

Board Meeting 41

9.30am – 12.00pm & 1.30pm to 2.30pm

Thursday 20 July 2023

Bucktrout House

St Peter Port, Guernsey

Minutes

Board of Jersey OFSO

Board of Guernsey OFSO

Present:

Antony Townsend (AT) in the chair

Robert Girard (RG)

Hayley North (HN)

Jennifer Carnegie (JC)

In attendance:

Douglas Melville (DM), Principal Ombudsman and Chief Executive

In attendance by video conference:

Alison Finn (AF), Manager, Finance and Administration

Ross Symes (RS), Ombudsman & Manager, Complaints Resolution

Apologies:

1 Approval of the Agenda

Approved

2 Declaration of interests or potential conflict with respect to the agenda

No interests or potential conflict with items on the agenda were declared. Though not a conflict, RG noted his appointment as Chair of the Guernsey Banking Deposit Compensation Scheme.

3 Minutes of the last meeting

The board approved the minutes of the last meeting.

4 Previous board decisions by email to note

The board noted the following decision made via email:

Approval of staff benefit policies – approved by separate Director emails on 26, 27, and 28 June 2023.

5	<p>Board to note</p> <p>Publication of Q1 2023 complaint statistics (27 April 2023)</p> <p>CIFO Board calendar of activities (note scheduled meeting dates for 2023 and 2024). It was agreed to change the 2024 dates to January and October in Guernsey and April and July in Jersey. Invites to meetings should be sent to all board members' CIFO and personal calendars to ensure no diary clashes.</p>
6	<p>Chief Executive's Report</p>
6.1	<p>Report for information and discussion</p> <p>The board noted the Chief Executive's report and in particular:</p> <p>The current inventory of cases suspected to involve suspicious activity reports (SARS).</p> <p>The increasing volume of data subject access requests (DSARs) consuming the operational capacity of one of the members of the team. The board agreed that while CIFO clearly communicates the reasons for the decisions made on complaints, managing complainants' expectations at the outset of the investigation could assist in reducing the numbers received. The use of AI in redacting the information may also be useful in limiting the time spent.</p> <p>The environment team-building day carried out by the Jersey-based staff in June and the need to investigate suitable agencies in Guernsey that would benefit proportionally from CIFO's environmental initiatives. The board agreed the budgeted amount was not to employee salary costs for the modest amount of time spent on such activities.</p> <p>Discussions regarding the potential addition of the Guernsey secondary pension scheme to CIFO's mandate.</p> <p>Ongoing meetings with the GoJ and occupational pension plan sub-sector stakeholders to plan for the extension of CIFO's mandate into this new area of financial services.</p>
6.2	<p>Stakeholder and hospitality registers</p> <p>The board noted the various registers presented to the meeting. The board advised that the comprehensive registers were not required to be viewed at Board meetings. Edited highlights would be sufficient with any trends or lack of engagement brought to the board's attention.</p>
7	<p>Operations and case-related reports</p>
7.1	<p>Operations report</p> <p>RS advised the case inventory is at its lowest since 2017. This is mainly down to active management of the complaint handling team.</p>
7.2	<p>Q3 2022 Complaint statistics</p> <p>The board noted the Q2 2023 Complaint statistics and approved them for publication.</p>
7.3	<p>Timeliness metrics</p>

	<p>The board noted the process stages and timeliness and, as agreed at the last meeting the figures reported should be in months for any that exceed 30 days. This included updating the website.</p> <p>RS advised due to personnel changes the intake and allocation stages' times were longer than usual as there is currently only one team member working on these stages, and this would continue in the next quarter until the new team members come on board in September.</p>
7.4	<p>Update on 10 oldest cases</p> <p>The board noted the report and requested that the presentation be altered to include dates when the complaints were received.</p>
7.5	<p>Website statistics</p> <p>The board noted the statistics and highlighted the comments from a couple of stakeholders regarding the perceived late publication of the 2022 annual report. DM advised the report was published later than usual as the two government committees couldn't co-ordinate their tabling dates with their respective legislatures to enable publication. HN suggested a statement on the annual report publication should be added to the website and the board agreed.</p> <p>JC suggested that pictures be re-introduced on the website for the board and staff. DM advised he would arrange this.</p>
8	<p>Finance and Risk</p>
8.1	<p>Q2 2023 Financial accounts</p> <p>The board noted the financial accounts, and that the operating year-end surplus was forecast to be around £70,000 higher than budget due to the recovery of case fees previously provided for.</p>
8.2	<p>Q1 2023 Cashflow analysis</p> <p>The board noted the cashflow analysis and there were no questions or concerns raised.</p>
8.3	<p>Levy update</p> <p>All the non-bank levies will be issued on 31 July. There are no significant changes to the number of financial service providers being levied.</p>
8.4	<p>2024 Budget steer</p> <p>The board agreed that the preparation of the 2024 budget would be done using the June 2023 RPI rate, due out on 21 July, with a potential review of this at budget approval in October. The main decisions around the proposed budget where;</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Increase reserves from 3 months to 4.5 months to ensure sufficient cover for unexpected costs. 2. Increase case fees to reduce levies ensuring the user pay model continues.
8.5	<p>Risk management and updated risk register</p>

	<p>AF advised the only update was the including of the risk around the increasing numbers of DSARs.</p> <p>It was agreed to investigate tools to produce a shorter, simplified register with a summary provided to the board of any changes in impact severity or new risks identified since the previous quarter.</p>
9	<p>Governance and Policy</p>
9.1	<p>Appointment of Deputy Chair</p> <p>AT that RG has been appointed as Deputy Chair.</p>
9.2	<p>Update on occupational pensions mandate</p> <p>DM advised the new proposed date for the legislative changes to bring occupational pension in is now October with the pensions in CIFO's mandate from 1 January 2024.</p>
9.3	<p>Emerging funding issues briefing (banking, pensions and insurance)</p> <p>It was agreed that while a review of CIFO's funding model was inevitable given changing circumstances (mandate extension and increase in insurance complaint volumes) that will prompt a consultation in 2024, the current funding model will likely continue for at least 2024 and possibly 2025 given the uncertainty around the timings of the inclusion of occupational pension schemes in Jersey and the secondary pension scheme in Guernsey.</p>
9.4	<p>Non-casework policies – Health and Safety (H&S)</p> <p>AF explained the HR consultant advised that due the changes in legislation it was usual to have a separate H&S policy rather that include a section in the handbook. The board approved the H&S policy.</p> <p>The board also noted that the risk register included in the policy was in a format they would like to see for CIFO's register.</p>
9.5	<p>Service complaint</p> <p>AT advised he had received two service complaints in the last quarter.</p>
10	<p>Administration</p> <p>Nothing to discuss</p>
11	<p>AOB</p> <p>It was agreed to review the set up for future annual meetings at the next board meeting.</p>
12	<p>In Camera – Nothing to discuss</p>

	<p>Approved at board meeting 42 on 19 October 2023.</p> <p>Chairman</p>
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