

<i>Meeting</i>	OLC	<i>Agenda Item No.</i>	4
		<i>Paper No.</i>	104.3
<i>Date of meeting</i>	27 April 2020	<i>Time required</i>	10 Minutes

<i>Title</i>	Executive Report
<i>Sponsor</i>	Rebecca Marsh, Chief Ombudsman
<i>Status</i>	OFFICIAL
<i>To be communicated to:</i>	Members and those in attendance

Executive summary	
<p>This paper updates Board on key issues from the Chief Ombudsman.</p> <p>Performance and finance updates are covered in separate items on today's Board agenda.</p> <p>Appendix 1 provides a summary of the Chief Ombudsman and Chair's engagement with key stakeholders.</p>	
Recommendation/action required	
Board is asked to NOTE the issues highlighted in the paper.	

27 April 2020

Executive report

1. Period since last Board

We are still operating in accordance with our business continuity plan and a formal update is elsewhere on the agenda. My overriding concerns at this time relate to the performance and financial impacts of COVID-19, both immediately and its ongoing effect post event.

In particular the three areas that are the immediate cause for concern:

- Service provider availability, their access to evidence and time to engage with LeO is constrained, resulting in delays and workflow changes
- Complainants are not unreasonably, deprioritising engagement with LeO, with similar impacts
- Attrition impacts on budget

At time of writing, we still had not seen any significant fall off in initial contact, or in files flowing through to the pre-assessment pool. The level of reallocations and longer term, the impact of returning delayed cases, will be of some real concern in maintaining the improvement trajectory in end to end experience.

We have not had any confirmed cases of COVID-19 within the staff, only low incidences of sickness and we have very few staff who cannot work at all. However, many of our staff are working reduced hours and flexibly across 24 hours and 7 days. Whilst this means we have levels of availability we otherwise would not, it also equates to a significant number of equivalent FTE time lost, and this impacts on performance as our available productive capacity is significantly reduced. The modelling and impacts are discussed elsewhere on the agenda, as is the expected outturn for both performance and finance for last year.

My other areas for concern are

- Resilience at all levels is limited and the prolonged impacts, and level of intensity, on all staff are being closely monitored. Mitigation is limited by financial constraints.
- Finance and HR – internal audit reports and the Independent Review have highlighted a number of areas that require focussed work. This has seen impacts on stakeholder confidence.

Anecdotally, staff engagement appears to have improved over the course of the last few weeks, but staff levels of anxiety remain high.

Appendix 1 summarises stakeholder engagement by Chair and CO since the last paper.

Appendix 1 – list of key external meetings and events

Date	Meeting/engagement activity	Scope/key issues	Outcomes
27/03/2020	CO call with Matthew Hill	Post Board catch up	Budget and position shared
From 02/04/2020	CO attends weekly MoJ Perm Sec COVID-19 Briefing	MoJ family COVID-19	Update briefing and information sharing
08/04/2020	CO virtual Ombudsman Association meeting	Engagement with other ombudsman on working together, sharing ideas through lockdown	Opportunities for collaboration and combined working
09/04/2020	Chair phone call with Simon Davis, Law Society	Introductory meeting with President of Law Society	Helpful introductory discussion
09/04/2020	Chair meeting with Steve Brooker LSB	OLC budget Learning review	Feedback taken
15/04/2020	Chair and Alex Moore call with Simon Davis and Anjali Mouelhi, Law Society	Meeting with President and Policy Advisor of The Law Society	Opportunity to begin discussing issues raised in recent consultation responses.
17/04.2020	Chair meeting with MoJ	OLC budget Learning review with Peter Rowlinson	Feedback taken