

Senior Management Team minutes Monday 20 June 2016

Members and attendees

Andy Laing	Head of Performance Improvement
Anne Jones	Assistant Commissioner – Wales
Jonathan Bamford	Head of Strategic Liaison
Kenneth Macdonald	Assistant Commissioner – Scotland and Northern Ireland
Louise Byers	Head of Good Practice
Michael Collins	Head of Organisational Development
Paul Arnold	Head of Customer and Business Services
Robert Parker	Head of Corporate Affairs
Steve Eckersley	Head of Enforcement
Steve Wood	Head of Policy Delivery
Simon Entwisle	Deputy Chief Executive Officer and Deputy Commissioner (chair)
Hannah Smith	Lead Communications Officer (digital) (item 3 only)
Peter Bloomfield	Senior Corporate Governance Manager (secretariat)

1. Introductions and apologies

Apologies were received from Christopher Graham who was unable to attend the meeting due to other work commitments.

2. Matters arising from the previous meeting

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 7 June were agreed subject to minor amendments relating to agenda item 3. This was to be amended by Secretariat.

Actions and decisions

Actions were cleared where possible. In particular there was discussion on:

- The decision to implement electronic pay slips. Due to CAPITA not being able to progress this project at present it was noted that implementing the decision was delayed. However, the decision needed to be kept on the register to ensure that, when possible, it was implemented; and
- Agreement of the procedure on how the ICO should investigate s77 and s55 allegations against its own staff. This was currently with trade union side and agreement may be delayed till July.

Simon Entwisle also advised the meeting that two of his Management Board actions had been cleared.

3. Search Engine Optimisation

Issue

Hannah Smith attended to give a presentation on search engine optimisation. This was an important area of work as the majority of people searching for information rights information on the web use search engines as the method of choice. And if the ICO is to reach its audience it needs to be in the top three or four pages of search results. For some search terms the ICO was not doing too badly but could do better in some areas.

The Communications Team was working in the areas of identifying key word search terms, meta-tags, link building with third party websites, internal links to more detailed guidance on the ICO website, and social book-marking; all to target our message better.

Search engine optimisation was an on-going process. This initial effort would take about six months. There have been measures identified, such as referrals to the ICO website etc, to ensure the time and effort is justified. And it was emphasised that following the initial blitz a continuing level of work was needed to ensure the right stakeholders could continue to easily access the information they needed.

Hannah also presented some recent web-user satisfaction results. She will be doing a know-about on this later and would be looking at the feasibility of pay per click advertising.

Decision

SMT fully supported the work being done and its importance.

There was a need to make sure work on implementing the EU data protection reforms was prioritised, although it was recognised that work had only just started in this area.

Actions

There were no specific actions needed other than a general need to keeping the profile of this work high within the ICO.

4. Citizen Reference panel

Issue

Robert Parker introduced the results of the recent Citizen Reference Panel. Areas covered were customer service, consent & conditions, fitness trackers, and early warning of rising new issues. Where applicable new issues identified by the panel needed to be flagged up with the Intelligence Hub.

The customer service results prompted a suggestion about using the panel to test standard letters and other ways in which the ICO communicated with people.

Decision

SMT considered that the panel was providing useful insights on the views of the public on information rights issues. Raising wider awareness of the work both internally and externally might also be helpful. And it was agreed to continue to make use of the Citizens' Reference Panel.

Actions

Andrew Laing and Robert Parker to discuss the ideas raised on testing standard letters and other ways in which the ICO communicates with people.

Robert Parker to consider how best to publicise the work of the panel to the outside world; whether in its entirety or as context to other issues being publicised.

Robert Parker to come back to SMT in two meetings time (18 July) to collect SMT members' views on what the next panel should consider.

5. Staff survey

Issue

Robert Parker asked for steers from SMT as to how the qualitative results from the staff survey (the verbatim comments) should be taken forward. Staff had been asked for input in response to five questions, the results of which had been broken down into 13 main areas. Some of the input, or suggestions, fitted into existing work streams, such as those about IT issues. But there needed to be decisions made about what the ICO should do about input into areas that did not.

Questions raised by the results of the quantitative research were felt to be better left with individual departments.

It was confirmed that the themes and issues raised by the verbatim comments would be addressed. There would not be an individual response to individual suggestions.

Decision

It was agreed to publish the verbatim comments.

Actions

Robert Parker to send suggestions which would fall to be considered under current programmes to the most appropriate Heads of Department.

Robert Parker to ensure discussion by SMT of the more corporate cross-cutting suggestions, and those relating to SMT visibility.

6. Strengthening our engagement

Issue

Jonathan Bamford introduced the paper on strengthening engagement by establishing sector panels where there are gaps in engagement (or to re-prioritise what is there already).

Strengthened engagement would be essential in taking forward the EU data protection reform. The links with ICO horizon scanning were also recognised.

There was also a need to consider how best to make use of the Technology Reference Panel. Suggestions made included taking a thematic approach to meetings and asking the reference panel for its ideas.

Decision

SMT agreed to support the proposed approach.

Actions

Jonathan Bamford and Steve Wood to take forward the setting up of sectoral panels and making changes to the Technological Reference Panel.

6. Any other business

Select Committee report on Cyber Security

Simon Entwisle asked about ownership of the recommendations coming out of the Select Committee report on Cyber Security. It was confirmed that Strategic Liaison and Enforcement would be taking the work forward.

Next Commissioner

Simon Entwisle advised that the next Commissioner wanted to attend team meetings etc over her first month at the ICO. Head of Departments were to liaise with her support.

Maternity cover for the Head of Good Practice

Louise Byers explained how maternity leave cover was to be provided for her post. The approach was agreed. Heads of Department were to advise Simon Entwisle of any expressions of interest in taking on the finance related work by the end of the week.

Request for a workshop on the implementation of EU data protection reforms

Louise Byers raised a request from DCMS for a workshop on the implementation of EU data protection reforms including discussing the

role of the supervisory authority. Steve Wood and Jonathan Bamford agreed to attend.

Operational performance

Andrew Laing reported that this first quarter had been one of the heaviest in terms of operational work for some years.

It was agreed to discuss operational performance at the Change Programme Project Board meeting of the 11 July in advance of the Management Board.

Inverness conference

Ken Macdonald reported that the Inverness conference had been very successful with over 100 attendees.