



related to PEACE IV. **JB** envisaged a delay to the processing of the Stage 2 PEACE IV application due to Brexit. It was agreed to confirm the date of the Steering Group Meeting at the next Co Design Meeting on 16 August 2016.

**ACTION: JB**

- 5.6. It was noted that the Consultation period for the Standards could be set by the Commission as it was not a formal Public Consultation. Consultation could be carried out at VPM's, through regional seminars and via the Panel and Forum.
- 5.7. **JT** asked whether sufficient resource was available for the work and whether extra resource could be made available if needed. A discussion took place and it was agreed that, for continuity, the Policy Officer would be freed from some other work to enable him to give more time to work on the Standards.
- 5.8. It was noted that an internal meeting to review the Corporate Plan had been rearranged and would now take place on 23 September 2016.
- 5.9. **JB** advised that comments had been received from the Executive Office on the latest draft of the Corporate Plan with comments focussing on an outcomes based approach and would be incorporated in a revised draft. The Executive Office acknowledged that without having an outcomes based Programme for Government in place, it was unrealistic to expect this in the Commission's Corporate Plan. Instead they were keen to see the Commission start to transition towards this way of working with next year's plans to be fully outcomes focussed.
- 5.10. A Training Workshop for the Commission, VSS and the Executive Office on outcomes based reporting was discussed. It was agreed to follow up on a timeline for the Training Workshop.

**ACTION: CG**

- 5.11. It was noted that a staff Corporate Planning Day would be held on 15 September 2016.

**Budget Report**

- 5.12. The Budget was discussed and **CG** advised that there was currently an underspend on the Forum Budget due to activity being suspended during the replenishment process. It was agreed to ask the Forum Manager for a Budget profile which would show anticipated costs including training, engagement and residential costs.

**ACTION: CG**

- 5.13. A discussion took place about potential Programme Budget spend with a Research Survey or the development of an IT facility for the Standards discussed as options.
- 5.14. It was agreed to arrange a meeting for **JB** with **AMN** to discuss survey questions, contact with NISRA as suggested by the Executive Office and an IT facility for the Standards.

**ACTION: SB**

- 5.15. It was agreed to circulate an example of an IT Facility from the Canadian Ombudsman to **CG**.

**ACTION: SB**

- 5.16. It was noted that a Conference with a Budget of £10k would take place in Quarter 3. It was agreed to progress a Business Case for the Conference. Dates would be discussed at SMT meetings.

**ACTION: CG, JB, AMN**

- 5.17. Potential information events on dealing with the past were discussed.
- 5.18. **CG** advised that £4k of the £5k International Engagement Budget had been allocated to date and noted that the Executive Office had raised this Budget line as area of potential savings in future financial years. **JT** advised that the Commission needed to ensure that the Executive Office were aware of the benefit of these engagements and provided examples of established links as a result of recent engagement trips to Washington and the VSE Conference in Utrecht. It was agreed to fast track PPE's in relation to both trips.

**ACTION: CG**

- 5.19. A discussion took place regarding seeking sponsorship for future International Engagements.
- 5.20. **CG** advised that £16k of the £30k Budget had been paid out for the Review of the Strategy. It was noted that an amended draft had been received on 15 August 2016 and the Research Officer was currently reviewing it.
- 5.21. **CG** advised that the Commission's Communications Services Provider, Emeritus, had had to register for VAT and this would have implications for the Commission. **CG** advised that he was seeking advice but that options included reduced hours to stay within Budget, the service provider absorbing the additional cost or the preferred option of revising the Business Case. **CG** noted that this would take the cost over the delegated limit.

#### **Update on Business Cases and Procurement**

- 5.22. The update on Business Cases and Procurement was discussed. There were no new items and PPE's that would be fast tracked were noted.

#### **External Audit/Annual Report and Accounts**

- 5.23. **CG** advised that the current Audit contract would end on 31 March 2016 and a procurement exercise would be undertaken and it was agreed to progress the Business Case for this.
- 5.24. For Annual Report and Accounts, see agenda item 6.

#### **Internal Audit**

- 5.25. The update on outstanding audit recommendations was noted.

#### **Risk Management**

- 5.26. The revised Risk Register was tabled at the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee meeting on 22 July 2016.
- 5.27. **JB** advised that he had recommended revising CR3 Failure to engage effectively with the Forum and the victims and survivors sector and to reflect the views of victims and survivors from red to amber as the Commission were now appointing new Forum Members. This was not agreed by the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee.
- 5.28. **JT** acknowledged the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee's decision to keep the status of CR3 red advising that this was due to the high risk nature of the process and noting the competent and robust measures taken by the Commission to mitigate risks.
- 5.29. It was noted that one of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee members had recommended replacing 'ongoing' with target completion dates where possible and incorporating timelines and mitigating actions.
- 5.30. **JT** noted that there were items which were outside of the Commission's control and that it would only be possible to monitor and respond to external factors.
- 5.31. It was agreed to review the Risk Register when reviewing the Corporate Plan at the meeting on 23 September 2016 to reflect the level of engagement and actions taken to mitigate risks.

#### **ACTION: JT, JB, AMN, CG**

- 5.32. The Commission's Corporate Risk Register currently contains 1 high rated risk with red status, 2 medium rate risks with amber status and 2 low rate risks with green status.

#### **Staffing**

- 5.33. **CG** provided an update on Recruitment of the Head of Communications and Engagement, advising that 36 applications had been received with 16 progressing to the interview stage.
- 5.34. It was noted that approximately 3 feedback requests and 1 Freedom of Information request had been received in relation to the Recruitment of the Head of Communications and Engagement.
- 5.35. The calibre of candidates progressing to interview was noted.

5.36. A discussion took place regarding resources in the Policy and Research team. It was agreed to source an agency worker to assist in the completion of ongoing projects.

**ACTION: CG**

5.37. **CG** advised that the Agency Worker who was to provide cover for the Corporate Services Manager whilst on Maternity Leave had left and that he did not intend to replace her. **CG** advised that he and the Finance Assets and Premises Officer would absorb the extra workload.

**Complaint**

5.38. It was noted that no complaints had been received.

**Freedom of Information**

5.39. It was noted that 2 Freedom of Information requests were received in the last quarter with 1 relating to the Recruitment of the Head of Communications and Engagement.

**Gifts and Hospitality**

5.40. It was noted that all Gifts and Hospitality for the last quarter had been recorded and approved by the Accounting Officer and would be available on the Commission's new website.

**Review of the Commission**

5.41. It was noted that the next Review of the Commission would take place later in the year and would cover 2011 – 2016.

**Audit and Risk Assurance Committee**

5.42. **CG** advised that the next Audit and Risk Assurance Committee meeting would take place on 14 October 2016.

**Pay Award 2015/16**

5.43. **CG** advised that he had most recently submitted responses to queries on the 11 August 2016 and noted that ECNI would receive their pay award with their August 2016 salaries.

5.44. It was agreed to follow this up with the Executive Office weekly.

**ACTION: CG**

## **6. Draft Annual Report and Accounts**

6.1. The draft Annual Report and Accounts were discussed. It was noted that they had been tabled at the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee meeting on 22 July 2016 and NIAO had provided feedback which has been incorporated.

6.2. **CG** advised that he expected to be within tolerance.

6.3. **JT** asked for further information on suggestions from Audit and Risk Assurance Committee members in relation to proportionality. **CG** explained and advised that NIAO had advised that this was not necessary for the Commission's Annual Report and Accounts.

6.4. **JB** asked for confirmation that Pension Figures had been received. **CG** advised that they had.

6.5. **JB** advised that he had reviewed the accounts to ensure that they were properly prepared in accordance with guidance provided and was content that adequate working papers had been provided in order to support the figures in the accounts.

6.6. **JB** noted that the Annual Report and Accounts had been prepared in house and noted the work of **CG** and the Finance, Assets and Premises Officer. **JT** noted her thanks.

6.7. It was agreed to send the foreword to the Commissioner for review and amendment.

**ACTION: CG**

- 6.8. It was noted that NIAO findings and Management Responses would be tabled in October 2016 and that an Extraordinary Board meeting may be required during the w/c 17 October 2016.

## **7. Communications Strategy**

- 7.1. **CG** advised that he had updated the draft Communications Strategy but that further work was required on the implementation plan. It was agreed that a meeting for **JB** and **CG** would be arranged.

### **ACTION: SB**

- 7.2. It was noted that the Communications Service provider would like to be involved in the preparation of the Communications Strategy.
- 7.3. Alternative narrative had yet to be received from the Communications Service Provider.
- 7.4. It was agreed to table a final draft of the Communications Strategy at the next Board meeting on 13 September 2016.

## **8. October 2016 Monitoring Round**

- 8.1. **CG** advised that the request for bids/surrenders in the October 2016 Monitoring Round had been received. He recommended a nil return.
- 8.2. **CG** advised that there would be another monitoring round in January 2017.

## **9. Pension Queries Paper**

- 9.1. A paper highlighting pension related queries from individuals and organisations from April – June 2016 was discussed.
- 9.2. It was agreed that advice would be sought from a member of the Commission's Audit and Risk Assurance Committee and the Commission's Legal services provider.

### **ACTION: JB**

## **10.CVS Brand Development**

- 10.1. The proposed new logo was discussed and the Commissioner asked for feedback from **CG** on a survey carried out by MCE PR. **CG** advised that the proposed logo had been well received.
- 10.2. The logo was approved by the Board.
- 10.3. A discussion took place regarding the Commission's presence at the entrance to Equality House.

## **11.Update on Safeguarding Policy and Training**

- 11.1. **CG** provided an update on the Safeguarding Policy and Training. He advised that he had asked the external service provider to revise her proposal to include the drafting of a Safeguarding Policy. **CG** was awaiting contact from the external service provider.
- 11.2. **JT** noted that this Policy would link to work on the Standards Project.

## **12.AOB**

- 12.1. There was no AOB.

NAME: **Judith Thompson**

SIGNED:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Judith Thompson", written on a light-colored rectangular background.

DATE: 23/09/16