

Present: Judith Robertson (Chair) JR
Susan Kemp (SK)
Alan Mitchell (AM)
Jane-Claire Judson (JCJ, items 7 and 8 items only)

In Attendance: Tiia Kontro (Minute Secretary) (TK)
Kavita Chetty (KC)
Liz Gibb (LG, items 4 and 5 only)
Emma Hutton (EH, item 6 only)

Apologies:

List of Acronyms: FRAC: Finance Risk and Audit Committee
HMIPS: Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Prisons Scotland
NPM: National Preventative Mechanism
SPCB: Scottish Parliamentary Corporate Body
UNCRC: United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

1. Welcome / Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

2. Minutes of Previous Meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 5 October 2020 were approved with minor changes.

3. Matters Arising

The matters arising report was discussed and the following points noted.

- 3.1. AM requested an update on the discussions with HMIPS, JR agreed and suggested this would be included in the discussion under AOB.

4. Q2 Finance Report

LG joined the meeting.

LG introduced the Q2 Finance Report paper to the Commissioners. The following points were noted. The Commission:

- 4.1. will require minimal contingency funding from SPCB to cover e.g. maternity leave, this being due to an underspend in other areas as a result of COVID-19.
- 4.2. is expecting to underspend on the additional funding received from SPCB for new roles, due to delays with recruitment.
- 4.3. discussed the potential impact of further lockdown and home working on estimated travel and event costs, and costs of support for staff working from home.

5. Review of Policies

LG introduced two reviewed policies to the Commission – the Finance and Procurement Policy, and the Business Continuity Plan.

LG explained that the Finance and Procurement Policy was combined from various existing policies to make a single consolidated version. No

major changes have been introduced as the policy follows SPCB guidance.

- 5.1. The Commission approved the Finance and Procurement Policy with some minor changes and agreed to review the Scheme of Delegation annex at a later date.

Action: LG to seek to amend the policy according to the feedback received from the Commission.

- 5.2. LG introduced the Business Continuity Plan paper to the Commission. No significant changes have been made to the paper: the document was last updated in 2019 at the time of office move.
- 5.3. LG noted that the policy was reviewed in February 2020 and had to be immediately implemented due to COVID-19 in March. It was also noted that the policy is based on Government guidance and has been drafted with the size of the organisation in mind.
- 5.4. AM raised a question about current business continuity risks in the extended period of home working. LG noted that the biggest risk in the current circumstances would be the loss of IT systems.

Action: LG to add an annex to the existing policy to reflect the plan during extended home working.

- 5.5. SK raised a question on whether the Commissioners and Chair should be included in the policy section about staff traveling to foreign countries. LG clarified that since the Commissioners and the Chair are employed by the Parliament, they should be covered by the SPCB policy.
- 5.6. AM raised a question on whether the Commissioners and Chair would be covered by the Commission's travel insurance policy when traveling abroad.

Action: LG to check the Commission's travel insurance policy and follow up with the Commissioners.

6. Comms Strategy Workshop

EH joined the meeting.

EH explained the purpose of the workshop to the Commissioners and shared with them a reminder of the Commission's current communications strategy as well as how it has been implemented.

The Commission discussed three key aspects of the communications strategy: the Commission's values; target and priority audiences; and communication goals in relation to the strategic priorities.

EH explained the next steps of the process and noted that a draft communications strategy will be presented to the Commission at a future Commission Meeting in 2021.

7. COVID Update

KC shared an update with the Commission on the ongoing work around COVID-19.

- 7.1. SK raised the recent Health Scotland Report on hospital discharges. The Commission will continue to call for these and other issues to be addressed by a public inquiry.
- 7.2. The Commission discussed the ongoing challenges around capacity. It was noted that at the beginning of the first lockdown the Commission's work was focussed on COVID-19 work solely. The Commission's regular work has now started again whilst COVID-19 work is still ongoing which is creating capacity issues. The Commission is assessing regularly the priority of work.
- 7.3. KC, JR and AM shared short updates about the National Taskforce on Human Rights Leadership, the NPM and prison monitoring work.

8. Commissioner Recruitment

JR explained that SPCB have requested feedback on what kind of profile would be useful for new Commissioners to have going forward. Each Commissioner has provided written feedback to SPCB, but it was

agreed that a more detailed conversation would be useful. A number of points were raised and it was agreed that the feedback from the Commissioners will be provided to SPCB.

Action: JR to share the feedback from the discussion with SPCB.

9. AOB

- 9.1. JR shared an update about the recent meeting with HMIPS. The discussion at the meeting was constructive and topics of discussions involved potential future thematic visits.
- 9.2. The Commission discussed the Scottish Police Authority Independent Advisory Group and the Commission's presence in the group.
- 9.3. AM requested an update on the Deaths in Custody Review work. JR provided an update, noting that the process is ongoing, the literature review has been commissioned, and that a number of families have indicated they are willing to be part of an advisory group.
- 9.4. KC shared a short update on the UNCRC Bill and the Commission's powers in relation to the framework bill. A full discussion and a supporting detailed paper will be coming to the December Commission Meeting.
- 9.5. TK shared suggestions for the Commission Meeting dates for 2021. It was agreed that the list of dates would be shared and agreed by email.

Action: TK to share the proposed Commission Meeting dates for 2021 with the Commissioners.

- 9.6. A note was added from the Commission to welcome all the new staff members Luis Felipe Yanes and Barbara Bolton to the Commission.