Note of the Extra-ordinary Executive Board Meeting held on 06/06/08

Present: Alice Brown, Ombudsman (Chair)
Eric Drake, Director of Investigations
Niki Maclean, Head of Services
David Robb, Director of Policy and Development

Fiona Paterson, Senior Personal Assistant (Secretary)

In attendance: Emma Gray, Communications & Outreach Manager (taking minutes)
Judy Saddler, Investigations Manager
Kathleen Steindl, Investigations Manager
Annie White, Casework Knowledge Manager

Actions

1. The meeting opened at 09:10 with apologies from Iain Law, Investigations Manager.

2. SDC Quarter 4 and Year-end Report
   The Board noted the contents of the paper and accompanying annexes. Issues arising from
   the report were discussed. The Board approved the paper and year-end statistics for
   publishing.

   The Board noted the paper outlining suggested changes to the two processes and
discussed the issues arising.

   The Board approved recommended changes to the Challenges to Casework Decisions
   process and noted the actions. Additionally, the Board requested the leaflet sent to
   complainants informing them of our investigations process be revised accordingly.

   The Board requested further information on the estimated costings for the proposed change
   to the SDC process. This section of the paper will be re-tabled at the Board Meeting on 18
   June with the additional information and proposals.

   A project leader to implement the Board’s recommendations on both processes will be
   identified for 18 June.

4. New Quality Assurance Process
   The Board thanked the Project Team for the production of the detailed and informative
   paper and discussed issues arising.

   The Board accepted the recommendation to trial a peer-review QA process for a 6-month
   period. The Board requested that the peer-review be carried out by two CIs at a time, on a
   rolling 3-month basis, with the expectation that all appropriately qualified CIs would perform
   this function. The Board endorsed the skill-development and learning that would take place
   in a peer-review system and noted it was a core function of the current CI role.

   The Board requested the Project Leader to make the suggested amendments and
   implement the recommendations.
5. **IF Group Project Report**
The Board thanked the IF Group for the production of the detailed and informative paper and discussed issues arising.

The Board requested the Investigation Managers to encourage their team members to ensure the Investigation Plan was a live document. IMs

The Board accepted the recommendations in the paper and requested the Project Leader to implement the 2-month pilot to extend the Gateway filter and take forward the other recommendations as required. KS

6. **Presentation of Statistics Review**
The Board noted the suggested changes to the presentation of statistics and the impact on internal and external communications. The purpose for the change in presentation is to improve general understanding of work done by the office. The Board discussed issues arising, including the terminology used to describe the process and the products for each stage.

The Board requested that the statistics presentation be adjusted as recommended and the internal and external communications take account of the new presentation and terminology. NM & EG

7. **All Staff Away Day Next Steps**
The Board noted the summary of the feedback on the All Staff Away Day and accepted the recommendations to involve managers and staff in the planning and delivery of the next All Staff event. The Board requested that the summary of feedback be posted on the intranet. FP

The Board noted that the Office Manager and Head of Services will meet with the two Greener Office Champions to agree next steps. NM

8. **Management Development Day Next Steps**
The Board noted the tabled paper and accepted the recommendations to publish the Team Working – Agreed Values on the intranet. FP

The Board noted the recorded actions from the day.

9. **Canadian Study Visit Proposal**
The Board approved the proposal that the Director of Investigations should attend the ‘Sharpening your teeth’ – Advanced Investigative Training for Administrative Watchdogs Conference.

The meeting closed at 11:30