
Children and Young People's Commissioner Scotland

Senior Management Team Meeting Minutes

09 October 2019
9:45 – 11:45

Note to Reader:

The Children and Young People's Commissioner Scotland publishes the minutes of the Senior Management Team (SMT) meetings. These meetings are held monthly.

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Requests should be made in writing, email or any other recordable form to:
Children and Young People's Commissioner Scotland
Bridgeside House
99 McDonald Road
Edinburgh, EH7 4NS
Tel: 0131 346 5350
Email: info@cypcs.org.uk

Present: Diego Quiroz (DQ) – Acting Head of Strategy
Nick Hobbs (NH) – Head of Advice & Investigations
Ezmie McCutcheon (EM) – Head of Communications
George Valiotis (GV) – Principal Strategic Adviser
Nicola Vallance-Ross (NRV) (Chair) – Head of Corporate Services

Apologies: Máire McCormack (MM) – Head of Strategy

Minutes: Heather Belmonte (HB) – Executive Assistant

| | Details | Action By |
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| | Start time 9:50 | |
| 1 | Welcome and apologies | |
| | Apologies from Máire McCormack, Head of Strategy | |
| 2 | Minutes of previous meeting & actions | |
| | Previous minutes were agreed. Item 4 – Insurance - EM confirmed there will be no activities out with either Bridgeside House or the Zoo during the Gathering. | |
| 3 | Annual Contribution Plan Strategic Plan | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual contribution plan <p>GV is currently writing a policy to clarify how the contribution plan should be utilised. GV advised that normally any appraisal system would be commenced at the beginning of the year and asked the SMT how they would like to progress this as in 2019 it will be out of sync. SMT agreed that as they have already discussed with their teams it would good to use the framework over next few months to start the process ASAP. DQ discussed the need for a standardised performance management system; NVR explained that there is a guide within the Employee Handbook provided to all of SMT by Law At Work. NVR is working on reviewing the Employee Handbook and Training needs currently.</p> <p>GV stated that he will finish the Contribution Plan Policy by the end of this week. He asked that SMT provide track changes/comments on this and send back to GV for review. The target date for the Contribution Plan is 25/10/2019. GV suggested 2 hour session to workshop with SMT and discuss approaches. HB to schedule after 23rd October</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategic plan <p>GV presented a draft Strategic Plan to SMT The SMT agreed that it would be good for the YAG (Young Advisers Group) to write the foreword.</p> | <p>GV</p> <p>SMT</p> <p>HB</p> |

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| | <p>GV talked SMT through the draft stating that the references within the text were only for reference and that the Budget would need to be added. NVR stated that if it were to be presented in its current form there would need to be clarification on what budget lines were incorporated into aims 1, 2 and 3.</p> <p>GV suggested the back page should be a call to action, to encourage participation and encourage young people to contact office.</p> <p>DQ commented that the Strategic Plan was a good piece of work.</p> <p>GV advised SMT that the draft plan would be completed today and would be circulated to SMT with prompt for feedback given the time constraints of the meeting.</p> <p>EM asked GV to talk through how young people are involved in strategy:</p> <p>GV detailed that an online survey is being prepared. This will go to EM for comms work. GV stated that it will be targeted at children and young people and shared by digital channels and schools. The cost will be minimum as using survey monkey. EM raised the challenge of wording questions for a broad age range. GV suggested the office would learn from responses and use as base line for future surveys.</p> <p>NH would like to encourage younger children to complete the survey and suggested asking Primary school teachers to complete with their class.</p> <p>It was also suggested that CYPCS should ask UNICEF and rights respecting schools could put a link to the survey in their newsletters.</p> <p>GV to link with Senior Professional Advisor for Rights Respecting Schools, UNICEF UK.</p> <p>GV detailed that there are 5 strategic plan consultations planned before the Human Rights Gathering in November. EM stressed the need to reach as many children and young people as possible and that CYCPS The SMT had a discussion around the volume and agreed that this was to be and usually is expected to be a minimum of 10.</p> <p>DQ questioned whether the office has capacity to do this. EM suggested some consultations could take place after the Gathering.</p> | <p>GV SMT</p> <p>GV</p> |
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| | <p>GV to speak to Participation officer to arrange more consultations.</p> <p>NVR asked GV given the draft form of the Strategic Plan whether he needed further assistance. SMT offered to assist with consultations given the time pressures for laying the Strategic Plan.</p> <p>SMT discussed which members of staff could lead workshops – NVR stated she is confident with participation but has not run consultations before although is happy to lead, and EM and NH stated they would be comfortable doing this and would consider which staff could also assist.</p> | GV |
| 4 | Finance | |
| | <p>Finance Update</p> <p>NVR presented the most recent budget vs actual report.</p> <p>NVR advised that underspend should be monitored by the budget holder with significant variances discussed at SMT and decisions made on reallocation of budget.</p> <p>NVR asked DQ to look at the Strategy budget line in more detail for reallocation of budget.</p> <p>SMT approved the figures within the budget vs actual report.</p> <p>NVR advised that the Auditors will be coming along to the Governance meeting held on 23/11/2019 to discuss the Audit process.</p> | DQ |
| 5 | Governance | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Register of Interests <p>NVR advised SMT that there will be an annual planner for SMT Meetings moving forward with an internal Policy tracker to ensure organisational Policies are reviewed according to Governance Model.</p> <p>SMT should look at whether there are conflicts of interests and how to mitigate these. Concerns should be flagged ahead of the next meeting.</p> <p>Carried over to next meeting to go through line by line.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Risk Register <p>NVR detailed that the Risk Register is a Governance and annual accounting requirement. Each year, CYPSC is bound to detail what The Commissioner deems as significant risks in its Annual Accounts. As part of the Audit process, the risk register is required to be updated on an Annual basis but should be updated when any risks are identified. It is a working</p> | SMT |

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| | <p>document. This document is an organisational document, to be updated by SMT with knowledge of risks brought to their attention by staff members.</p> <p>SMT to update the risk register by end of the day tomorrow – 10 October. NVR will put the document onto Microsoft teams for all to access.</p> | SMT |
| 6 | Office Policies | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Guideline for the supervision of young people staying overnight <p>EM had previously added comments to the documents on Microsoft teams</p> <p>Page 1 – NVR questioned whether different consent forms are necessary and suggesting combining into one with 'n/a' next to where not applicable.</p> <p>GV left the meeting at this point.</p> <p>SMT discussed the need for a suite of materials to assist with participation. This includes a participation policy, child protection and safeguarding and guidance on overnight stays. DQ was advised to task</p> <p>Policy and principles need to go alongside this document to give staff confidence when supervising young people. The legal element but also good practice to be included.</p> <p>Travel insurance was discussed – the need for clarity as to who is responsible for it.</p> <p>EM raised the need for clarity regarding sharing a room overnight and gave the example of sharing a tent at the Who Cares? Summer Camp.</p> <p>NH suggested distinguishing between external events and CYPCS events.</p> <p>NVR feels this document is more about admin and consent forms and should be an appendix to a much broader policy to be developed by the Participation Officer and Legal Officer.</p> <p>NH & DQ to speak to staff this week regarding creating suite of materials – policy and principles.</p> <p>One single document to come to next SMT meeting for approval.</p> | NH/ DQ |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business Travel Insurance <p>NVR confirmed the Young Advisers Group and those working on behalf of the office can be added to business travel insurance.</p> <p>Need to be clear to staff when travel insurance needs to be booked.</p> <p>NVR is happy to write briefing note</p> <p>Before then needs to renew travel insurance – needs to know travel plans over next 12 months – October – October. The approx. number of different types of travel for Commissioner, staff and young people was agreed.</p> <p>NVR to communicate this with JELF and renew travel insurance for the year.</p> <p>GV returned to the meeting.</p> | |
| 7 | Health and Safety | |
| | <p>5 staff completed first aid training.</p> <p>NVR confirmed to DQ that the DSE for a member of the Strategy Team was complete and one of the actions from this was to purchase a softer light.</p> <p>Mental health first aid training for all staff has been arranged. It was noted the date clashes with Children's parliament sitting and incorporation march. DQ to nominate a strategy team member to attend the Children's Parliament sitting.</p> <p>It was agreed not all staff need to do training but there is a need for staff we can signpost to when necessary.</p> | DQ |
| 8 | SMT report | |
| | <p>This report is a quarterly statement of the work of the SMT over the period for the Commissioner to be presented at the Governance meeting. HB to pull together a starting document taken from SMT minutes.</p> | HB |
| 9 | FOISA discussion | |
| | <p>SMT discussed how to embed FOISA (Freedom of Information) organisationally to mitigate any bottlenecks after the move of the Information Officer to Strategy from Corporate Services.</p> <p>The Information officer has volunteered to provide training for the office.</p> <p>NH suggested allocating a lead person related to the FOISA context. For example, if the request related to records of spend, this would sit with Corporate Services as the lead.</p> | |

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| | <p>It was agreed a clear process, division of tasks and sign off is needed. The information officer has already created a process map.</p> <p>NVR suggested the person who holds the information should be responsible. SMT discussed the need for a process to identify overlap between teams and to assign a lead.</p> <p>NVR to meet with Information Officer and map out the process. Training then to be agreed at the next SMT meeting. NVR to discuss with Data Protection Officer and arrange training. Completion date – over the next 3 months.</p> | NVR |
| 10 | Future agenda planning | |
| | <p>Strategic plan - 30 minutes for sign off.</p> <p>SMT report</p> <p>Child protection and safeguarding policy – sign off – 10 mins (under policies)</p> <p>Register of interests – 10 mins</p> | |
| | Meeting end: 12:15 | |

Date of next meeting: 5 November 9:45

Chair: NVR

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| Minute Approved By: | SMT | Date Approved: | 5/11/19 |
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Senior Management Team Action Log

| | Item No. | Item | Date Due | Lead | Notes |
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| 13/08/19 | 2.2 | NVR to look at insurance for external organisations using the office. | | NVR | |
| 21/08/19 | 4 | NVR with SMT to create CPD (Continuing Professional Development) plan for next year | | NVR | 9/10/10 Agreed this should be for the whole office between now and 2021. NVR to draft |
| 09/10/19 | 3 | Annual Contribution Plan GV will finish this week and send the policy and template to SMT by end of week Next week SMT should track changes and send to GV to be agreed HB to schedule 2 hour workshop for SMT and GV | 18/10 25/10 | GV SMT HB | |
| 09/10/19 | 3 | Strategic Plan GV to finish draft plan today and circulate to SMT SMT to review and provide feedback GV to link with Senior Professional Advisor for Rights Respecting Schools, UNICEF UK re circulating online survey | 18/10 25/10 | GV SMT GV | |

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| | | GV to speak to Participation officer to arrange more consultations | | GV | |
| 09/10/19 | 4 | Finance. NVR asked DQ to look at the Strategy budget line in more detail for reallocation of budget. | | DQ | |
| 09/10/19 | 5 | Register of Interests. Concerns on the conflict of interests for the organisation to be discussed prior to the next meeting. | 05/11 | SMT | |
| 09/10/19 | 5 | Risk Register. SMT to update the risk register by end of the day tomorrow | 10/10 | SMT | |
| 09/10/19 | 6 | Office Policies. Guideline for the supervision of young people staying overnight NH & DQ to speak to staff this week regarding creating suite of materials – policy and principles. | | DQ/ NH | |
| 09/10/19 | 7 | Health and Safety. Mental Health training clash with Children's Parliament event. DQ to nominate a strategy team member to attend the Children's Parliament sitting | Before 6/11 | DQ | |
| 09/10/19 | 8 | SMT report. HB to pull together a starting document taken from SMT minutes. | 29/10 | HB | |

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| 09/10/19 | 9 | FOISA - NVR to meet with Information Officer and map out the process. NVR to discuss with Data Protection Officer and arrange training | End of January 2020 | NVR | |
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