

Meeting: Redress Scotland Oversight Board

Date: 24th March 2025, 1330-1530

Location: Flemming A, 5 Atlantic Quay, Glasgow, and Online via MS Teams

Minuted by: Diane Piper (DP)

In attendance

- Kirsty Darwent (KD) (Redress Scotland Oversight Board Chair)
- Bill Matthews (WM) (Redress Scotland Oversight Board Deputy Chair, Audit Risk and Assurance Committee Chair)
- Colin Spivey (CS) (Redress Scotland Oversight Board Member)
- Paul Edie (PE) (Redress Scotland Oversight Board Member)
- Roy McComb (Redress Scotland Oversight Board Member)
- Brian Houston (BH) (Redress Scotland Oversight Board Member, Panel Member)
- Mary McCallan (Redress Scotland Oversight Board Member, Panel Member)
- Joanna McCreadie (Redress Scotland Chief Executive)
- Gary Gallacher GG) (Redress Scotland Head of Operations)
- Michael Stevens (Head of Finance and Resources)
- Michelle Nairn (MN) (Redress Scotland Head of People)
- Melanie Lowe (ML) (Redress Scotland Head of Policy & Improvement)

Apologies;

None

By Invitation;

Neil Mackay (Redress Scotland, Audit, Risk and Assurance Committee Member)

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

KD opened the meeting welcoming all present.

There were no apologies.

There were no board member conflicts of interest noted.

MM was appointed the survivor voice for the duration of the meeting.

Agenda item 2. Strategic discussion – efficiencies and effectiveness

See Appendix 1 for detail

Agenda item 3. Minutes of the previous meeting on the 26th of February 2025 and minute from the restricted papers

The minutes of the previous meeting held on the 26th of February and the note from the restricted discussions were agreed as an accurate record of the meeting with no further amendment required.

Agenda item 4. Matters Arising – Action Log

The Action and Decision log was noted and updated during the meeting.

Agenda item 5. Report from the Chair

KD noted a constructive meeting with a survivor who had provided useful feedback on the scheme from their own perspective and that of other survivors. One key area of discussion was the experience of survivors who use solicitors to collate their applications.

In addition, KD has supported the executive team with the development of the 2025/26 budget and in meetings with Scottish Government.

Agenda Item 6. Report from the Chief Executive

6.1 Chief Executive's report

JM highlighted several key areas of focus since her last report in February;

- A review of the corporate plan is underway. It will be very similar to the current version but with an increased focus on Efficiency, Effectiveness and Quality (EEQ). The new plan will include for reporting back on performance against actions.
- Focus for the senior team has been on budget spend and how to best communicate progress to Scottish Government.
- In terms of our overall performance, we are increasing the number of decisions per month. Quality is being maintained.

- Work with the redress division continues in a number of focussed areas and is proving very effective.
- A report has been submitted to the Deputy First Minister with an update on the queue and work on EEQ.
- The People Team have produced the results of a positive staff survey.
- 25 appointable new panel members have been identified. Discussion with Scottish Government is underway to agree the best way and time to onboard this new cohort.
- The work of the Practice Development Group continues to add value to our decision making and at the last meeting several practice notes were agreed. Both the senior management team and other panel members value the group.
- We have been delighted to receive 10 invitations to the Royal Garden Party. 7 survivors and 3 members of the team will attend this.

Members thanked JM for her report and asked for assurance that the work on induction of new panel members was manageable within the team. JM advised that the materials were all there and that all the team would be involved in delivering and assessing the new appointments.

The total cost of the scheme was discussed and JM advised there would be a formal actuarial review of the whole scheme with funding sources identified.

GG noted that one exciting area is the partnership with the Parole Board in supporting decision makers. There is an expectation of more collaboration in the future.

The First Minister and Deputy First Minister will write to survivors to thank them for their support of recruitment of new panel members. JM added that survivor input has added to the robustness of the process.

6.2 KPI report

JM presented the paper which reviewed the KPIs for the organisation. The recommendation is to maintain the current KPIs which are still applicable and necessary to show trend information. The exception to this is the KPI around processing of P3 applications. Waiting times for P3 applications are far in excess of the indicator that was set and is not useful to the organisation and sets unrealistic expectations for survivors. The recommendation is not to report against an indicator, but to instead report on trends in the waiting time and ensure survivors are regularly updated with waiting times.

The board approved the revision to the KPIs adding that going forward average time for processing should be reported together with a descriptor advising that this will be monitored but not reported on.

There was a further recommendation that the cost per decision figure be added to the report.

Action; JM to amend the report as outlined. The board were content to approve report on this basis.

6.3 Draft Business Plan 2025/26

JM presented the 3rd business plan of the current corporate plan for approval. The new plan has an increased focus on improvement. Once approved regular updates on progress will come to the board.

Board members suggested referencing the new EEQ group and to revisit the wording on the work of the Practice Development Group. It was further suggested that an additional column to capture the expected impact of the actions be included.

Action; Business plan was approved subject to the amendments detailed above.

Agenda item 7, Oversight Board Terms of Reference

KD advised that the terms of reference for the operation of the Oversight Board were approved in September 2022 and as part of the mini governance review scheduled for May they are presented here for consideration and updating if necessary.

Members suggested the following;

- Add a heading to cover relationships i.e. with ARAC and the Corporate Body.
- Emphasise the independence of Redress Scotland as the decision-making body of the scheme with reference to the Act.
- Add that the meeting agenda will be circulated to the corporate body with verbal updates from the chair via drop-in sessions after each meeting.
- To note that approved minutes are available on the website.

Action; JM/KD to make suggested changes and bring back to the Oversight Board in May as part of the annual governance review.

Agenda item 8. Finance

8.1 Period 11 Management accounts

MS reported an underspend at the end of Period 11 of £37.6k. End of year projections estimate a total underspend of £450k and as a result we will not draw down £400k in

the final month. This represents a variance against budget of 1.75% which is within the 3% threshold.

Cash flow remains steady with 6 weeks costs held in deposit in the bank.

The average cost per decision remains steady at around £2.9k. We could expect to see this plateau over the next few months.

8.2 Budget 2025/26

MS updated the board with changes to the 2025/26 budget following the meeting on the 28th of February.

The board were content with the changes and approved the budget.

Agenda Item 9. Policy Approvals

9.1 Guidance for observers of sitting panels

JM advised that going forward there will be a routine audit trail of applications from receipt through to decision letter.

JM added that a few minor changes have been made to the form to allow for easier information gathering for panel member reviews.

The board noted the changes and approved the guidance.

Agenda Item 10. Forward Plan

Members were content that all future items identified had been captured.

Agenda Item 11. New and emerging risks

Recent feedback from survivors has been to share that not all support received from solicitors improves the quality of the application received by the scheme. A number of panels have noted and identified shortcomings as to the information provided. The redress division are aware of this and are taking their own actions to address this.

In terms of what we can do it was agreed that panels would record and report shortcomings on applications with solicitor support for a period of 3 months and

prepare a report for the board. In addition, this will be added to the agenda for the next meeting with the Deputy First Minister.

A note will also be added to the risk register that this has been identified and will be intensively assessed over a quarter. This is an increasing risk to the redress scheme and to Scottish Ministers.

Action; Highlight this area of concern to the deputy First Minister and add to the Risk Register

Agenda item 12. Any other competent business

None

Agenda Item 13. Review of Meeting and Survivor Voice

KD thanked all present for their contributions to both the strategy session in the morning and to the board meeting.

MM highlighted several areas where the survivor was key to the discussion. These included

- finding better ways of identifying changes in priority of applications.
- a continuous endeavour to improve communications with survivors and noting the non sharing of letters from Redress Scotland by a number of solicitors.
- Potential for survivors to have access to minutes and audio transcripts of the panel meeting.
- The meeting with survivors undertaken by the Chair.
- Involvement of survivors in the recruitment of new panel members.
- Consideration of KPI data and the impact on survivors.