

Minute of Forensic Services Committee

Meeting	Forensic Services Committee – Open Session	Date/Venue	Tuesday 7 th November 2017 Pacific Quay, Glasgow
Meeting Called By	Iain Whyte	Start Time	09.33
Reference Meeting No	OFSC-001	End Time	10.30

Members Present		In Attendance	
Name	Title	Name	Title
Iain Whyte	Authority Member	Tom Nelson	Director of Forensic Services
Nicola Marchant	Authority Member	Amy McDonald	Director of Financial Accountability
Robert Hayes	Authority Member	Fiona Douglas	Head of Biology, Forensic Services
		Victoria Morton	Head of Scene Examination, Forensic Services
		Gary Holcroft	Head of Physical Sciences, Forensic Services
		Graham Stickle	Risk and Policy Specialist
		Martin Smith	Strategic Programme Lead
		Lynne Clark	Programme Development Manager

OBSERVERS		Stephen McGowan	Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service
Jennifer Blackwood	Communications and Engagement Coordinator	Sean Scott	Police Scotland
Michelle Brewster	Unison	Raymond Clements	Committee Coordinator

DRAFT

STANDING ITEMS

1. OPENING REMARKS

NOTE *Due to unforeseen circumstances, Iain Whyte was unavailable at 09.30. The Meeting was Chair by Nicola Marchant until Iain Whyte arrived.*

1.1 Chair's Opening Remarks: (Nicola Marchant)

1.1.2 The Chair welcomed Attendees to the meeting and introductions were made.

1.2 Apologies

1.2.1 Apologies were received from Gill Imrie, where Tina Yule attended to represent HMICS. Steve Johnstone from was also unable to attend, where Sean Scott attended to represent Police Scotland.

1.3 Declarations of Interest

1.3.1 There were no declarations of interest.

1.4 Items for Board Submission

1.4.1 There were no items for Board Submission

1.5 Business Conducted Since Last Meeting

1.5.1 There was no business conducted since the last meeting.

2. MINUTES AND ACTIONS FROM LAST MEETING

2.1 Forensic Services Committee Action Log – Public

2.1.1 The Forensic Services Committee Action Log – Public was discussed, where the 5 Proposals to Close were accepted.

2.1.2 With regard to Action 20170807 – FSMAG – 008, it was suggested that further information was required regarding this action, as updates would also link into Action 20170807 – FSMAG - 009. As Iain Whyte was not available at this time, the action was move to ongoing.

2.2 Matters Arising

2.2.1 There were no Matters Arising.

3. GOVERNANCE

3.1 Forensic Services Governance

3.1.1 The Forensic Services Governance paper was presented by Tom Nelson.

3.1.2 Tom Nelson agreed to an action to create a Governance Model and accompanying manual in order that it can be discussed at the next Forensic Services Committee on 15th February 2017.

ACTION: 20171107 – FSCOMO – 001: Tom Nelson to create Forensic Services Governance Structure and accompanying manual in order that this can be discussed at the next Forensic Services Committee on the 15th February 2017.

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- 3.1.3 Member requested that the mechanism for reporting Assurance and Risks were incorporated into the model. It was highlighted that the Forensic Services Committee will be part of the mechanism for addressing Risks in relation to ongoing delivery. Tom Nelson agreed to an action to speak with David Hume, Head of the Audit Committee, as Risk Management is currently under review and assurance was sought that issues would not be lost.

ACTION: 20171107 – FSCOMO – 002: Tom Nelson discuss Risk Management with David Hume, Chair of Audit Committee, to ensure there is clarity on the management of Forensic Services risks.

- 3.1.4 It was suggested that the paper should be updated in section 2.6 to say specifically that the transactions within budget limits refer to both Capital and Revenue Budgets and that section 2.7, relating to Co-Opted Members, should be expanded to refer to the broader Justice and Scientific Community.

- 3.1.5 It was also suggested that 2.7 allows Members to be Co-Opted in order that ethical discussions may also take place at the Forensic Services Committee. However this may be subject to discussions at the Biometrics Independent Advisory Group who have suggested there should be a Biometric Commissioner, whose remit may be expanded to cover these wider issues. It was highlighted that public confidence was an essential part of Forensic Services' License to Operate.

- 3.1.6 Tom Nelson agreed to an action to submit a paper on Co-Option to the next Forensic Services Committee in order that this matter could be discussed further.

ACTION: 20171107 – FSCOMO – 003: Tom Nelson to submit a paper on Co-Option at to Forensic Services Committee on the 15th February 2017.

3.2 Terms of Reference

- 3.2.1 It was noted that the Terms of Reference had already been accepted by the SPA Board however the Chair asked if there were any further comments, as many Attendees would not previously had the opportunity to provide input.

- 3.2.2 It was suggested that the Terms of Reference should highlight the development of the tripartite relationship of Forensic Services, the Crown Office and Police Scotland. Sean Scott and Tom Nelson agreed to an action to forward suitable wording, to expand section 2.2 or to add an additional bullet point, to Raymond Clements in order that the Terms of Reference can be updated.

ACTION: 20171107 – FSCOMO – 004: Sean Scott and Tom Nelson to provide suitable wording to reflect the developing tripartite relationship, by expanding section 2.2 or by adding an additional bullet point, and forward to Raymond Clements.

- 3.2.3 Tom Nelson and Stephen McGowan also agreed to an action to forward suitable wording to Raymond Clements, by expanding section 2.3 or creating a new bullet point, to reflect the importance of Quality and the Regulatory Framework.

ACTION: 20171107 – FSCOMO – 005: Tom Nelson and Stephen McGowan to provide suitable wording to reflect the importance of Quality and the Regulatory Framework, by expanding section 2.3 or to adding an additional bullet point, and forward to Raymond Clements.

- 3.2.4 Tom Nelson also took an action to reword section 5 to ensure that it reflected the standing invitation to both Police Scotland and the Crown Office to the Forensic Services Committee.

ACTION: 20171107 – FSCOM – 006: Tom Nelson to provide rewording for section 5 to reflect the standing invitation to both the Crown Office and Police Scotland.

NOTE *Iain Whyte joined the meeting and assumed the role of Chair at 09.50*

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4. FORENSIC SERVICES PERFORMANCE REPORT

- 4.1 The Forensic Services Performance Report was presented by Tom Nelson.
- 4.2 Members commended the report, highlighting that it gives a good overview of performance.
- 4.3 It was highlighted that there is an imbalance in the Scene Attendance Service Delivery, with a higher demand in the North than in the West or East. Capacity is being reviewed to establish methods of addressing this issue.
- 4.4 It was also noted that Forensic Services plans to do further work on evidence recovery to ensure negative behaviors are not being driven and only appropriate evidence is recovered.
- 4.5 It was highlighted that two meetings have taken place with regard to the New Psychoactive Substances (NPS) Centre of Excellence and Drugs Intelligence Unit, and that consideration of benefit realisation would be addressed. The next meeting will take place in November where consideration would be given to what information different parties' hold and how this will benefit all stakeholders. This will assist in mapping possible benefits and costs.
- 4.6 It was confirmed that the Digital Evidence Sharing Capacity would not be subject to accreditation at this time as it would only focus on sharing information around Justice Partners. It was also confirmed that compliance would be involved in this project to ensure all relevant legislation is adhered to.
- 4.7 Members noted that areas of the report indicate issues with work/life balance, with Forensic Services being reliant on overtime, causing absence and resignations to increase. It was acknowledged that Senior Management were aware of this and are treating capacity as a priority. A Business Case is being submitted for additional Staff in Biology. As new Staff will require training that can take two years to complete, shorter term measures are also being investigated.
- 4.8 It was stated that demand management was necessary and that Forensic Services, in conjunction with Police Scotland and the Crown Office, must make decisions on work that could be eliminated as it offers no Scientific or Justice Benefit.
- 4.9 It was suggested that a review of demand management should take place across the Justice sector, where a small investment may save money across several partners. Forensic Evidence was given as an example, where good evidence leads to early pleas and a saving in other areas, such as Legal Aid.
- 4.10 Nicola Marchant took an action to discuss methods of progressing this with the Board.

ACTION: 20171107 – FSCOMO – 007: Nicola Marchant to discuss progressing Review of Demand Management across Justice System with Board.

- 4.11 Police Scotland stated that DCC Iain Livingston supports the Critical Work of Forensic Services. It was confirmed the Police Scotland would work hard to address the demand issue however pointed out that this must balance with public expectation.
- 4.12 Tom Nelson took an action to arrange a Demand Management Review Session, with Forensic Services Committee Members, Forensic Services, Crown Office and Police Scotland in November, before budget finalisation.

ACTION: 20171107 – FSCOMO – 008: Tom Nelson to arrange a Demand Management Review Session to discuss and reduce demand in Forensic Services in November 2017, with Forensic Services Committee Members, Forensic Services, Crown Office and Police Scotland.

5. HMICS UPDATE REPORT

- 5.1 The HMICS Update Report has was presented by Vicki Morton.

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- 5.2 With regard to Item 13, it was noted that the need for a Crime Scene Attendance Policy has been noted at the Forensic Management Advisory Group but work had been completed at an operational level. As it was highlighted that this policy could affect public confidence, Vicki Morton agreed to an action to provide an overview of the changes in the new policy and its progress.

ACTION: 20171107 – FSCOMO – 009: Vicki Morton to submit Update Paper on new Crime Scene Attendance Policy, highlighting changes and progress.

- 5.3 It was confirmed that evidence for the Inspection would be sent directly from Forensic Services to HMICS, who would confirm that the Recommendation was complete or that they require further evidence.
- 5.4 It was clarified that a process would be written into the Governance Structure to provide clarity on evidence that should be submitted to the Committee and evident that can be sent directly to HMICS.
- 5.5 Tom Nelson took an action to report further progress back to the Committee in February 2018.

ACTION: 20171107 – FSCOMO – 010: Tom Nelson to provide update report on HMICS Inspection.

- 5.6 It was confirmed that the Recommendation with a delivery timescale of March 2018 are on track. Sub Groups are being created within Forensic Services to aid implementation and additional resource has been provided by SPA and Police Scotland.

6. FORENSIC SERVICE DRAFT LONG TERM STRATEGY – UPDATE ON PROGRESS

- 6.1 The Forensic Service Draft Long Term Strategy – Update on Progress was presented by Amy MacDonald.
- 6.2 It was suggested that an agreed Demand Management Model should be part of the Strategy.
- 6.3 It was also suggested that the Strategy should also make reference to Digital Forensic. This could confirm which areas are within the remit of Police Scotland but agreed that both areas will operate at the same standard, including accreditation.
- 6.4 Members **NOTED** the report and were content for it to go forward for stakeholder consultation without prior presentation to the Board. The matter would be noted in the Forensic Services Committee Chair's Report and consultation would also take place with the Board, as a Stakeholder.

7. WORKPLAN

- 7.1 Due to the time required for business at the next Forensic Services Committee meeting, Raymond Clements took an action to add a 3 hour session to the afternoon of the 15th February 2018 to accommodate discussion of the Forensic Services Long Term Strategy.

ACTION: 20171107 – FSCOMO – 011: Raymond Clements to organise 3 hours session on 15th February 2018 to discuss Forensic Services Long Term Strategy.

8. AOB

- 8.1 There was no other business.

9. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

- 9.1 The next Forensic Services Committee will take place on Tuesday 15th November 2017 in the Boardroom at Pacific Quay.

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