

MINUTES OF THE SWIA MANAGEMENT BOARD MEETING
2.00 pm, Thursday 24th November 2005
Pentland Room, Ladywell House

Present: Alexis Jay, Chief Inspector
Hamish Hamill, Non Executive Director
Alistair Gaw, Depute Chief Inspector
David Cumming, Depute Chief Inspector
Andrew Wilkinson, Corporate Manager
Anne Travers (Minutes)

Apologies: Gill Ottley, Depute Chief Inspector
Sandra Nutley, Non Executive Director

1. Introductions

1.1 Alexis Jay introduced Hamish Hamill to the other attending Board Members and gave apologies for Gill Ottley and Sandra Nutley.

2. Discussion of SWIA's Objectives

2.1 Alistair Gaw explained that SWIA's 4 key objectives were:

- inspection, review and reporting across social work and social care services;
- sectoral and aspect evaluations of social work and social care services, including commissions from Scottish Ministers, relevant SE Departments and other bodies;
- provision of professional advice to Scottish Ministers and others; and
- building capacity and good relations with our stakeholders.

2.2 SWIA's higher level objectives were:

- improving the quality of social work across Scotland;
- securing improved public confidence in social work services;
- building capacity in Scotland's social work services;
- informing social work policy development; and
- becoming an excellent organisation.

2.3 Prior to the Agency being formed its predecessor the Social Work Services Inspectorate (SWSI) was involved primarily in providing advice on policy issues. However, the balance of work for the Agency now was 90% inspection and 10% policy but there were pressures meeting the demands of an increasing policy agenda and special investigations. Despite this workload SWIA had met all its stated work commitments for 2005 as described in the Corporate Plan. Hamish Hamill advised that the Agency should identify the cost of such additional work and seek to recover it from requesters. He suggested that the Agency should contact Scottish Executive Solicitors Office who had a very good example of 'How to measure time'.

2.4 As additional background information, it was agreed that a copy of the Agency's Framework Document, Corporate Plan and other relevant documents should be provided to Hamish Hamill.

Action Point 1(Nov 05): Alistair Gaw to provide background documentation to Hamish Hamill.

2.5 The Board also discussed performance measurement in general terms. Whilst SWIA was able to participate in SE initiatives such as Investors in People (IiP), it would need to develop its own performance measurement systems. It was recognised also that a professional infrastructure for secondees/associate inspectors would be required.

3. Board Remit and Responsibilities

3.1 It was agreed that Andrew Wilkinson should provide a draft for the Board's approval.

Action Point 2(Nov 05): Andrew Wilkinson to draft Board remit and responsibilities.

4. Governance Documentation

4.1 The Board considered draft governance documentation covering the establishment of an Audit Committee; the Fraud Strategy and Fraud Response Plan; and the Risk Management Strategy.

4.2 Subject to minor amendments, the Audit Committee remit was agreed. Hamish Hamill agreed to chair the Committee. Andrew Wilkinson would establish the Committee and propose meeting dates to fit the Board meeting calendar and risk, control and governance processes.

4.3 The Fraud Strategy and Fraud Response Plans also were approved subject to minor amendments.

4.4 It was agreed that the SMT would need to consider and agree its policy on prosecution in response to fraud.

4.5 The draft Risk Management Strategy and Desk Instruction were approved, again subject to minor amendment. The Board recognised that the main risk area for the Agency was to its reputation.

4.6 It was agreed that Andrew Wilkinson should revise the documentation and arrange publication. It was recognised that careful consideration would need to be given to embedding throughout the Agency the policies and principles contained in the documentation.

Action Point 3(Nov 05): Andrew Wilkinson to publish agreed governance documentation and arrange wider dissemination across the Agency.

4.7 The Board noted that the draft Corporate Plan was with Alexis Jay for submission to the Minister for final approval.

5. Inspection Programme

5.1 The Board talked through the 2005/06 programme of 3 pilot inspections which was being delivered alongside the additional work necessitated by the Western Isles Report (Ministers had since asked that Western Isles be included in the Performance Inspections for 2006), the Borders Follow-up Report and the Joint SWIA/HMIC Fife Report which was due to be published soon. It was agreed that consistency across reports would be critical and close liaison between inspection teams would be required to achieve this. The Board also discussed the grading system used for the pilot inspections and recognised that more consideration would need to be given to the implications of using it for all inspections.

5.3 The Chief Inspector reported to the Board the planned inspection Programme for 2006/07. The Board heard that the programme for 2006/07 would include 10 Performance Inspections; 7 Criminal Justice Inspections; 2 Older People's Services Joint Inspections; 1 Learning Disabilities Joint Inspection; and 1 Drugs and Alcohol Joint Inspection

5.4 A copy of the programme would be forwarded to Hamish Hamill and Sandra Nutley when finalised.

Action Point 4(Nov 05): Anne Travers to forward finalised inspection 2006/07 programme to Non-exec Directors.

6. HR Issues

6.1 The Board considered a background paper detailing current and projected staffing levels and associated issues. Key among these was the need to find accommodation for staff that would exceed Ladywell House's capacity and to ensure that any solution was consistent with the longer term SE dispersal programme. Shared service and co-location opportunities were being investigated with sister inspection agencies.

7. Budget Report

7.1 The Board considered an interim financial position paper projecting a year-end spend of £2.6 – £2.7 million against the £3 million allocation. Clear financial information had only recently become available. The Agency still had not been allocated a budget and existed as a pressure on SEED's budget. A budget of £4 million for 2006/07 and 2007/08 had been tentatively agreed.

7.2 The Board discussed the level of financial (and staffing) information appropriate for the Board to avoid unnecessary overlap with SMT meetings and the Audit Committee. Andrew Wilkinson was tasked with considering this and producing proposals.

Action Point 4(Nov 05): Andrew Wilkinson to work up proposals for Board standing reports on finance and staffing.

8. Board Away Day.

8.1 The Board considered the suggestion of an initial 'away day' and agreed that this would be useful. It was agreed that a half-day prior to the next Board meeting in February

would be sufficient. The most suitable time for Hamish Hamill would be a Thursday morning from 10.00 am. A possible location would be the Mansion House at Edinburgh Zoo. A programme for the event would be drawn up with others invited as necessary.

Action Point 5(Nov 05): SMT to consider and produce programme for Board away day.

9. AOB

9.1 It was agreed that the dates of the Board meetings and the minutes would be published on the SWIA website.

10. Dates of Future Board Meetings

10.1 It was decided that Board meetings would be held in February, May, August/September and November. Hamish Hamill would not be available on the 2nd Monday of every month due to other commitments.

Action Point 6(Nov 05): Anne Travers to co-ordinate and agree Board meeting dates.

SWIA
December 2005