

Meeting	OLC Board	Agenda Item No. Paper No.	7 113.5
Date of meeting	31 March 2021	Time required	10 minutes

Title	Annual Report 20/21
Sponsor	Alex Moore, External Affairs Team Leader
Status	OFFICIAL

Executive summary
<p>The Annual Report and Accounts 20/21 project is being managed by the Business Performance Manager and External Affairs Team Leader.</p> <p>The following paper summarises:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The key milestones of the project, including OLC board approval dates. 2. The messaging and structure for the report. <p>Board are particularly asked to note the tight timescales at the end of this project to ensure that the Annual Report is laid before the summer recess. The dates for the summer recess have not yet been published and therefore we have been asked to work to a date in early July to ensure that we are in a ready position. This means that we have a week from final board approval to the report being laid in which to obtain sign-off from the Comptroller General and the print work to be completed.</p>
Recommendation/action required
OLC is asked to NOTE the paper.

Annual Report & Accounts 20/21 – Update

Progress to date

A project management approach is being applied to this years' Annual Report and Accounts 20/21 submission, which incorporates key lessons from last year's process.

To date the following actions have taken place:

- A project kick-off meeting was held with members of the Executive Team on the 18th February and the structure of the annual report was agreed.
- The commissioning of content was issued to all contributors w/c 22nd February.
- Individual meetings with all content contributors and a progress meeting have taken place.

Annual Report and Accounts – structure and messaging

Following the lessons learned session from last year there will be a few key differences in the report this year:

- Separate Annual Report and Overview of Complaints Report. Both to be published at the same time.
- Alignment between strategic objectives, business plan priorities and progress. This will allow for clearer understanding of performance and risk against business plan priorities.
- Section providing an overview of the business priorities for 2021/22.
- Use of infographics where possible and a less text heavy report.

A detailed content structure for the report has been developed, and an overview of this is below. This has received approval from Executive and drafting of each section has begun. The key themes which will run through the report are:

- Impact of Covid-19.
- Performance through the year from managing lockdown, stabilising performance through to development of recovery plans.
- Progress against business priority areas.
- Realistic about challenges and current risks, alongside providing confidence that these are being pro-actively managed.
- Importance of delivering a recovery plan for our customers, stakeholders and confidence in the scheme.

Performance overview	
Chair's foreword	- Review of the last year noting impact of Covid-19 on performance, the scheme and wider sector. Being clear that we are not in the position we hoped to be in but there are cautious signs of recovery.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reflect on the three priority areas for OLC noted in last years foreword (confidence in modelling / confidence in operational leadership/capacity / confidence in responding to the people issues) and progress against these. - Look forward to 21/22 plans and key risks for the OLC. - Commitment to transparency with the sector and re-building confidence in the scheme.
Who we are	<p>Set out:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Vision / mission / strategic objectives - Core areas of work, operations + learning and insight - Include mini case studies to show impact of work <p>Year in complaints – similar to diagram in current report.</p>
Performance report	
Chief Ombudsman overview	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Overview of performance: backlog, reduced level of closures but showing early signs of improvement, and plans in development (inc AI) to support further recovery. - Our People: Gains in staff engagement over the last year and importance of building on this to deliver future recovery. - Looking forward: importance of delivering at pace a recovery plan for customers and wider sector and beginning process of rebuilding confidence in the scheme. - External factors: a well-performing ombudsman key part of public confidence in the sector. Also allows the scheme to begin to give greater resources to Insight and learning / Transparency / shaping the role of redress and future discussions about this for the sector.
Responding to Covid	<p>Impact of Covid on staff / resourcing.</p> <p>Impact of Covid on performance – growth of backlog and reduced closures.</p> <p>Financial impact – ie special leave / cost of equipment / changes to office.</p>
Review of annual priorities by business area	<p>Appraisal of performance against planned business priorities and impact on the business. Linking to key performance indicators and risks for each area.</p> <p><i>Operational delivery:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Minimising impact of covid and working towards a sustainable recovery position (backlog and case closures). - Improvements to front-end of business. <p><i>Operational support:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Improving BI to give organisation tools and data to manage both day-to-day performance and organisational planning.

	<p><i>Operational transformation:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Use of technology to reach strategic objectives. - Piloting of technology projects and outcomes. <p><i>Learning and insight:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Publishing transparency response paper. - Online courses reaching more people + beginning to test new approaches to working with providers - Development of new website
People and organisation	In addition to required areas section will also cover results of staff survey and focus of the People Plan.
Looking forward	<p>Priorities and key challenges for the year ahead.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Focus on the backlog and how this will be addressed with pace and urgency. - Priorities for transparency work and contributing to ongoing work in the sector. - Learning and Insight. Use time and resources to work with those who need our support. - Commitment to accountability with the sector. - Commitment to value for money and revised framework for measuring this.
<p>Governance report (Number of sections which will be updated from last year and presentation refreshed)</p>	
Governance statement	<p>In addition to FReM requirements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Overview of process for assuring risk and governance, including work done to improve this during the year. - Key corporate risks (backlog, leadership, customer confidence, stakeholder confidence, staff engagement) - Update on audit reports (HR and finance) from last years report.
Remuneration and staff report	As per last year but will include some diversity data.
Financial statements	As per last year.

Key dates

A milestone report is included in Appendix A.

The first draft of the report will be shared with board for the May meeting, and sign-off is anticipated for the 1st July. A provisional laying date of 8th July has been set (with our own publication on 9th July) to ensure that the report is laid before summer recess. This is a tight turnaround which is accounted for in the project planning, however it should be noted that meeting this dates relies on coordinating both the external printers and Comptroller General report.

Appendix A

High Level Milestone Plan: Annual Report 20/21

