

**DISCLOSURE SCOTLAND STRATEGIC BOARD - 16 FEBRUARY 2010**

**MINUTES OF MEETING**

Present: Board Members

D Patel (Disclosure Scotland) - Chair  
B Gorman (Disclosure Scotland)  
G Hart (Disclosure Scotland)  
T Grant (Disclosure Scotland)  
M Gibb (British Telecom)  
R Gwyon (Non-Executive Director)  
B McQueen (Non-Executive Director)

Presenting Papers

D Harrison (Disclosure Scotland) – Item 2  
R O’Neil (Disclosure Scotland) – Item 3  
L Shaw (Disclosure Scotland) – Item 6

L Maguire – Secretary (Disclosure Scotland)

Apologies: None

**Disclosure Scotland Business**

1. A paper was tabled outlining Disclosure Scotland’s core business, covering Police Act Disclosures, Staffing Structure, Partnership Activity and Key Stakeholders.
2. A number of points were noted and discussed. Disclosure Scotland provides basic disclosure certificates for applicants in England and Wales, as well as Scotland. The Agency has ongoing engagement with its Registered Bodies, in addition to surveys of customers more broadly. They report satisfaction with prompt turnaround, costs and the availability of electronic data capture.
3. The Board noted that a fee increase was approved last year. A new fee structure has been developed to support the scheme to be introduced by Protection of Vulnerable Groups Act, based on a cost model incorporating both PVG business and the remaining Police Act disclosure business (e.g. basics).
4. The Board considered whether there were outstanding issues for the Agency arising the transfer of staff from Strathclyde Police to Scottish Government. All contractual activity has been completed. There are remaining discussions on some specific issues, which are being addressed with SG colleagues.
5. The Board noted the 24-hour working pattern within the Agency, which has historically resulted from accommodation constraints. Working patterns will be reviewed in the context of the requirements of the PVG Scheme, but, given the space available within the existing building there will be constraints in the foreseeable future.

6. The Board also considered customer disputes in respect of the existing Police Act disclosures. These remain small and can be grouped into 3 categories: the appearance of spent convictions on certain certificates; the accuracy of what is held on police systems; and incorrect identification. The Agency also monitors written complaints, which can arise across a range of business.

### **Annual Performance and Business Forecasting**

7. A paper was tabled outlining trends and growth in Disclosure Scotland's performance, as well as Disclosure Scotland's forecasting methods and how these inform its staffing model.

8. The Board noted the growth in the number of disclosure certificates issued by the Agency. This is primarily because a number of large organisations have sought basic disclosures as part of their recruitment process in recent years.

9. The Board discussed the Agency's target of turnaround within 14 days where applications are complete and can be dealt with by the Agency without further enquiries to police forces. It noted that this was an operational target and that end user experience can differ. That the performance on the target is generally very high; and that critical factors determining performance are IT performance and police response times (where further inquiry is necessary). Forces are issued with a monthly report which illustrates all forces' performance.

10. All Force information has been published. The Board recognised that some inquiries to forces were complex and that a negative impact on performance figures may, in such cases, be inevitable. It agreed nonetheless that the Agency should consider ways that may further improve force enquiry performance where it was feasible.

11. The Board noted that the impact of the recession on the number of disclosure applications appeared small. Overall the number of disclosures issued had stood up well thus far.

12. The Board went on to consider how forecasting methods relate to the staffing model and how the Agency handles fluctuating staffing requirements. The Board felt that the model developed for the Agency could be useful in the wider public sector and that there may be merit in promoting it as an exemplar of good practice.

- **Action 2010/1/1: Agency to consider publication policy on force enquiries.**

### **Income and Expenditure**

13. A paper was tabled to provide an overview of the Agency's income and expenditure in the nine months to 31 December 2009.

14. The Board was advised of the expectation that the Agency should be self-funding, apart from some funding for specific purposes from Scottish Government. Finance is mostly generated through revenue from fees for disclosure certificates, as well as income generated

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from the Criminal Records Bureau (the sister body in England and Wales) and Access NI in respect of applications both bodies have received with Scottish addresses. A budget transfer has been received from Scottish Government, for example, to cover the Central Registered Body of Scotland (CRBS) which makes these applications on behalf of the voluntary sector.

15. The Board considered whether there was delegated authority to allow the Agency to embark on capital projects. It was noted that the Framework Document sets out the overall position. The Board agreed that it would be useful in the future to consider the need for an investment strategy. Future contractual obligations would routinely be assessed with reference to value for money and effectiveness.

### **Governance**

16. A paper was tabled to provide an outline of the various boards and groups which support the Agency in the achievement of its business objectives and obligations.

17. The Board noted the existing governance and sponsorship arrangements and agreed that it would be useful to return to this topic at an early date when members are more familiar with the Agency's business.

- **Action 2010/1/2: Board to consider governance arrangements in the near future.**

### **Annual Reporting Cycle**

18. A paper was tabled to provide an overview of the Agency's corporate reporting cycle.

19. The Board was advised that 2009-10 will be the first year in which the Agency would produce an annual report and accounts. It is also the intention to utilise the assurance framework outlined in the Scottish Public Finance Manual. This is a new process for management within the Agency and guidance has been sought from the Scottish Government's Internal Audit Division.

20. Work is also underway to develop a broad outline for the business plan for 2010 – 11.

- **Action 2010/1/3: Outline business plan to be discussed by the Board at an early opportunity.**

### **Protecting Vulnerable Groups (PVG) – Changes to Disclosure Scotland Activity**

21. A paper was tabled to provide an outline of the changes to Disclosure Scotland's business activity arising from the implementation of the PVG Scheme.

22. The Board was advised on the arrangements covering access and control with regard to scheme information. It noted that bespoke PVG modelling has informed the preparations, and that it employs an estimate of around a 800,000 members who will be in the scheme once fully established.. The 'PVG barred' lists will be small in comparison. It was acknowledged that there was work to be done nearer the time of implementation to ensure appropriate expectations of the Scheme's coverage.

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23. The Board was interested in the impacts of the Scheme on Disclosure Scotland and how those were planned, including on IT, communications and change generally. It noted that the PVG implementation team had engaged with the forces on training. It was agreed that it would be useful for the PVG implementation team to give a presentation to the Board.

- **Action 2010/1/4: PVG Team to be invited to next Board.**

### **Board Ways of Working**

24. A discussion paper was tabled to assist consideration of terms of reference, duties and responsibilities, and the Board's standards and work programme.

25. The Board noted the intention to work with the 9 principles of public life, that in the near future it should develop its programme on a 6-monthly basis, and agreed it should take time to articulate its rules and procedures for operating. The Board agreed to consider the terms of the paper and revert at the next meeting.

- **Action 2010/1/5: Board to consider 'Ways of Working' paper prior to the next meeting.**

### **Date of Next Meeting**

26. It was agreed to meet on 16 March, 13 April and thereafter on an 8-weekly basis.

**Secretary to Strategic Board**  
February 2010

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**Action List**

<b>MINUTE REFERENCE</b>	<b>ACTION</b>	<b>RESPONSE(S) BY</b>
2010/1/1	<b>Agency to consider publication policy on force enquiries.</b>	Executive Members in first instance
2010/1/2	<b>Board to consider governance arrangements in the near future.</b>	Board Members
2010/1/3	<b>Outline business plan to be discussed by the Board at an early opportunity.</b>	Executive Members in first instance
2010/1/4	<b>PVG Team to be invited to next Board.</b>	Secretariat
2010/1/5	<b>Board to consider ‘Ways of Working’ paper prior to the next meeting.</b>	Board Members

