

RESTRICTED AND CONFIDENTIAL

Notes from the Trustees Conference Call held Tuesday 12 November at 11.00 am

Present: Stephen Jack (Chairman)
Peter Cooke (Vice Chair)
Yogi Amin
Mike Boyall
Sally Sparrow

James Sanderson (Chief Executive)
Joel Major (Principal Programme Manager)
Pam Mellors – note taker

Apologies: Sue Winterburn

1.0 Introduction

1.1 The Chair advised that he had called the meeting to discuss the decision made by the court of appeal, to quash the decision to close the ILF and to discuss the required response, impact to the ILF and plans for the way forward.

2.0 Decision

2.1 The Chief Executive advised that the court of appeal had upheld the Government's position on the consultation on the future of the ILF finding that it had been carried out properly and fairly. However it concluded that more documentary evidence was required to demonstrate the Minister's awareness of the impact of the decision on the Public Sector Equality Duty. As a consequence the decision to close the ILF was overturned.

2.2 The DWP was given the option to appeal, however they have chosen not to appeal but to make a fresh decision, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

3.0 Response and Impacts

- 3.1 The Chair and Chief Executive had met with DWP on 6 November to discuss the impact with the stewardship team. [REDACTED]
- 3.2 The Chief Executive outlined that there were approx 2000 visits with assessors at various stages of the process which have had to be cancelled. Assessors have been told to stop TRP visits and are contacting users to inform them of the position. The transfer of reports from the portal to ici has also stopped due to changes needed to the systems. A series of letters will be drafted for users taking into account at what stage of the process they were at. There are also currently around 1000 cases WIP with Service Delivery.
- 3.3 Stakeholders, devolved administrations LA's have all been informed.
- 3.4 A further complexity is with Group 1 users as the majority of which had given consent to involve their LA and pass on their information. We will be writing to these users to inform them of the position. A lot of these reviews were put on hold in the allocation process, however these users can now be visited under the proposed SRP, as some will now have exceeded the normal timeframe of 2 years and 6 weeks for a review.
- 3.5 The Chief Executive advised that there had been three full staff briefings and lines to take for were produced for staff, he said that the team had reacted very quickly to the decision.
- 3.6 JM is now undertaking to deconstruct the TRP structure that the organisation has spent the last 10 months building, and bringing up to full momentum.
- 3.7 The Chief Executive explained that it was not proposed to go back to the old biennial programme, improvements have been made in many areas eg outcome focussed reviews being introduced, and

will continue this work as best practice. [REDACTED]

3.8 Proposals for the SRP were discussed. The Chief Executive explained the process that would merge the old biennial programme and the relevant TRP elements to form the SRP. He detailed the elements that would cease from the TRP.

3.9 [REDACTED]

3.10 [REDACTED]

3.11 [REDACTED]

3.12 It was planned to commence the SRP on 18 November, users will be visited under the SRP from that date and cases in the office will be outcomed as an SRP visit.

3.13 A letter will be compiled to all user's, this may cause confusion and anxiety for users and will inevitably need careful handling.

3.14 SS commented that proposals were very clear and that that the organisation had done a marvellous job in turning it around in a short space of time.

3.15 YA commented that the result of the decision has created a state of flux. He said that communication was important to user's, [REDACTED]

- 3.16 [REDACTED]
- 3.17 [REDACTED] We have no mandate to close now and clearly the organisation can't wait around for a decision, we have therefore returned to our responsibilities to our users under the trust deed and responsibilities as a NDPB; managing public monies.
- 3.18 The Chair agreed, if Trustees did nothing they would be failing their responsibilities to the service users.
- 3.19 [REDACTED]
- 3.20 MB advised that he wanted to call an extraordinary Audit Committee meeting with the auditors to discuss the implications of the decision. It was agreed to get a date in the diary within the next few weeks.
- 3.21 The Chief Executive said that he was confident that the SRP would be up and running from next week. Assessors are going to start telephoning users today to arrange review visits under the new programme. He said it was important to try to maintain momentum, however it will take a while to get up to speed.
- 3.22 The week prior to the decision we had our best set of TRP results with approx 300 assessor reports returned to be outcomed. It was proposed to provide Trustees an end of programme report of the TRP for discussion at the Trustees meeting.
- 3.23 The Chair asked how staff morale was following the decision and response.
- 3.24 The Chief Executive advised that there had been a mixed response, a number of staff have had a professional approach and just got on with the work required, whilst others have been

confused and upset. Some staff had been preparing to leave and had plans in place ie training etc and had been disappointed, but were conscious of the bigger picture as public servants.

3.25 The Chief Executive commented that staff had been kept fully informed. We have been in this situation before and need to move forward.

4.0 Scenarios

4.1 The Chief Executive commented that it would be remiss not to plan for future events, it may be we will still close in 2015, we could stay open longer so need to plan for every eventuality,

[REDACTED]

4.2

[REDACTED]

4.3 The Chair also said that there were risks around staff, the organisation may lose more staff now. The Chief Executive said that this was a risk, staff were previously in a good position, they were engaged in the TRP and pleased with the service we were providing to our users to oversee an effective transition.

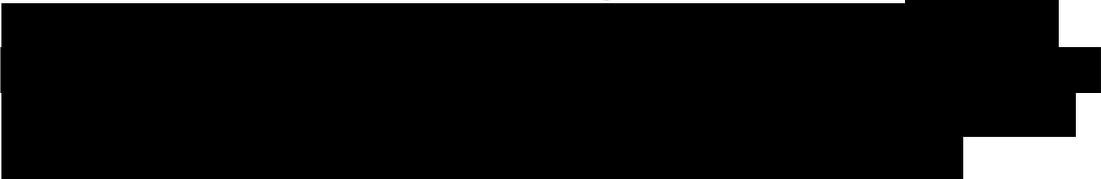
4.4 In the meantime the organisation is looking at different scenarios on how it can continue to maintain a good service to our users whatever the new decision may be.

4.5

[REDACTED]

4.6

[REDACTED]

- 4.7 YA asked about joint reviews and potential changes to packages what will be the impact of those cases.
- 4.8 JM reported that the TRP had not identified any major issues, but this can only be used as a general indicator and not an agreement by a LA.
- 4.9 Reports on the TRP, Lights Out and SRP will be presented at the next Trustees meeting for discussion.
- 4.10 Trustees noted actions taken by the management team since the decision and how quickly they have responded. They were content with the proposals to commence the SRP, it met with their expectations to continue interaction with users, safeguarding and to continue to ensure that their support packages are appropriate. They acknowledged that the decision has had an adverse impact on staff morale. They understood that there would be further challenges to face ahead 

- 4.11 Trustees commended the management team for their agile response and noted all the hard work and effort required to implement DWP's instructions following the court of appeal decision.
- 4.12 There being no further business the meeting ended at 12.00 hrs.