

<b>Meeting</b>	OLC Board	<b>Agenda Item No.</b>	9 118.8
<b>Date of meeting</b>	26 January 2022	<b>Time required</b>	15 minutes

<b>Title</b>	Reduction of the Pre- Assessment Pool
<b>Sponsor</b>	Sandra Strinati, COO, Operations Managers, Deborah McIntyre, David Peckham, Treena Moseley and Mark Persard
<b>Status</b>	OFFICIAL SENSITIVE

<b>Executive summary</b>
<p>Operations update on the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Initiatives impacting PAP, currently in progress, in planning or due to start.</li> <li>• Initiatives impacting BAU process to deliver process efficiencies, in progress, in planning or due to start; and</li> <li>• Initiative impacting people to improve efficiencies, in progress, in planning or due to start.</li> </ul>
<b>Recommendation/action required</b>
No action required for information only

# Reduction of the Pre-Assessment Pool

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 Operations committed to updating the Board on initiatives to deliver backlog recovery to include people, process and efficiency measures.
- 1.2 Where activities can be quantified, they have been.
- 1.3 We would expect a reduction in performance across all areas in December due to additional seasonal holidays. There is also a known historic issue in contacting complainants and service providers during this period
- 1.4 The Operational Management Team have anticipated many of the actions committed to in 22/23 and have put them in place in order that the 22/23 year begins smoothly and efficiently.

## 2. PAP Initiatives – In progress

- 2.1 Reasonable offer made – After working through potential opportunities in the PAP there was an expectation of circa 30 closures per month. December delivered 34. This is now a BAU process. An additional resource of 0.8 has been allocated across this and Guided Negotiations. This resource will be used to cover the additional closures required in both initiatives. The effect of this resource will not be seen until January
- 2.2 Guided Negotiation - After working through potential opportunities in the PAP there was an expectation of circa 19 closures per month. December delivered 21. This is now a BAU process with some limited additional resource added.
- 2.3 Nudge - there was an expectation of circa 26 closures per month. December delivered 36. This is now a BAU process and is subject to review each month to assure ourselves of increased, as well as decreased, delivery against the assumptions.
- 2.4 GET Investigator (GETI) – GETI's continue to be in the pilot phase, they remain on an upward learning curve that has seen them take 36 cases from the PAP in December. This is a reduction on the 66 in November and is due to increased annual leave. Early indications are where a case goes through to an investigator the investigation times are significantly reduced. Total investigation time on a sample of 43 cases was circa 33 days compared to a case where there has been no GETi involvement of 91 days. January and February will see volumes of cases taken from the PAP increase, as GETI's knowledge and experience increases, and they are signed off the quality and feedback model.
- 2.5 We have had 1FTE GETi resignation and 1 FTE GETi successful in applying for an investigator role internally. Critical success factors are due to be reviewed and will be updated prior to next Board.
- 2.6 Bulk updates – this is the automation of pushing messages to complainants and service providers in the PAP throughout their wait time. This keeps both parties engaged and informed, manages their expectations and nudges

parties to consider the resolution of their case prior to LeO involvement. Our next update is planned for January 2022

2.7 Demand Management – Operations have created a Front End Team (FET) of Ombudsman and supporting staff who are using existing Scheme Rule 5.7 to determine proportionality at initial complaint stage. Initial estimates suggested a 10% reduction of cases going into the PAP - circa 60 cases per month and that is built into 22/23 trajectories. This work started on 4 January 2022. Early indicators are showing this level to be 17% reduction month to date.

### 3. PAP Initiatives – Planned / Due to start

3.1 Proportionality test on existing PAP – The FET Ombudsman undertakes checks to apply existing Scheme Rules to determine proportionality at this stage for cases that fall under Reasonable offer made, Guided Negotiation & Nudge. This relates to the 75 per month early closures in the trajectories and chapter 5 dismissals which relates to 94 proportionality in 2022/23 forecasts. This process excludes low remedy cases. The same proactive approach is being taken by the FET on new customer cases, however this referred to as Demand Management which reduces our core demand of cases going into the PAP.

3.2 Current testing does not relate to low remedy. However, previous high level calculations based on previous years closure profiles indicated that cases relating to low remedy would equate to an additional 39 closures per month. Although this approach is not being taken forward yet, the FET are proactively identifying cases in both the PAP backlog and new cases that would fall the auspices of low remedy. The figure of a £250 remedy is being used as a benchmark for this test and early indications show that the team have identified 48 cases in a 6 week period. To reiterate, whilst low remedy cases are being identified, they closures which may derive from them are not included in any trajectory

### 4. BAU efficiencies – In progress

4.1 Scoping call planning at assessment stage – accurate scoping sets the tone for the entire case, any errors at this stage compound as the cases progresses and results in failure demand and rework. Formalising the approach will improve the customer journey, reduce rework and improve customer journey times – this will be strengthened with a review and implementation of customer communication training to new staff, with a view to rolling out to the business.

4.2 Listening to our people – After engagement with, and feedback from, established investigators a limited trial with 1 team has started. It will test whether removing much of our formal process and give ‘signed off’ established investigators, the autonomy to manage cases in the way they

believe would be most efficient, improves overall performance. This began in December and will run throughout Q4. We will have further data from the success of this pilot in February and March.

## 5. BAU efficiencies and process reviews – In planning

- 5.1 Review of Request Remind Proceed Process – This review has been completed, and the implementation of agreed action will give improved guidance to investigators on how they proceed or dismiss cases where parties disengage. This work has the potential to improve customer journey times and free up investigator resources which are then reinvested into other cases. This is a planned Q4 initiative
- 5.2 Combining Scope and evidence request – Currently we wait 7 days to allow parties to confirm complaints before sending an evidence request. GETi's have trailed removing this step, it has had no detriment and has reduced time. We plan to roll this out across operations to reduce an unnecessary admin burden and reduce investigation timelines. This is a planned action for February ensuring that data collected from GETi pilot support this action. This is planned for February.
- 5.3 Removing the requirement for Service Provider to agree complaints in all cases. This delays the early part of a case when Service Providers cannot respond to the request often due to their own work loads. Removing this step will reduce delays and improve investigation times. This action was completed in December and is now in policy and guidance.
- 5.4 Adding new complaints – This has reviewed the process of when a complainant can add extra complaints that would have been known at scoping stage of the complaint. Adding complaints that would have been known about delays investigations and creates part premature complaints that stop the investigation proceeding which elongates the customer journey time. Streamlining this process, within our existing Scheme Rules, will reduce investigation time and remove admin burden from investigators and improve the overall service to Service Providers and complainants.
- 5.5 Ideas Station Review (IDS) - The IDS will be refocussed to ensure all ideas are looking at PAP reduction. Ideas for other areas of the business will be redirected to various improvement workstreams. This will be recomunicated with staff to renew focus. A review will be completed by end of January 2022 with LeO's communications manager t scheduled in February 2022. Ideas from 2021 that were non PAP related will be directed to operational workstreams. LeO's people will be asked to focus on PAP reduction ideas from March 2022. The mechanisms for idea progression and feedback will also form part of this review.

## 6. People / Structure changes – In progress

6.1 Grad Bay – we have taken feedback from previous new recruits to LeO and used this to change and develop the 2021 induction process. We previously experienced new recruits leaving LeO early and any changes therefore had an aim of improving retention and productivity at an earlier stage of their career with LeO. The July starters were due to deliver 4.5 closures per FTE and delivered 3.32 in December. This cohort had accrued holidays that disproportionately affected the results. The last comparable cohort was April 2020, this cohort at the same stage had a productivity of 2.29 (covid affected) September starters were due to deliver 1.7 per month but have also exceeded expectations by delivering 2.3 in December. Attrition is lower when compared to previous cohorts. We expect November cohorts to be productive at 0.73 from January

6.1 Improved Induction – Induction process has been refreshed in line with November cohort feedback. System and theoretical training have been more closely aligned. This gives trainees more confidence going into the live role. We have also increased the number of experience mentors in readiness for March cohorts. Specific feedback from inductees has been that this was the one singularly most important support for them. For March inductees we will be splitting the numbers in to two cohorts. Feedback has been that maximum group sizes in induction is 20. Whilst this has resource implications for those delivering the March induction more risk is presented if we do not protect our recruitment investment and future productivity from our new intake.

6.2 Combining the L1 Ombudsman investigator and QaF role – combining the two distinct roles will deliver a more flexible ombudsman resource. It gives us flexibility to react to changes in demand in the three core areas that L1's deliver: High Complexity complaints, Quality and Feedback to investigators and decision making. A combined team ensures that Team Leaders can use ombudsman to react to the demands of the business in a more agile way. This change took effect from 6 December.

6.3 Operational Leadership changes – Large volumes of new investigators require increased support and leadership, increased attention on performance variation activity, leadership of PAP reduction activity, business process change and coaching, and development work all means there is a need for increased operational leadership capacity. Mark Persard joined on 4<sup>th</sup> January and we have taken the opportunity to align operational leadership to job families. Roles have been designed as follows;

- Mark will Lead the GET;
- Deb, ombudsman and FET from an operational stance;
- David and Treena will share BAU Resolution Centre teams.

This will give Operations Managers clear lines of accountability and focus. Each Operations Manager retains several other project and corporate LeO accountabilities.

**Operations Management Team  
January 2022**