



The Scottish Parliament
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

Minute of the Leadership Team (LT) meeting held on Monday 4 December 2023 at 10.15am

Present:

- David McGill (chair)
- Michelle Hegarty
- Alan Balharrie
- Susan Duffy
- Lorna Foreman
- Sara Glass
- Judith Morrison
- Callum Thomson
- Tracey White

Apologies:

- Lynsey Hamill

In attendance:

- Mark Brough (items 1-5)
- Mary Ann Masson, Rachel Fishlock (item 7)
- Ben Kaner, Senior Director Analyst, Gartner
- Erin Aitken
- Judith Proudfoot, Secretary

Item 1: Previous minutes

1. LT agreed the minute of the previous meeting held on Monday 6 November 2023.

Item 2: Matters arising

2. There were no matters arising.

Item 3: Information sharing

3. LT discussed and noted updates on activities including:

- SPCB Investigation: David provided an update on the decisions taken by the SPCB in relation to the investigation. LT noted that the work of the investigation team, led by Michelle, would be undertaken on the SPCB's behalf separately from other workstreams under distinct governance arrangements.
- Review of mobile device policies: In November, prior to instigation of the formal investigation, the SPCB had instructed officials to undertake an urgent review of the Parliament's policies and procedures around the use of mobile devices and data roaming charges. Alan advised that a discussion on the scope of this review was due to take place with the SPCB later in the week, with final proposals for any changes being presented in January 2024.
- Meeting between David and the Scottish Government's Permanent Secretary: David provided a summary of the key points he had discussed with the Permanent Secretary as part of their regular meeting.
- Workloads: LT noted the large volume of work being generated through receipt of correspondence, PQs and FOI requests relating to the subject matters of the SPCB Investigation which was putting considerable extra pressure on staff during an already busy period.

Item 4: SPCB meeting feedback

4. LT noted feedback from colleagues on issues discussed by the SPCB at its meetings on 9, 23 and 30 November. Topics included:
 - Costs incurred by MSPs in relation to Cross Party Group activities
 - Digital project investment planning
 - Budget discussions
 - A meeting with the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman
 - Consideration of officeholder budgets
 - A meeting with the Electoral Commission

Item 5: SPCB and LT forward looks

5. LT noted the items currently planned for future LT and SPCB meetings.

Item 6: Support provided to staff

6. LT discussed actions arising from previous discussions around support to staff involved in sensitive and/or contentious committee work and noted that the 'contact group' format had become an established and successful method/process for providing additional support. Group Heads (GHds) provided updates on specific actions and a note of these would be circulated to GHds to help them feedback to their staff.

Action: LT secretariat

Item 7: Staff survey report – Paper 30

7. LT discussed the report on the staff engagement survey carried out between 19 September and 6 October 2023 and thanked the team for their work on producing the survey and evaluating the outputs. The overall response level was again very high.
8. The 3 areas in which staff appeared to feel most strongly were: a 35-hour working week; hybrid working; and culture of respect. These would be looked at in more detail through planned reference groups along with the scores relating to feelings of anxiety. The team would be meeting with Group Heads to discuss Group results and provide guidance for local action plans to be developed. Information and guidance was also being developed for Office Heads and Team Leaders to support having conversations with colleagues/teams around challenging unacceptable behaviour.
Action: Mary Ann, Rachel
9. LT then discussed their own survey returns as a group, noting that scores in some key areas were down on the previous survey in 2021.
10. LT approved the Staff Survey Report and agreed that it would be shared with all staff in December.

Item 8: Artificial Intelligence (AI)

11. As part of developing digital leadership in the organisation, Ben Kaner, a Senior Director Analyst, provided LT with an overview of AI and some of the considerations the Scottish Parliament would need to give as the associated technologies grow in popularity and are used to help address business needs.
12. LT welcomed the insights offered by the briefing and followed up with a discussion on the potential risks and opportunities AI presented for the organisation.

Date of next meeting

13. The next meeting was scheduled for Monday 15 January 2024.

LT secretariat
December 2023