

Meeting: Redress Scotland Oversight Board

Date: 24 August 2026 1730-1900

Location: Online via MS Teams

Minute by: Linda Aitken (LA)

In attendance

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| • Kirsty Darwent (KD) | Redress Scotland Oversight Board Chair |
| • William (Bill) Matthews (BM) | Redress Scotland Oversight Board Deputy Chair |
| • Paul Edie (PE) | Redress Scotland Oversight Board Member |
| • Neil Mackay (NMac) | Redress Scotland Oversight Board Member,
ARAC Member |
| • Roy McComb (RMc) | Redress Scotland Oversight Board Member |
| • Colin Spivey (CS) | Redress Scotland Oversight Board Member,
ARAC Member |
| • Joanna McCreadie (JMc) | Redress Scotland Chief Executive |
| • Gary Gallacher (GG) | Redress Scotland Deputy Chief Executive |
| • Eileen Skinner (ES) | Redress Scotland Oversight Board Member Panel
Member |
| • Michael Stevens (MS) | Head of Finance and Resources |
| • Michelle Nairn (MN) | Redress Scotland Head of People |
| • Melanie Lowe (ML) | Redress Scotland Head of Policy & Improvement |
| • Andrew Freeburn (AF) | Redress Scotland Oversight Board Member Panel
Member |
| • Kirsty Christie | Redress Scotland Head of Operations |

Apologies:

Apologies were received from Michelle Nairn.

1. Welcome, apologies, conflicts of interest and appoint Survivor Voice

K Darwent opened the meeting welcoming all present.

Apologies were received from M Nairn.

Members noted the values of Redress Scotland (dignity, compassion and respect) which were embedded in the work of the organisation. Redress Scotland seeks to

ensure that survivors are always put at the forefront of business conducted by the Board.

R McComb was appointed the survivor voice for the duration of the meeting.

No conflicts of interest were raised.

2. Governance

2.1 Legal Advice provided by Redress Scotland's appointed legal advisors on the organisation's instruction

2.2 Chronology for Redress Scotland Budget to 12 August 2026

2.3 Timeline of Correspondence with Sponsorship Team

The above three items were considered together.

J McCreadie spoke to paper 2.1. Legal advice provided by Redress Scotland's appointed legal advisers on the organisation's instruction was noted and duly discussed. The meeting agreed to seek clarity on specific aspects through requesting further advice.

Members recalled that, in 2022, it was agreed at a meeting with all panel members that governance would be the responsibility of the Oversight Board. Currently, Panel Members have regular opportunities to hear about the work of the Oversight Board and can also be appointed as members to both governance committees. It was noted that there are planned in-person events which may offer a suitable space to update colleagues on the budget and on their pay uplift.

The new SG RS recruitment procedures meant it took some time for the Redress Division to receive approval for recruitment of replacement and additional caseworkers. This has also resulted in lower than originally forecast throughput of applications being received by RS. There are currently around 5,000 applications with the Scottish Government. The monthly number of new applications has increased, and in recent months was over 400. August has seen a lower number of applications received from SG and this means that RS has much lower numbers of applications than expected. This is having an impact on the scheduling process and may result in a reduction in the number of sitting days to take account of the fall in demand.

Members agreed that RS should continue to operate within the assumption of a £6.7m budget rather than the £8.5m approved by the Scottish Parliament. Redress Scotland must continue to focus on efficient and effective operational methods and delivery for survivors. There was discussion of whether expenditure should be reduced, given the uncertainty about the budget, however the consequences of this for survivors were assessed as being detrimental as waiting times would increase.

Members were updated on the recent meeting held between J McCreadie, G Gallacher and M Lowe with the Sponsorship Team (ST) who advised that facilitation of a positive and quick outcome of the current impasse was being supported by the ST; their offer of a meeting with Andrew Watson (the Director for Children and Families) was accepted and arranged for Friday 28 August.

In addition to the meeting with A Watson, Members were advised that at the request of the Deputy First Minister's (DFM) office, an invite had been extended to meet with panel members and staff on Monday 7 or Tuesday 8 September, and a response on this is awaited.

B Matthews advised that in his discussion with Audit Scotland (AS) they said they the current budget uncertainty would not prevent RS from preparing the annual report and accounts although it is likely that the auditors would comment on this in their public report. AS reflected that the position RS found itself in was not commonplace across the Scottish public sector and other Non-Departmental Public Bodies (NDPB).

The Chair proposed a letter be drafted asking for the budget allocation to be confirmed and clearly stating that until RS has this confirmed it will work within the assumption of it being £6.4m.

Members agreed it was vital RS retains a positive working relationship with the SG and RSST, noting that all opportunities to continue a positive dialogue with each party would be considered.

All members expressed their concern about the difficult position that RS found itself in in relation to the budget. They recognised that the budgetary uncertainty was resulting in significant additional work for the senior team and was making planning for the public body much more difficult and time consuming.

Members agreed that RS:

- Continue to draw monies down in alignment to its agreed budget allocation;
- Continue to keep AS updated;
- Prepare a letter to Andrew Rennick (Director General for Education and Justice) or Joe Griffin (SG Permanent Secretary) reiterating the position RS finds itself in and include an invitation to meet with representatives of RS;
- State clearly in the letter that RS plans to continue to manage expenditure to meet demand and grow the capacity of the public body;
- Further consideration to be given to the responsibilities of Panel Members.

3. New and Emerging Risks

The Chair noted no additional new and emerging risks in addition to those already identified under earlier items.

4. Any Other Competent Business

No other competent business was submitted for consideration

5. Review of Meeting and Survivor Voice

R McComb noted several areas discussed which impacted on survivors including:

- The reference to RS values;
- The impact of the SG RS Division's recruitment which slowed the throughput to RS;
- Continuing to draw monies down was made with the Survivor's at the forefront of this decision.

Members concluded that in all meetings the Survivor voice is present in the room.

The Chair thanked everyone for their contributions today.

Actions arising from meeting on 24 August 2026

Action	Item	Actions	Lead	Progress
No actions arose.				