
Meeting Minutes: Redress Scotland Oversight Board

Date: 6th April 2022 0900

Minuted by: Paula Craik

In attendance

- Johnny Gwynne (JG) (Oversight Board Chair, Redress Scotland Chair)
- Bill Matthews (WM) (Oversight Board I Deputy Chair, Redress Scotland Deputy Chair)
- Emma Lewis (EL) (Oversight Board Interim Member, Redress Scotland Panel Member)
- Anne Houston (AH) (Oversight Board Interim Member, Redress Scotland Panel Member)
- Colin Spivey (CS) (ARAC Interim Member, Redress Scotland Board Member)
- Joanna McCreadie (JM) (Redress Scotland Chief Executive)
- Michael Stevens (MS) (Redress Scotland Head of Finance and Resources) (in part)

Agenda item 1 Welcome

JG welcomed everyone to the first meeting of the Redress Scotland Oversight Board and thanked everyone for attending before giving colleagues an opportunity to introduce themselves.

JG noted that there are three main stages of development which are the initial meeting of the Body Corporate, the current interim arrangements and the set arrangements. JG noted interim arrangements are still in place and an external non-executive role still needs to be advertised.

It was agreed that this initial meeting was a key moment in the development of governance for Redress Scotland and a similar approach will be taken to the project board, however this board will be more formal. JG added that in due course the documents of this body will be published in line with the freedom of information act, including the minute.

It was noted that the first meeting of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee was held on Friday. WM reminded JG of the concept of an 'survivor champion' to be appointed at the start of the meeting to reflect back on the meeting and everything that has been discussed. WM to fulfil the role this time.

Agenda item 2 Functions, responsibilities, relationships and reporting

JG gave an update noting that two substantive items: the reporting structure, which has been circulated by JM; and a decision on the structure of how the committee will draw up work will be discussed.

WM updated that the Audit Risk and Assurance Committee had endorsed this paper in draft. Members discussed the interplay between the Audit Risk and Assurance Committee and the Oversight Board noting that the Audit Risk and Assurance Committee should not be a committee for detail and not act as a gate to the Oversight Board. It was agreed this was something to be mindful of when preparing papers for both committees although this will be more flexible in the early days.

There was a further discussion around what would need to go to either or both committee(s) AH queried whether a version of the annual report should go to the Oversight Board and highlighted the idea of a yearly more detailed look into the risk register. WM confirmed the Audit Risk and Assurance Committee would provide an annual report to the Oversight Board.

There was a discussion around the risk register noting that this was owned by the Oversight Board however, discussion(s) about the level of risks and how they are categorised needed to take place adding that occasionally the Audit Risk and Assurance Committee would take a detailed look into a specific risk. It was agreed a risk workshop should be held once a year and the details of this should be discussed further.

JM added that the risk management process behind the risk register is still a work in progress. JM added that consideration of strategy still needed to take place and the risk workshop would likely be around autumn time. Members agreed this approach.

JG noted that on the annual accounts, the Oversight Board can only endorse these as they must be signed off by ministers.

JG invited members to comment on the structure of the Oversight Board. JM added that a work plan for the Oversight Board including skeleton agendas needs to be developed.

Action - JM and JG to work on a proposed work plan for the Oversight Board. JG reiterated that our role is to endorse and not to sign off.

JG moved on to the AGM and the role of the Body Corporate noting that another ten panel members were being recruited. There was a discussion around the wording Body Corporate and Corporate Body. JG confirmed they were one in the same.

Members approved the reporting structure with minor adjustments.

Action – JM to draft work plan and action plan for each committee.

JM confirmed that there is an advert out for a governance secretary and this would be a full time role. Members discussed papers and reports highlighting that these have to be to a high standard to enable them to be published. JM also added that an additional post will be advertised to support detailed work on risk work, panel work etc. JG commented that at the beginning there was a view that it was critical to get the scheme up and running.

JG commented that the draft rules of procedure for the Audit Risk and Assurance Committee and Oversight Board are the same documents presented to Body Corporate on 22 February. JG noted that these will be brought back to the meeting at the beginning of May after review by Redress Scotland's legal advisers.

Action – JM to bring back a revised version of the draft rules of procedure to the Audit Risk and Assurance Committee and Oversight Board.

CS queried whether there was a requirement for the code of conduct to be included as this was not covered in the meeting structure, and JG noted it was agreed that these should sit separately and this would be brought back to this committee in due course for approval.

Agenda item 3 Report from the Chief Executive

JM gave an update on the Chief Executive report : managing operations; iteration of operations; and developing new work areas within the organisation. JM added that there was still significant work to be done to set-up the public body. A large part of JM's role and the senior management team's priorities currently is recruitment to ensure the permanent team are in place.

Members discussed the challenge of working to optimum effectiveness with the Scottish Government and the external confusion on what part of the scheme is run by Redress Scotland and what part is run by Scottish Government.

JM added that forecasting applications had been a further challenge noting that both Redress Scotland and Scottish Government forecasting had not made entirely accurate forecasts. It was also noted that a number of applications that had been received by Redress Scotland were being sent back to Scottish Government for further information. JM updated that a piece of work was underway in the form of a pipeline project with Scottish Government to alleviate some of these issues and good progress is being made.

It was noted that there's a lot of recruitment ongoing to fill a number of vacancies across Redress Scotland and 5 more administrators will be joining the team.

JM noted that there will be more work on the survivor forum moving forward. EL noted that she was impressed with the administrator staff and AH agreed. AH commented that

the panel members were growing in confidence. AH suggested using the panel members as a resource for circulating vacancies as many panel members have good networks.

Action – JM to reach out to panel members as a resource on vacancies.

Members agreed that the Chief Executive report reflects the enormous amount of work that has been undertaken so far. CS commented that the report has an internal focus and wondered whether it should include the communications strategy and communication of the issues and delays as a result of the application backlog. CS also commented that the board are being asked for approval of the practice development approach and asked for clarification on what this will look like in practice.

JM commented that there would be an increasing external focus over the coming months noting that there had been a lot of discussions with Scottish Government in relation to communication and the risk around negative publicity.

JM reported that there was a piece of work being finished off in terms of seeking survivor's feedback and that a panel member has also produced a framework about high level panel decision on cases. It was noted that the practice development group, which will include panel members, will be able to have issues referred to them to work through. JM added that the practice development paper was intentionally light touch as she wanted members to discuss if it was a good idea and how it would work. Members agreed and were happy to endorse the development of a practice development group.

Action – JM to draft a more detailed plan for practice development group.

Members discussed the survivor forum and agreed that Redress Scotland may have a responsibility to report how survivors feel they have been treated, which JG raised with the Deputy First Minister. Further work with survivors and the Survivor Forum will be helpful for this.

JG commented that data and decisions are two big corporate risks however health and safety are also key and we need to get these in place as soon as possible. JM added that Redress Scotland has to comply with procurement noting that a contract from an occupational health service has been agreed but will take 12 weeks to implement. Members discussed the actions from the last meeting of the project board and JM confirmed these would be brought to the next meeting of the board.

Action – JM to bring appropriate open actions from the last project board to next meeting.

Agenda item 4. Dashboard Report

JG gave an update on the dashboard report noting that it has been updated over the last few months highlighting that there is a lot of information in it that may not be relevant to members.

JM reported that she had provided members with an overview paper and dashboard which was still being developed, including things like Key Performance Indicators. JM asked members for feedback on what should and should not be in the dashboard and what format is best for the Oversight Board. JM added that this document will be a work in progress.

Members discussed the information in the dashboard report noting that it was a lot to digest but the way the dashboard was split was helpful. WM noted that this data was particularly useful for the annual report and that it would be helpful if JM could pull the information into a one-page scorecard format.

EL noted that it would be helpful to know why people aren't following through with applications and JM said she would raise this with Scottish Government. JG raised the issue that the information from Scottish Government may not cover the requirements of the annual accounts and it was agreed information should be brought back to this board. There was a discussion around the data received from Scottish Government and how we could use this.

Action - JM to raise issue of Scottish Government data with Harper Macleod to clarify whether Redress Scotland can publish such data.

Members discussed complaints and systematic complaints and it was agreed this should be brought to the next Oversight Board.

Action – JM to amend the information in the dashboard report and bring back to the Oversight Board.

Agenda item 5. Minutes of the Audit, Risk and Assurance Committee

WM updated that the minutes of the Audit Risk and Assurance Committee had been circulated noting that under interim arrangements the committee consists of himself, Colin Spivey, Michael Steele and Lynne Harvie. WM noted that the quality of the papers presented were of a high standard.

It was noted that neither Internal nor External Auditors had yet been appointed, but that contact had been established with Audit Scotland. Whilst the organisation does not have to submit an annual report for 2021/22 a report will be prepared at the end of 2022/23. It is expected that Audit Scotland will seek to engage later in the financial year,

and the Finance Team are in the process of seeking an appropriate procurement framework with which to engage internal auditors.

Agenda item 6. Matters considered by the Audit, Risk and assurance Committee

WM raised the risk register noting that JM had provided a paper for discussion.. The discussion at the Audit Risk and Assurance Committee focused on reducing the number of risks at a corporate level and adopt categories. JM added that the target is to reduce all risks to an attainable level and these would be edited to reflect where we think we can realistically get risk levels to.

There was a discussion around risk categories and which risks should go to the Oversight Board as well as target risk scores. It was agreed that a realistic approach needs to be taken.

WM noted that the Audit Risk and Assurance Committee were content with the finance report. MS discussed the highlights of the finance report noting that the Scottish Government had agreed an annual budget for 2022/23 of £5 million. He noted that initial forecasting suggested that cost pressures could cause the financial requirement to rise to around £5.3 million largely as a result of its demand-led nature. MS added that in looking at what budget we need to spend we need to pay close attention to Scottish Government throughout, noting that they have increased the number of staff processing applications which will have an impact on the number applications received, panels and administration staff.

It was noted that the costs that Scottish Government had covered on our behalf as the scheme went live have not yet been added as we have still to be invoiced for this (and the VAT on that payment). MS noted that we were currently forecasting an underspend and provided detail on why this was and which areas this covered. It was noted that MS was looking for feedback on the update and paper and any changes in the format moving forward.

JG noted that we are not agreeing as per the paper a reviewed budget. Members agreed that the £5 million budget is endorsed but the projected spend is likely to be more than this and we may have an overspend of around £300k.

Agenda item 7. Schedule of Meetings

JG asked all to let PC know if the dates in the schedule do not suit.

Agenda item 8. AOCB

WM noted that as the applicant champion he believed the quality of this meeting was good and the papers were of a very high standard. It was noted that we have a diversity of backgrounds in the meeting and the meeting was useful.