 March 2021</p>	<p>Performance Framework will be shared at the Board on 10 March 2021.</p> <p><b>27/02/2021:</b> On-going</p>
<p><b>Action/01/Jan:</b> Director of Digital and Service Owner investigate digital investment and efficiency savings for the SFAP</p>	<p>Director of Digital and Service Owner</p>	<p>7 May 2021</p>	
<p><b>Action/02/Jan:</b> Director of Operations and Business Continuity review panel reporting arrangements</p>	<p>Director of Operations and Business Continuity</p>	<p>30 April 2021</p>	
<p><b>Action/03/Jan:</b> Board members to provide suggestions for ARC Calendar of Business to DH and/or Senior Governance Manager</p>	<p>All Board members</p>	<p>12 March 2021</p>	