

**MINUTES: RESEARCH AND ETHICS COMMITTEE
23 June 2025, 13:00, VIRTUAL**

Present

Ms Michele Gilluley, Vice Chair
Mr James Maybee
Mr Alain Zysset
Prof Kieran McCartan

In Attendance

Mr Geoff Tordzro-Taylor, Head of Research & Development
Mr Mark McSherry, Chief Executive
Mr Paul Keoghan, Director Corporate Services
Dr Craig Thomson, Researcher (Minute taker)

Welcome

1. The Chair called the meeting to order at 13:03.

Apologies

2. The Chair noted no apologies submitted.

Declarations of Interest

3. The Chair called for declarations of interest.
4. The Chair noted no declarations were submitted.

Approval of Previous Minutes

5. The Committee reviewed and approved the minutes from 17 February 2025 as a fair and accurate reflection of the meeting.

Matters Arising

6. The Committee received updates on the following actions which are noted as complete – 8.4 (02/25), 10.6 (02/25), 12.2 (02/25), 8.4 (10/24), 8.5 (10/24), 9.2 (10/24), 10.1.2 (10/24), 10.1.3 (10/24), 12.3 (10/24), 10.2 (06/24).
7. The Committee noted the following actions were still ongoing – 11.3 (02/25), 13.2 (10/24), 10.3 (06/24).

Agenda Items

8. Updates on Ongoing Projects – Committee Paper 039

- 8.1. The Head of Research & Development (HRD) presented an update on the following ongoing projects.
 - 8.1.1. Internet Offending Pilot: This is very close to completion. All three papers drafted and designed. Envisage they will come to the October Committee for approval, with publication following that Committee.
 - 8.1.2. SAFERR: Ongoing, various entries being worked on with some sent for external review (e.g. Electronic Monitoring). HRD notes concerns over the communication of entry on Caledonian. Engagement with SG to follow on this.
 - 8.1.3. OLR Audit: Oversight of this project has been moved to the R&D team. 44 out of the planned 50 cases completed. The focus in the next quarter will be on producing a report on the 50 cases. The pilot report on 15 cases will not be published but will support the creation of the main report. Some ideas on next steps such as coding all cases for ACES. HRD provided clarification on how offending behaviour has been coded in the database.
 - 8.1.4. OLR & Psychopathy: This report is coming to the August Board. Engagement with SG and SPS to be conducted in next quarter to support publication.
 - 8.1.5. OLR & Personality Disorder: Researcher is working on a report currently looking at the relationship between psychopathy and personality disorder.
 - 8.1.6. Use of LSCMI Data: Presenting at June CJB, with the intention of then producing quarterly data. In conversation with HMP Shotts to look at their long-term population. Looking at short-term and remand prisoner data in HMP Barlinnie.
- 8.2. The Committee discussed how we work with practitioners to help them understand and interpret research findings. A member of the committee highlighted that some practitioners might not have the knowledge or experience to fully understand the process and implications of statistical analysis and output. HRD clarified that we can have a 1–2-page summary accompanying each of our publications to explain what the findings mean. The podcast was also highlighted as a form of communication to support understanding. CE noted the communications package that supports the research and highlighted the focus and consideration we give to the using language that is accessible to a wider audience. A committee member raised a query about having a forum hosted on the website to allow practitioners to ask questions about the published research, colleagues could provide a response. HRD suggested something similar to an FAQ could be feasible, and could function like the current feedback form on SAFERR.
- 8.3. A committee member noted that there is not a lot of trauma and ACES focused research on sexual violence and therefore there would be an interest in this area from England and Wales. The committee discussed the prevention angle by considering the impact of ACES on the victims of OLR individuals and the use of a trauma-informed approach to reducing recidivism. The committee also discussed assessor practices

regarding personality disorder assessments and diagnoses and any opportunity for evidencing these practices.

8.4. The Committee noted the updates on the ongoing projects.

9. FRGMA Annual Assurance – Committee Paper 040

9.1. The HRD presented the FRGMA 2024-25 Annual Assurance paper to the Committee advising that all recommendations made in 2023-24 have been implemented, and all but one has already been implemented from the current assurance.

9.2. The Committee noted no questions on the evaluation.

9.3. A Committee noted the FRGMA Annual Assurance paper.

Other Competent Business

10. CEESAY Research – Committee Paper 041

10.1. The Chief Executive (CE) presented the CEESAY Research paper to Members advising that the RMA engaged with PhD research as a means of de-mystifying the OLR. This year, the individual's PhD was due for viva and the research was not to be made public prior to review. It was noted that quotes included within the PhD research were made public via the NOLR campaign. A meeting was held with the researcher and their supervisors; an apology was provided as the supervisors had agreed to the NOLR request quickly without considering the implications of sharing these quotes. HRD and Researcher met with SCCJR colleagues as a result of NOLR campaign. It was noted that the RMA Research & Ethics Committee didn't exist at the time of initial engagement with the PhD research, and in the future such activities would come through this Committee.

10.2. The Committee discussed how the RMA can become an informal third supervisor in situations such as this. This has been done in the past but in this situation, it had been avoided as it was the first engagement regarding the OLR.

10.3. The Committee noted the CEESAY Research paper.

Date of Next Meeting

11. The Committee noted the next meeting is scheduled for 27 October 2025 and will be held in the RMA office.

12. The Chair thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 14:46.