

MINUTES OF THE PHSO UNITARY BOARD MEETING

THURSDAY, 10 JANUARY 2013

15th floor, Millbank Tower

11am-1.30pm

EXECUTIVE MEMBERS:

Dame Julie Mellor DBE, the Ombudsman (Chair)

Claire Forbes, Director of Communications

Gwen Harrison, Interim Director of Operations

Gavin McBurnie, Interim Director of Operations (Business Development)

Helen Hughes, Chief Operating Officer

Angela Paradise, Interim Divisional Director of Corporate Resources

NON-EXECUTIVE MEMBERS:

Peter Freedman

Sharmila Nebhrajani

Sir Jon Shortridge KCB

Helen Walley

Dr Tony Wright

IN ATTENDANCE:

Catherine Bickle, PA Consulting

Steve Brown, Head of Executive Office and Governance

Joy Higgins, Executive Assistant to the Ombudsman (minutes)

Graham Payne, Director of Finance, Planning and Performance

1. Welcome and introductions

- 1.1 Julie Mellor welcomed members to the inaugural meeting of the Unitary Board ('the Board').

2 Final draft high-level operating model

- 2.1 The Board was informed that the high-level operating model was the starting point for developing the detail of the 2013-18 Strategic Plan. Today's meeting gave an opportunity for Board members to familiarise themselves with the model and provide feedback on its potential implications.
- 2.2 Alongside the operating model were:
- Our high-level Strategy for 2013-18
 - Our design criteria and staffing plans
 - A five-year plan to design, build, implement and operate the new strategic aims
 - Our investment and savings plans
 - Our future complaints delivery process model
 - Our future governance framework.

2.3 The non-executive Board members requested a presentation that would give them a fuller picture of the path of thinking to date to enable them to join the executives as we move to operating as a unitary Board and to contribute to further deliberation and decision making.

This should include:

- the drivers and evidence base for change
- the high-level vision, mission and strategic aims:
 - positioned in the context of our statutory remit
 - making clear whether individual complaints were still to be at the heart of what we do
- what needs to change for us to be fit to deliver the five strategic aims
- how the new operating model will enable us to tackle the things that need to change, including explaining:
 - whether health and parliamentary cases can be dealt with in the same way
 - the tests we will use to check if the operating model deals with the things that need to change e.g. what will be better in relation to complaints about potentially avoidable deaths
 - whether we are talking about incremental or fundamental change
 - how caseworkers will know things are different
 - given that previous Ombudsmen have shared the ambition to have wider public impact, what about this strategy and model makes us think we can achieve more
 - what we will stop doing
- over what time periods will different changes be delivered.

2.4 On the design criteria for the organisation, comments on things to consider included:

- maintenance of quality control of casework
- career paths for high potential staff
- explaining terms like 'design authority'
- raising our sights from being good at 'public administration' to providing a good 'public sector customer service'.

2.5 Other general comments on things to consider as we move forward were:

- the importance of reviewing our values to reflect the behaviours needed for the new strategy e.g. flexibility and agility
- focus on risks:
 - what risks might be involved in changing the current case assessment model
 - to what extent are proposals grounded by staff with experience of PHSO.

3. High-level Structure

3.1 Please refer to the minutes of the confidential session.

4. Human Resources Plan (to April 2013)

4.1 Please refer to the minutes of the confidential session.