

Board Meeting 17 December 2020

Agenda Item no: 10

Ombudsman's report to the Board

Author: Rob Behrens, Ombudsman

To note

Purpose

To update the Board on my ongoing work as Ombudsman and Chair since our last meeting on 1 October 2020.

Recommendation

Board members are asked to note the report.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This report takes on a different shape and format in the light of your reception of my weekly letters bringing you up to date with developments. Rather than repeat what I have already conveyed, and in line with our previous constructive discussions, I am focusing on strategic issues and therefore draw your attention to the SWOT analysis at Annex A. I will speak to that at the meeting.

2. PACAC Scrutiny Session

- 2.1 On Monday 23 November Amanda and I attended our [annual PACAC scrutiny hearing in person at Parliament](#). We are grateful to Alex Allan, Kate Eisenstein, and all those involved in drawing up the briefing [REDACTED]

- 2.2 In the exchanges, we agreed to re-configure our data to reflect strategic changes made in time for the next Annual Report and to consider undertaking the 2021 Peer Review with an auditor Panel member, providing that person is accredited by the International Ombudsman Institute. We also agreed to give consideration to involving MP Offices in upgrading their resolution skills. We welcomed the Committee's indication that it would scrutinise the progress on the Complaints Standards Framework.

3. Engagement with staff

- 3.1 On 12 October I held an all-staff call and took questions from staff through Slido. In the current, unprecedented climate it is of great importance to keep

engaging with staff. Towards this end, I have been regularly meeting with teams across the organisation and am grateful to the Board for joining in next weeks all-staff conference.

4. Casework

- 4.1 I continue to engage with casework by providing advice to casework teams and overseeing several cases in the context of the group overseeing high risk cases. The time taken to address these cases should not be underestimated, given challenges to the integrity of the Office, and the Officeholder [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
- 4.2 Since the last Board meeting a [high-risk Windrush related](#) case has been finalised and published (on 21 October). [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED]
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[REDACTED]
- 4.3 The Insight Report [Continuing Healthcare: Getting it right the first time](#), was published and laid before Parliament on the 4 November. The report is a rigorous piece of scholarship, drawing on the fine work of the two specialist CHC teams created in 2018. I was interviewed by BBC's You and Yours on 4 November to discuss the report which had good coverage in the Daily Mail, the Daily Express and on social media.

Annexes

Annex A: SWOT analysis of PHSO

Annex B External meetings

Minister of State DHSC, Nadine Dorries MP, December 7, 2020.

Complainant, December 8, 2020

██████████

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Annex B

External meetings attended by the Ombudsman:

Thursday 1 October 2020 - Thursday 17 December 2020

All meetings held via Microsoft Teams unless otherwise indicated

Date	Meeting	Purpose
08/10/2020	Policy Profession webinar hosted by the Institute for Government roundtable	Policy workshop to discuss 'How can policymakers better understand citizens to deliver meaningful change?'
13/10/2020	Podcast recording: Dame Jackie Daniel	Podcast recording for Radio Ombudsman - link here to recording
13/10/2020	Introductory meeting with Jacqueline Davies, Director of Leadership Development & Lifelong Learning NHSE/I	Introductory meeting
14/10/2020	Meeting with Jonathan Reynolds MP	Meeting to discuss women's State Pension complaints
15/10/2020	Meeting with Baroness Cumberlege	To discuss the findings of the Independent Medicines and Medical Devices Safety Review
16/10/2020	Nick Bennett Public Service Ombudsman for Wales & Darren Miller MS	To discuss the MP filter
19/10/2020	Meeting with [REDACTED], PHSO complainants	To discuss [REDACTED] complaint
21/10/2020	Meeting with Chloe Smith MP	To discuss public bodies' response to COVID-19
22/10/2020	Meeting with Kathryn Chamberlain, Acting Chief Executive Independent Monitoring Authority. Attended with Amanda Amroliwala	To update on the set up of the Independent Monitoring Authority
23/10/2020	Anita Stuhmcke (via Zoom)	To discuss contribution to Ombudsman Reform book publication
26/10/2020	Podcast recording: Lord Adebawale, NHS Confederation	Podcast recording for Radio Ombudsman - link to recording
29/10/2020	Joint Committee of Regional Directors of International Ombudsman Institute - European region	Board meeting

Date	Meeting	Purpose
02/11/2020	Ombudsman Association Strategic issues sub-committee meeting (via Zoom)	Board meeting
03/11/2020	Public Service Ombudsman Group meeting	Regular catch up with Ombudsman colleagues
05/10/2020	LGSCO CLAE Commission mtg	With Sally Baxter (LGSCO)
06/11/2020	Anita Stuhmcke (via Zoom) - Ombudsman in the modern state	To discuss contribution to Ombudsman Reform book publication
13/11/2020	Meeting with Tamara Finkelstein, Permanent Secretary at Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs	To discuss the [REDACTED] case
17/11/2020	Ombudsman Association Validation Committee	Board meeting
20/11/2020	LGSCO Leadership Conference	Board meeting
25/11/2020	Kennedy's annual Healthcare seminar programme (via Zoom)	To give a keynote speech
01/12/2020	Meeting with colleagues from Oxford University	To discuss input to a research programme
01/12/2020	Meeting with Peter Schofield, Permanent Secretary at Department of Work and Pensions	To discuss DWP change to complaints process
03/12/2020	Meeting with [REDACTED], PHSO Complainant	To discuss complaint
03/12/2020	Ombudsman Association Board meeting	Board meeting
07/12/2020	Meeting with Victor Adebawale, Chair NHS Confederation	Regular catch up
08/12/2020	NHS Complaints & Concerns Roundtable	Roundtable hosted by Nadine Dorries to discuss NHS complaints
09/12/2020	Meeting with Professor Makgoba	Introductory meeting to begin the process of developing the twinning agreement between PHSO and the South African Health Ombud (OHO)
09/12/2020	LGSCO Quartet meeting	Regular meeting held jointly with Amanda Amroliwala
11/12/2020	Anita Stuhmcke - Ombuds in the modern state (via Zoom)	To discuss contribution to Ombudsman Reform book publication

Date	Meeting	Purpose
11/12/2020	Lady Hale interview	For PHSO all-staff event
14/12/2020	Meeting with Sue McAllister, Prison and Probation Officer	Regular catch up
15/12/2020	Meeting with Jeremy Hunt MP	To finish discussion on 9 September which was cut short