

MINUTES: BOARD TEAM MEETING

01 August 2025, RMA Office, Paisley

Present

Dr Geraldine O'Hare – Convener
Mr Jim Farish
Mr James Maybee
Mr Stephen McAllister (via MS Teams)
Dr Alain Zysset (via MS Teams)

In Attendance

Mr Mark McSherry, Chief Executive
Mr Paul Keoghan, Director Corporate Services
Mr Geoff Tordzro-Taylor, Head of Research & Development (Until Point 11)
Ms Lauren McClintock, OLR Team Manager
Miss Kathleen McAuley, Office Administrator (Minute Taker)
Ms Elaine Ferguson, Policy Lead (point 12.1-13.4)

Welcome

1. The Convener called the meeting to order at 10:00 am and welcomed all present.
2. The Board congratulated Ms Lauren McClintock in her new role as Head of OLR (HOLR) and thanked the previous HOLR Debbie Campbell for all her work.

Apologies:

3. The Convener noted apologies from Prof Kieran McCartan and Mr Edward Kotrys.

Declarations of Interest

4. The Board noted no declarations of interest.

Approval of Previous Minutes

5. The Board reviewed and approved the minutes from 28 April 2025 as a fair and accurate reflection of the meetings.

Matters Arising

6. The Board noted updates will provided on actions 8.2 (04/25) and 12.2 (04/25) during the course of the meeting.

Agenda Items

7. Chief Executive Update – Verbal

- 7.1. The Chief Executive (CE) reported on engagement with the Scottish Human Rights commission who are compiling a report on the OLR and advised the report is expected to be published by September 2025. The CE noted the Head of OLR (HOLR) will also be engaging with Scottish Government on this report.
- 7.2. The CE advised the Scottish Centre for Crime & Justice (SCCJR) released a podcast last month focusing on the the OLR sentence. Consequently, the Head of Research & Development (HRD) has engaged with academics at SCCJR. T
- 7.3. The CE updated the Board on the planning of the Anniversary Conference on 8 October 2025 and advised 36 individuals have confirmed attendance.
- 7.4. The CE also advised that engagement with PCS regarding the pay deal is ongoing with a further meeting scheduled in two weeks.
- 7.5. The CE informed the Board the RMA presented LSCMI data to the Criminal Justice Board for consideration.
- 7.6. The Board noted the CE's verbal update.

8. Convener Update – Verbal

- 8.1. The Convener thanked Jim Farish and all staff in their involvement in the recent recruitment campaign
- 8.2. The Convener updated the Board on a recent presentation to the Sentencing Council attended by both the Convener and the CE. The Convener noted that following the presentation a meeting took place with the Chair of the Sentencing Council.
- 8.3. The CE and Convener met with the Director of Justice this week and confirmed work is continuing on the appointment of new Board Members.
- 8.4. The Convener also advised all Board t appraisals have been completed.
- 8.5. The Board noted the Convener's verbal update.

9. Scottish Government Governance Hub – Verbal

- 9.1. The Board noted the Scottish Government Governance Hub as a standing item with no updates to date.

10. Head of Research and Development Update – Verbal

- 10.1. The Head of Research and Development (HRD) reported on ongoing projects including the OLR audit review advising of the completion of the coding of 50 cases, database and analysis, work is now progressing on preparing the final report.

- 10.2. The HRD also informed Members that the Internet Offending Report will be presented to the Research and Ethics Committee in October.
- 10.3. The HRD provided a presentation to the Board on the Psychopathy and OLR report and advised that this will be published on 19 August 2025. The Convener thanked the HRD on his presentation and all the work that went into the report.
- 10.4. The Board noted the update from the HRD.

11. Head of OLR Update - Verbal

- 11.1. Head of OLR (HOLR) provided an update on the Assessor recruitment advising that while no new candidates had been appointed there are three deferred candidates.
- 11.2. The HOLR also informed the Board of evidence of a significant increase in the number of Risk Assessment Reports instructed by the Court. The HOLR confirmed this matter continues to be monitored as it puts significant strain on existing assessor resources.
- 11.3. The Board noted the update from HOLR.

12. Sentencing and Penal Policy Commission Consultation Response – Board Paper 1133

- 12.1. The Policy Lead (PL) joined the meeting and updated Members on the Sentencing and Penal Policy Commission Consultation advising the RMA responded for evidence. The PL provided an overview on the response to Members.
- 12.2. The CE advised the Board that engagement on five strategic groups is continuing while the RMA becoming part of the oversight group is being considered.
- 12.3. The Board noted the update on the Sentencing and Penal Policy Commission Consultation Report.

13. Head of Effective Practice Update – Verbal

- 13.1. The PL update the Board on ongoing Effective Practice Team projects advising that two support sessions had been delivered to CJSW and Police Scotland.
- 13.2. Members were also updated on LSCMI support advising that the team are continuing requests received and that Risk Practice Training will take place next week.
- 13.3. The Board noted the update.
- 13.4. The PL left the meeting.

14. Public Sector Reform and Medium Term Fiscal Strategy – Board Paper 1134

- 14.1. The Director of Corporate Services (DCS) presented the Public Sector Reform and

Medium Term Fiscal Strategy to the Board for noting advising that a published strategy has now been received. The DCS gave an overview of the strategy to the Board.

14.2. The CE advised that he has requested a definition of Front Line Services and will update the Board once an answer has been received.

14.3. The Board noted the Public Sector Reform and Medium Term Fiscal Strategy.

15. Financial Performance Report – Board Paper 1135

15.1. The DCS updated the Board on the Financial Performance Report giving an update on the first quarter activities. The DCS also advised of the implementation of EPM to support monthly reporting to Scottish Government.

15.2. The DCS advised that the Scottish Government funding has been settled at £2,473,000 for 25-26 which represents an increase of £215,000 against the prior year. The DCS noted the current financial forecast is for an underspend against this budget.

15.3. The Board noted the Financial Performance Report.

16. Business Plan Performance Report – Board Paper 1136

16.1. The DCS presented the Business Plan Performance Report to the Board advising that the Business Plan contains 36 objectives, of those 18 are strategic and 18 are operational which are revised monthly. The DCS reported confident levels to complete 23 of the objectives are rated as high while 13 objectives are rated as medium.

16.2. The HOLR advised that RMP evaluations are operating in line with KPI's and that Q1 has seen an increase in AIR submissions.

16.3. Members noted the volume of meetings staff are currently attending and the CE advised this matter is under review.

16.4. The Board noted the Business Plan Performance Report.

17. Human Resource Performance Report – Board Paper 1137

17.1. The DCS presented the Human Resource Performance Report to the Board advising the RMA currently employs 21 staff and holds 8 vacancies. The DCS confirmed of these vacancies 6 are due to be filled in Quarter 2.

17.2. The DCS noted the Oracle HR system continues to present operational difficulties and engagement on this matter is ongoing with Scottish Government. The DCS confirmed work on the staff pay award is ongoing with the RMA continuing to engage with PCS.

17.3. The Board discussed international working and were advised that Members are not permitted to take their laptops abroad.

17.4. The Board noted the Human Resource Performance Report.

18. Board Member Pay Remit – Board Paper 1138

18.1. The DCS presented the Board Member Pay Remit to Members for approval advising the proposal cover 2025-26, 2026-27 and 2027-28. The DCS also confirmed that in relation to 2025-26 the award will be backdated to April 2025.

18.2. The Board approved the Board Member Pay Remit for immediate implementation.

19. CE Annual Pay review - Verbal

19.1. The CE, HOLR and Office Administrator (OA) left the meeting.

19.2. The Board discussed the CE Annual Pay review.

19.3. The CE, HOLR and OA returned to the meeting.

20. Board Succession Planning and Composition – Board Paper 1139

20.1. The DCS presented the Board Succession Planning and Composition to the Board for review which considered the recent departure of two Board Members.

20.2. The Board reviewed Committee composition and agreed the following Committee memberships:

- Accreditation Committee: Jim Farish (Chair), James Maybee, Kieran McCartan and Alain Zysett
- Research and Ethics Committee: Kieran McCartan (Chair), Alain Zysett and James Maybee
- Audit and Assurance Committee: Stephen McAllister (Chair), James Maybee, Jim Farish and Kieran McCartan.

20.3. The Convener advised that early engagement meeting for recruitment is scheduled for September.

20.4. The Board approved the Committee Memberships.

21. DIAA Bulletin – Board Paper 1140

21.1. The DCS presented the DIAA Bulletin from Internal Audit for noting.

21.2. The Board noted the DIAA Bulletin.

Other Competent Business

22. Conference Planning - verbal

22.1. The CE advised that the Prevention Domestic Abuse Bill is now open for consultation and that the RMA will be responding.

Date of next meeting

23. The Board members noted the next meeting is scheduled for 20 October 2025.

24. The Convener thanked everyone for attending and drew the meeting to a close at 14:10.