

**Minutes of the SWIA Management Board Meeting  
2.00 pm Wednesday 27 August 2009  
SWIA Offices, Ladywell House, Edinburgh**

Present: Alexis Jay, Chief Inspector  
Gill Ottley, Depute Chief Inspector  
David Cumming, Depute Chief Inspector  
Marc Hendrikson, acting Depute Chief Inspector  
Andrew Wilkinson, Corporate Manager  
Hamish Hamill, External Independent Advisor  
Sandra Nutley, External Independent Advisor  
Anne Travers (minutes)

1. Minutes of the Meeting held on 3 June 2009
  - 1.1 The minutes were agreed.
2. Matters arising from Minutes
  - 2.1 The Board agreed that draft Board minutes should be circulated to members more promptly after each meeting.
  - 2.2 Alexis Jay informed the Board that the DCI complement had been temporarily increased to four by offering a temporary responsibility supplement (TRS) developmental opportunity. The temporary DCI role, primarily, would provide additional capacity to allow for increased restructure related work including attending parliamentary committees where required.
3. New Scrutiny Body Update
  - 3.1 The Board considered written submissions provided by SWIA to the three Parliamentary Committees – Finance; Education, Lifelong Learning and Culture; and Health and Sport – considering the Public Services reform Bill. A copy of the relevant Scottish parliament Information Centre (SPICe) briefing was issued at the meeting. SWIA had not been called to give evidence at the Finance Committee but Alexis Jay would be giving evidence at the Education, Lifelong Learning and Culture Committee on 1 September and David Cumming to the Health and Sport Committee on 9 September. The Board agreed that all relevant points appeared to have been made in the written submissions.
  - 3.2 The Board was also provided with a paper detailing SWIA business continuity issues and actions taken and requiring to be taken to address these together with a report from HR following one to one interviews it had held with SWIA staff. A further meeting with Sarah Smith, Barbara Allison

and Alexis Jay was being arranged. The Board discussed and noted the papers. It recognised the very real threat to SWIA's business continuity and agreed the importance of a meeting with Sarah Smith and Barbara Allison with the suggestion that it would be worth noting the cost of losing key staff prior to the formation of the new body.

#### 4. SWIA Inspection Methodology

- 4.1 Marc Hendrikson had provided the board with a draft Performance Improvement Handbook for information. Marc explained that the first seven pages summarised the current position and the methodology with the next two sections covering the operational detail. The issues raised by staff at the recent seminar chaired by Hamish had been addressed in the Handbook.
- 4.2 Marc explained that there had been scheduling difficulties with the first five pilot ISLAs which had caused some slippage to the timetable. However, the process appeared to be operating well and the new methodology was aligned with Audit Scotland's Risk Assessment process.
- 4.3 The Board discussed a number of points. There remained an issue with the amount of evidence being provided by local authorities exceeding that requested. It had been agreed that for file reading thirty files was not a statistically valid sample so a hundred files would be read until at least the next round of ISLAs in November 2010. Issues remained also about clarifying the dual role of the link inspector in relation to scrutiny and providing support to councils. The Board offered a number of suggested amendments which Marc agreed to incorporate.

**Action Point 2 (August 2009) – Marc Hendrikson to amend the Draft Performance Improvement Handbook to reflect the Board's suggestions.**

#### 5. Inspection methodology risk assessment

- 5.1 The Board discussed the risk assessment for the revised methodology. It noted that item 3.4 of the report - loss of energy/focus on leading edge practice – did not have any mitigating action to be taken. It was agreed that this should be taken up by the Revised Methodology Group. Overall the Board agreed that it was a useful document.

**Action Point 2 (August 2009) – Marc Hendrikson to ask the Revised Methodology group to consider what actions could be taken to prevent the risk of 'loss of energy/focus on leading edge practice'.**

## 6. Self-evaluation e-tool

- 6.1 The Board was updated on progress with the self-evaluation e-tool being developed for SWIA by the Institute for Research and Innovation in Social Services (IRISS). IRISS had successfully used SWIA's existing self-evaluation tool to develop an e-tool that could be accessed and used by local authorities via the SWIA website. SWIA's Senior Management Team had been given a demonstration of the e-tool and agreed that it should be trialled with a few volunteer local authorities. It was agreed that a demonstration should be made to the Board at the next meeting and an article included in the next SWIA newsletter .

**Action Point 3 (August 2009) – Andrew Wilkinson to arrange for a demonstration of the e-tool to the SWIA Board at its next meeting in November and a newsletter article.**

## 7. Inspection of Jersey childcare services

- 7.1 The Board was updated on progress on the possible Jersey inspection. Jersey Health and Social Services Department was keen for SWIA to inspect all of its social work services, not just childcare services, but finding a legally acceptable way for SWIA carry out the inspection had proved problematic. It seemed likely that the inspection would have to be carried out on a secondment basis but confirmation on this was awaited. The proposal had been put to Jersey Health and Social Services Department's Minister for approval.
- 7.2 The Board noted the position.

## 8. Communication Strategy

- 8.1 Andrew provided a revised draft communication strategy for the Board's approval. The strategy had been amended to incorporate the Board's comments from the meeting held on 3 June 2009.
- 8.2 The Board agreed that the draft communication strategy subject to a couple of minor drafting amendments.

**Action Point 4 (August 2009) – Andrew Wilkinson to arrange amendment and issue of the strategy.**

## 9. Performance Reporting

- 9.1 The Board considered the updated version of the performance reporting metrics and information. Considerable work had been carried out to simplify the reporting tool as far as possible for the staff who use it and to

- encourage them to think critically rather than mechanically during data input. Further work would be required to incorporate the full ISLA process as this developed and to more clearly reflect the customer satisfaction information. The Board was pleased to see a comparison of old and new costs in the report and asked for additional clarity around the rolling annual figures in column 1 and the quarterly costs in column 3.
- 9.2 The Board agreed the information provided was helpful.
10. Audit Committee
- 10.1 The Board was provided with the Audit Committee report for 2008/09 and advised that the report had been approved by the Committee at a meeting held the previous week.
- 10.2 The Board noted the Audit Committee Report.
11. Risk Register
- 11.1 The Board reviewed and agreed the risk register.
12. Finance and Staffing
- 12.1 The Board reviewed the finance and staffing reports. Staffing vacancies continued to drive a healthy underspend and whilst restructure business continuity measures could increase spend, this was unlikely to completely reverse the underspend trend. The impending move of the Glasgow staff to Europa Building on the Scottish Government estate would reduce the rent spend modestly but moving from a private sector landlord would represent significantly better value for public money. The Board asked for a clearer representation of the Depute Chief Inspector staffing position.
- 12.2 The Board noted the finance and staffing reports.
13. Policy Update
- 13.1 The Board discussed a paper outlining SWIA's most recent policy activities. Alexis advised the Board that a more systematic approach had been introduced to ensure good liaison with Scottish Government policy colleagues with regular meetings being arranged with Education, Health and Justice. Andrew updated the Board on a report by the Scottish Government's Office of the Chief Researcher who had carried out a survey of SWIA's Scottish Government policy stakeholders. The mainly positive comments would be pursued by DCIs directly with policy colleagues with a view to ensuring that SWIA was delivering the best possible inspection-informed policy contribution.

13.2 The Board noted the report.

14. AOB

14.1 There was no other business.

15. Date of the next meeting – 26 November 2009, Ladywell House.