
INFORMATION RELEASED UNDER THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT

Information released title	IIP assessment: Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman
Original request	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Precisely which areas were given points ie each specific area and the evidence base for each point as provided to UKCES by PHSO or any other body or authority. 2. Which areas were not given points and were negative and were not deemed to be the acceptable level for any award of any kind? Please give specific evidence base for each of these points not accredited by UKCES according to any information provided by PHSO or any other body or authority. As well as using all your data as held in the public realm and using the evidence and criteria for the 26 areas of achievement and all the other areas where achievement was not reached, please then answer my original request for information: 3. What criteria did PHSO prove they had that qualified them for the Bronze Award Investors in People? 4. Was the Bronze Award solely on account of its internal structure of looking after its workforce? I note that much is made on the website of IIP that managing staff satisfaction is very important. 5. Or was the Bronze Award provided also for meeting the criteria of serving the public and citizens with good, accurate assessments and reports in respect of complaints taken to them either via MP's [for Parliamentary Ombudsman] or as the Second Tier Complaints resolution for the NHS [for the Health Ombudsman]? 6. What were the criteria used to enable PHSO to achieve their accreditation?

	7. What was the name of the Investors in People assessor who conducted the assessment process? 8. Was it based on self-assessment?
Date of release	01.06.2015
Requester type	Individual

Information released:

1. Please find attached a redacted copy of the Investors in People assessment report presented to the Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman (PHSO) in 2011. We have decided to release this report under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA), having taken account both of the views of PHSO and of UKCES' statutory duties.

This feedback report documents performance by PHSO against the ten indicators of the Investors in People Standard:

- Indicator 1: Business Strategy
- Indicator 2: Learning and Development Strategy
- Indicator 3: People Management Strategy
- Indicator 4: Leadership and Management Strategy
- Indicator 5: Management Effectiveness
- Indicator 6: Recognition and Reward
- Indicator 7: Involvement and Empowerment
- Indicator 8: Learning and Development
- Indicator 9: Performance Measurement
- Indicator 10: Continuous Improvement

Please see in particular Annex A, which provides an Outcomes Table documenting where the organisation had met the 39 evidence requirements of the Core Standard, as well as the additional evidence requirements from the wider framework, in order to achieve IIP at the Bronze level. Please note that whilst the PHSO met the minimum 26 evidence requirements to be accredited as Investors in People Bronze, it also achieved an additional 12 on top of these, thus meeting a total of 38 additional evidence requirements.

To access the evidence requirements of the Core Standard, please download the [Investors in People Standard](#), available for free through the link provided. The additional evidence requirements needed to achieve IIP at the Bronze, Silver and Gold level are set out in [Investors in People: The Framework](#), available to purchase via the IIP shop at a cost of £6.49.

As you may be aware, in some circumstances, certain types of information requested

may be withheld under an exemption or exemptions articulated in the FOIA. In line with best practice, UKCES consulted with the organisation to consider disclosure and engagement of exemptions. Having reflected on this consultation, we have concluded that certain information within the report is exempt from release. This relates to the name of the IIP Assessor and specific comments made by PHSO employees during their confidential one-to-one interviews with the Assessor. The remainder of our response to this question explains in detail how UKCES considered all the circumstances in question in concluding that certain exemptions should be engaged.

Exemption 40(2): Information is exempt information if disclosure would breach one of the data protection principles.

The reason that this exemption is engaged is due to this information consisting of personal information, in the form of the name of the Specialist who conducted the Investors in People assessment. Release to the general public would be likely to breach one of the data protection principles. This is because we would not be meeting our duty to process personal data fairly and lawfully, as set out in the first data protection principle. The name was held as part of the Investors in People assessment process. To process this information for any other purpose – as in this instance by releasing it under the Freedom of Information Act - would not be the reasonable expectation of that individual - and therefore a breach of the principle.

Section 41 – Information provided in confidence

Information is exempt information if it was obtained by the public authority from any other person (including another public authority and, the disclosure of the information to the public (otherwise than under this Act) by the public authority holding it would constitute a breach of confidence actionable by that or any other person.

As you may be aware, a duty of confidence arises when a confidant is provided with information by the confider in the expectation that the information will only be used or disclosed in accordance with the wishes of the confider. In ascertaining whether an obligation of confidence has arisen in a particular case, the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) advises that public authorities take account firstly of the circumstances under which information was provided to the authority and secondly of the nature of that information.

In terms of the circumstances under which the information was provided, each employee participant in the PHSO IIP accreditation process was assured that evidence provided would be handled confidentially. At the beginning of any evidence gathering sessions (such as confidential interviews), the IIP Specialist would have reinforced their role in protecting any information that is shared with them.

It is also our view that the evidence has the necessary “quality of confidence”. Preserving confidentiality is essential for UKCES to allow it to uphold relations and trust with organisations on their IIP journey. It is also important that members of staff participating in any future IIP assessments feel assured that their specific comments would remain confidential.

We have reflected on the public interest as required by the test of the common law duty of confidentiality. We have weighed up the public interest in disclosure against both the wider public interest in preserving the principle of confidentiality and the impact that disclosure would have on the interests of the confider. We have concluded that the confidences of employees participating in the IIP accreditation process must be respected in order to maintain trust and integrity in Investors in People. Undermining such relationships would mean disregarding the privacy rights of individuals and be at odds with our goal of helping businesses realise the potential of their people through IIP.

Section 43(2) – Commercial interests

Information is exempt information if its disclosure under this Act would, or would be likely to, prejudice the commercial interests of any person (including the public authority holding it). NB – A person may be an individual, a company, or any other legal entity.

It is our view that the commercial interests of PHSO are likely to be harmed by disclosing the individual comments of the organisation’s employees. A potential impact of releasing the specific comments of participants of the 2011 assessment may be an unwillingness of employees in the future to speak freely and openly in any other IIP assessments. They may feel inhibited by the risk that their comments could be made public. This could have consequences for future IIP assessments, which could in turn jeopardise PHSO’s ability to secure continuous improvement to its people management practices as well as to its ability to engage employees, increase efficiencies and achieve better business outcomes

We have weighed the prejudice caused by possible disclosure against the likely benefit to the wider public. We recognise that there is a public interest in ensuring that UKCES is accountable and transparent in its role as guardian of the Investors in People Standard and framework and in its duty to ensure continued high standards through the licensing of regional and national delivery centres across the UK. However, we also recognise that there is a strong public interest in maintaining the confidentiality of the comments of IIP assessment participants. The confidentiality afforded by the one-to-one interviews between IIP assessor and PHSO employee facilitate the honesty and openness required to gain clear insights into the organisation’s performance. To publish the comments would signal that the views of participants in future IIP assessments would also be subject to disclosure. The resulting inhibition on the part of employees could contribute to a loss of the

valuable insights that help the organisation understand how it can harness the skills of its people and optimise performance.

We have concluded, therefore, that in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

2. The IIP assessment of PHSO in 2011 found that the organisation continued to meet the IIP Standard, satisfying all of the Framework's 39 evidence requirements. As explained in our response to your previous request, aspirational organisations that are assessed to be operating beyond the Core Standard can achieve additional recognition as Bronze during the assessment process, by meeting additional evidence requirements from across the wider Investors in People framework. This was the case for PHSO, which specifically met additional evidence requirements for indicators 1, 2, 8 and 10. Please see Annex 1 of the attached report which lists the evidence requirements for those indicators met and those assessed but not met.
3. Please see our response to question 1, above.
4. PHSO received the award by demonstrating that it met specific evidence requirements within the ten indicators described in our response to question 1, above. These indicators focus on best practice in people management, such as ensuring that staff have the right skills to carry out their role, managing change, values and culture, building management capability and employee engagement.
5. No. IIP is a voluntary good practice framework which awards accreditation based on organisation-wide corporate policies and practices related to people management, rather than an organisation's wider performance in the delivery of its core remit.
6. PHSO was assessed against ten best practice indicators of people management:
 - Indicator 1: Business Strategy
 - Indicator 2: Learning and Development Strategy
 - Indicator 3: People Management Strategy
 - Indicator 4: Leadership and Management Strategy
 - Indicator 5: Management Effectiveness
 - Indicator 6: Recognition and Reward
 - Indicator 7: Involvement and Empowerment
 - Indicator 8: Learning and Development
 - Indicator 9: Performance Measurement
 - Indicator 10: Continuous Improvement

Under each indicator sits evidence requirements which set out the standards which must be met to achieve the Accreditation. To access the 39 evidence requirements,

please download the [Investors in People Standard](#), available for free through the link provided. The additional evidence requirements needed to achieve IIP at the Bronze, Silver and Gold level are set out in [Investors in People: The Framework](#), available to purchase via the IIP shop at a cost of £6.49.

7. I can confirm that UKCES holds this information, however, we consider that this name is exempt under section 40(2) of the FOIA.

Exemption 40(2): Information is exempt information if disclosure would breach one of the data protection principles.

The reason that this exemption is engaged is due to this information consisting of personal information, in the form of the name of the Specialist who conducted the Investors in People assessment. Release to the general public would be likely to breach one of the data protection principles. This is because we would not be meeting our duty to process personal data fairly and lawfully, as set out in the first data protection principle. The name was held as part of the Investors in People assessment process. To process this information for any other purpose – as in this instance by releasing it under the Freedom of Information Act - would not be the reasonable expectation of that individual - and therefore a breach of the principle.

8. No. Any organisation presenting itself to Investors in People must undergo a rigorous and objective assessment to determine performance. In line with the Investors in People Policy and Practice Guide, the assessment of PHSO was conducted by an independent Investors in People Assessor. The principal mechanism used to conduct the review was a series of individual and group interviews with a cross section of approximately 53 members of staff. A collection of relevant documents was also submitted during the review.

INVESTORS IN PEOPLE REVIEW REPORT - **BRONZE**

Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman
(PHSO)

Presented by 

Investors in People Assessor

On behalf of Inspiring Business Performance Limited

8th April 2011

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■ Introduction

This report covers the findings of the latest post-recognition review visit to PHSO. The organisation first achieved the Investors in People Standard in 1999. Further information about the organisation can be found in the Review Plan.

The principal mechanism used to conduct the review was a series of individual and group interviews with a cross section of staff, held 21st – 24th March 2011. Approximately 53 people were seen during this visit which was in line with the Review Plan. A collection of relevant documents was submitted during the review. The Assessor visited the London and Manchester offices.

A feedback session was given by the Investors in People Assessor on site at the end of the interviews to the Executive Board and members of the POD (People and Organisational Development) Team. The Assessor would like to take this opportunity to thank all staff for the frank, open and honest discussions held during the review visit. Many thanks also for the hospitality of the organisation. This was a very well-organised Investors in People Review.

The feedback report is written against the ten indicators of the Investors in People Standard as requested by the client. The organisation was being assessed against and additional 42 evidence requirements from the wider framework in addition to the Core Standard with the aim of achieving Bronze.

■ Executive Summary

There has been significant progress in changing people's perceptions of PHSO as an employer, its ability to deliver cultural change and in raising levels of employee engagement. Much has been done to address issues that the organisation faced. So it is both a measure of distance travelled as well as a great achievement for the whole organisation that **the Assessor's conclusion is that the Investors in People Standard continues to be met and Bronze status has been gained.** The organisation is considered to be operating beyond the Core Standard and has achieved additional recognition as Bronze at this visit by meeting additional evidence requirements from across the wider Investors in People framework, specifically indicators 1, 2, 8 and 10. Congratulations are due to the senior management and staff across the whole organisation for this significant achievement.

This outcome represents a real tribute to the work that all the staff in the organisation have delivered in the last three years, on organisational and personal development and performance management. The review was rigorous and challenging, as well as affirming the progress that the organisation has been striving to achieve. It is clear that Investors in People matters at PHSO and the Assessor was impressed by the professionalism and commitment shown. PHSO have, especially since becoming the second and final point of contact for health complainants in April 2009, successfully built up a strong culture of performance management and continuous improvement. This is evident in the outputs from the Office which is now delivering on its second strategic objective 'to drive improvements in public services and inform public policy'. It was apparent when talking to people that the publication and surrounding publicity of the reports has had a significant impact on internal levels of pride in working at the Office and the knock-on effect to rising levels of employee engagement. This reached something of a tipping point with the success of the Care and Compassion report in February 2011.

PHSO had experienced a period of change during the time of the last Investors in People Reviews (2006 – 2008) around the Organising for the Future (O4TF) change programme.

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It was noteworthy that while there are still some legacy issues for longer-serving people, all agreed that the organisational performance had improved as a result and that the programme while, difficult was with hindsight entirely necessary and ultimately successful. This amongst other things saw an escalation of decision-making in the scheme of delegation. Again, while this has undoubtedly 'worked' to improve the quality of output and consistency, some staff wondered whether now the standard was understood whether there was scope for the pendulum swinging back a little.

The long-standing commitment to Management Development through the Management Development Programme (MDP) and Aspiring to Management has clearly built management capability in the organisation and the consistency of quality line management and leadership people were receiving has risen again in the three years since the last Investors in People visit.

The opening of the Manchester office provided the organisation with an another challenge, but also an opportunity to put the post 'O4TF' structure and culture to the test. The office has now been open for two years and again it is apparent that a tipping point has been reached with staff in that office particularly positive about the way they are being led, managed and developed and the overall working environment and culture that is now in place.

During this time of growth and expansion there has remained an important commitment to the internal focus. The findings of previous Investors in People reports have been considered and actions taken in response have become embedded and are delivering outcomes. In many ways, the organisation is now reaping the rewards of the efforts made in the last few years. The actions taken have resulted in improvements to the working lives of people but also PHSO has continued to respond to a phenomenal number of enquiries (circa 24,000 per annum) to a level that staff were proud of. In addition, during that time PHSO have delivered a range of reports and consultations. There was no evidence of the quality and service standards dropping, in fact the reverse has happened. Staff morale is higher now than it was at the time of the last Investors in People Assessment (March 2008). That so much has been achieved is a real credit to the leadership but also to the dedication of the managers and staff to making it work.

The clear top-level priorities, associated values and objectives were able to be tracked through to the various teams and down to staff. Levels of involvement in local level planning are improved and the Performance and Development Review (PDRS) is embedded and taken more seriously by managers and staff. One-to-ones are taking place for virtually all staff. The improvements in internal communications, the greater compliance to the systems and the efforts of leadership have all contributed to what staff referred to as a positive shift in culture. This has all helped move the organisation towards being 'a great place to work' with a 'workforce that delivers', two of the original aims of the 2009 People Strategy. This report seeks to highlight the good practices that have moved the organisation forward, but also considers what could be done to take the organisation to the next level and become a true, sustainable, high-performing workplace.

Despite the undoubted progress, PHSO management have yet to convince everyone and it is fair to say that people are at different stages. There is no shortage of strong process at PHSO and all the machinery one would expect of a high-performing, modern workplace exists. What determines the success of the processes is how they are used and it is the supporting ethos and culture that will deliver the consistent outcomes that will convince everyone that PHSO genuinely has become a 'great place to work'. Leaders will need to continue to be relentless in listening to people, delivering consistency and ensuring that the values and the organisation's approach to equalities, diversity, consultation through to coaching are embedded and at the heart of the organisation. This unwavering approach will continue to challenge those who are less engaged who remain

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at PHSO and are yet to be convinced. As such, there is no room for complacency and the organisation is clear that further progress is possible and that there would be great value in maintaining the current momentum. In terms of how many are engaged, neutral, disengaged – while Investors in People is a qualitative process rather than quantitative the interpretation of the interviews suggests around 63% of people are fully engaged advocates, 33% are neutral/yet to be convinced and around 4% are disengaged. It is the 33% of people in the middle who should be the target group and within that the vast majority were positive about the direction of travel.

In addition, the organisation faces a further ‘risk’. The significant change is movement at Executive Board level with the retirement of the current Ombudsman during this year. The current Ombudsman is universally respected and clearly set a personal and compelling vision for the Office which she has transformed into a reality. She leaves behind a very strong legacy and an Office that is self-aware and in ‘the best shape it has been in for years, the apex of complaint resolution’ as one interviewee put it, an Office that is delivering and is in great shape to face future challenges. Maintaining a focus on the themes of Investors in People such as managing change, values and culture, building management capability, employee engagement and ensuring people have the right skills will continue to be very important in the coming year.

Given the level of continued change the organisation is encouraged to continue to engage Investors in People as an independent measurement and improvement tool. Continue to work with Investors in People and to use them as critical friends as PHSO continues its journey of improvement through potentially more difficult times. The capacity and capability certainly exists within PHSO to achieve Investors in People Silver and Gold at a future date.

■ Areas of Strength

PHSO is essentially already a very good employer, some staff described it as an exemplary employer, and given the analytical nature of the workforce, this is not to be dismissed. The following is a list of good practice characteristics or features found during the course of the visit. These are recognised as being of good practice or exceeding the requirements of the Investors in People Standard: -

- A well-articulated, clear vision, a more strategic focus and simply stated, meaningful, embedded set of core values. Everyone described a clearer ‘golden thread’ between organisation priorities, team goals and individual objectives. This combined with a more open leadership, better internal communications and a talented, high intellect workforce have created a successful, more confident organisation of which people are justifiably proud.
- More recent starters described PHSO as a real listening and learning organisation which was open to change and innovation. Everyone agreed that there is more listening now. There are numerous focus groups in place to get input on a range of issues including Equalities and Diversity, but also working groups such as the Staff Forum and The Network. Executive Board (EB) are more open and people can observe EB meetings. The Assessment Panels which are chaired by the Ombudsman or Deputy Ombudsman are greatly appreciated and help staff feel more connected to senior management. There has been movement on both sides with staff suggesting that senior management better understand the motivation and culture of the organisation and what makes it tick.
- PHSO have put a huge amount of energy into improving the organisation as ‘a good place to work’. Everyone considered PHSO to be very well-intentioned and were genuinely striving to improve as a workplace. The vast majority of people recognise

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the improvements made. Comments included that PHSO is a more self-confident, mature organisation. There has been more listening (e.g. the range of forums and meetings) and more modelling by managers of positive corporate behaviours. The gap between the values and behaviours and the day-to-day reality of working at PHSO has closed. Most people described a less 'anxious' organisation in the last three years and higher levels of confidence and trust in the Executive Board. The success factors include the leadership of the Ombudsman, galvanising and engaging the wider Extended Management Group (EMG), not just Directors, real attempt to live the values and involving the managers in solutions which has all created a greater sense of a management community.

- The changes made to the PDRS provide a strong example of how the organisation does listen, empower and respond to feedback. The shortcomings of the current system were highlighted via the Extended Management Group and it is that group who have made improvements and will be rolling out the new system for 2011/12.
- Staff recognised a more genuine commitment to employee engagement and performance management from managers that now goes beyond managers complying with processes. Most reported terrific opportunities to get involved via working groups, projects and events such as the Casework Conference.
- There has been a conscious and deliberate effort made to improve how people are led and managed. The values, management development, management meetings and unequivocal messages from a more visible Executive Board have emphasised the critical role of leadership and people management. EB have got closer to middle managers and staff and this is creating a stronger, more positive relationship.
- The Management Development Programme (MDP) and Aspiring to Management programme are equipping managers with key tools and skills. It is a programme tailored to what is happening in the here and now. Importantly staff reported it is delivering improved people management. Senior managers were viewed as becoming more influential as role models. Managers are taking responsibility for managing. The line management role is valued by staff and the effort gone into improving it represents a rebalancing where good people management is increasingly viewed as a valuable discipline that is rewarded through career progression.
- At the top and throughout the organisation there is a very real understanding of how the organisational strategy and people strategy are inextricably and mutually dependent. The continual growth, development and improvement of the organisation as measured by its ability to effectively deliver is largely dependent on PHSO's ability to help its people to grow and develop.
- People appreciate the level of learning and development that takes place at the organisation. They also feel that this is entirely necessary and appropriate for a knowledge-based organisation. There is a comprehensive and well-resourced offer of learning and development activities. The programmes that have been designed to develop people from START, to NVQs in Customer Services, Trainee Casework Scheme, Aspiring to Management and the Management Development Programme are highly regarded and beneficial. People described a real learning environment. There were numerous examples of secondments, coaching, mentoring and lunchtime talks.
- People spoke highly of the work of the People & Organisational Development (POD) Team and how they have improved the way they analyse personal development needs and incorporate these into corporate programmes. People hope that this commitment to staff development will continue into the future. Much has already been done to expand the skills of the workforce and ongoing effort here will create a more flexible

workforce.

- Individuals have positive meetings with their line managers that generate Forward Job Plans. There is greater compliance around individual performance management (notably one-to-ones) with objectives in place for all.
- A recognition from staff that there has been a concerted effort to build on and improve the organisation's approach to equality of opportunity and diversity. Equalities and Diversity have a higher profile and people were pleased with the seriousness with which this is being taken.
- The majority of staff reported feeling valued and appreciated for their contribution. The Performance Recognition Scheme was said by many to work well in creating a sense of being recognised.
- There is much evidence of continuous improvement and PHSO is clearly a very self-aware organisation. Examples include the work being conducted on Knowledge and Information Management Strategies which represent another step forward in how PHSO utilises data, information and knowledge and will put PHSO in a good position to gain more from the data and knowledge that PHSO itself generates.

■ Possible Areas for Development

PHSO is a self-critical organisation with a workforce that has, rightly given the organisation's role, high expectations. The following feedback points represent areas found during the course of the site visit where the organisation might consider improving and are offered in the spirit of continuous improvement. Feedback points are derived from a comparison of PHSO practices against the best practices outlined in the Investors in People Standard. In addition, staff comments, the assessors' reflections and observations and what has been seen to be best practice in other organisations are used to inform the feedback points. Actions are not necessary to meet the Standard but may help the organisation develop further, manage change and move towards achieving Investors in People Silver status: -

1. It is more challenging for some parts of the organisation to measure **outcomes** and impact of its work, especially with regard to the second strategic objective. The impact may often be downstream and some years after PHSO has got involved, where it is a more complex question (e.g. 'what do we want to affect?') that needs to be asked and answered. Defining the sort of impact, how to get there, the rate of improvement/milestones will all help to make people more accountable, and empowered. This outcomes-based approach should be applied to not just the overall strategy but also to other areas such as Customer Services and Equality and Diversity strategies. Give people a greater opportunity to be involved in these debates and understand how policy is being shaped. (1)
2. It is almost 'a given' that PHSO has a very fiercely held commitment to making a positive contribution to the society in which they all work. It's their 'product' after all and is embedded in the principles. While social responsibility is implicitly at the heart of what PHSO does and has an increasing presence in the Office, staff did not consistently feel that it was part of the internal culture of the organisation yet. Social responsibility has not yet been fully explored with staff as to what it means and how PHSO supports it explicitly and in practice. Ideas for next steps included a more explicit **Corporate Social Responsibility** (CSR) strategy and action plan, greater promotion and support for volunteer work and encouraging team building activities to have a social responsibility or community focus. (1)

3. The range of fora and meetings is welcomed. Continue to **listen** to staff as it is not only highlighting areas for improvement, it is successfully challenging and converting staff who previously felt that the organisation had a closed culture. Continue to involve people in designing and implementing consultation arrangements. Some staff, who are not union members (circa 50%) highlighted that they would value more of a dialogue with senior management and more consultation on major decisions. This could take the form of a Staff Council (see The Information and Consultation of Employees Regulations for more details). The most successful of these bodies include a trade union representative. Other ideas might include Keep in Touch (KIT) meetings between the EB and staff, Director/Ombudsman Forums with staff or the use of social media such as an Ombudsman's Hot Seat to overcome the split site challenge. In short, press ahead with the plans to consult on consultation arrangements. (1, 7)
4. There exists in PHSO the potential for disempowering people. It is the nature of the Office that it demands some centrality of command and the achievement of the highest standards. Staff highlighted the tension between the scheme of delegation and recruiting and developing talented people. This can and does lead to some disaffected individuals who cite issues around trust, empowerment and the sense of feeling valued all of which are drivers of employee engagement. Some suggest a more proportional approach to Quality Assurance would achieve the same results. The debate around whether there is scope for pushing down **decision-making** while not sacrificing quality is one of risk. Others support the scheme of delegation and consider that it goes hand-in-hand with excellence. (7)
5. People consider it important that the organisation maintains support and funding for learning and development through the current financial climate. Continue to build on **knowledge management** strategies especially for this split-site workforce. Press ahead with the exploration of the use of social media and technologies such as Sharepoint to create Communities of Practice. There is much in the pipeline that if implemented will put PHSO in a strong position. Putting a process in place does not necessarily always deliver a solution to a problem, the organisation will need to keep checking that it is working and delivering outcomes to people. There was some reference to over-engineering at PHSO and it is worth bearing in mind that all the processes need to be matched with a positive, healthy culture to be a truly high-performing workplace. Equally, layering processes and systems on top of each other, while maintaining demanding targets can lead to people feeling that they are being squeezed. The organisation needs to find a way of balancing high demand with high support and high recognition to give people the space for quality outcomes around customer service but also for employees to actually take advantage of the all opportunities that exist to get more involved and engaged. A common view was that realistic targets need to be set and resourced to create space for the quality outcomes the Office is seeking to achieve. (2, 8)
6. Continue to implement best practice approaches to organisational design, structure and **talent management**. Press ahead with succession planning strategies and the career development pathways. Post-O4TF some staff described themselves as feeling unemployable with little or no transferable skills. People were positive that the Office has responded to that but suggested that there was further to go. Consider the value of developing a tailored **learning and development** programme for Investigators. People described a particularly large gap between C and D1. However, shortening spans of control may not make sense at this time. People valued the improved staff:manager ratios of recent times. (2)
7. Move towards all managers and staff gaining more **constructive feedback** on their people management capabilities and performance levels to build consistency of

behaviour. It is important that people receive constructive feedback and ideally a development plan when unsuccessful at internal interviews. (3, 5)

8. There is more embedding of **Equalities and Diversity** to do. The Equality and Diversity Strategy 2011 - 2015 represents an important step forward, it does not go as far as other organisations in terms of a Single Equality Scheme with an associated Equality Standard that can be used as a dedicated improvement tool with built in benchmarking. Equality Impact Assessments are not intuitive for managers yet. It was also interesting to note that of the four values, Diversity was the one that people felt that management struggled to demonstrate the most. The new Strategy will continue to embed and progress equalities at PHSO, but there is no room for complacency and further tools exist should the Office want to go further, as some put it to achieve a more demonstrable shift in this area. (3)
9. There remain some **inconsistencies amongst managers**, in terms of behaviours and interpretation of policy. It is important that PHSO knows where its rogue managers are and are consistently challenging inappropriate behaviours and/or non-compliance. It is encouraging however, that such feedback related to specific individuals rather than being widespread trends. Keep reminding managers about the 'what and how' of their role, for example, how to run effective meetings and one-to-ones that include at least some focus on personal development, for example. (3, 4, 5)
10. While people acknowledged that managers are generally **managing people** in line with the **values**, some suggested that the values and manager competencies lacked something, 'there's a hole in the middle where emotional intelligence should sit' as one put it. It is this 'x factor' aspect that may win over the hearts and minds of those who are at different stages in engaging with PHSO. For example, it was evident in Manchester but less consistent in London. It is for the organisation to work out and define what this might be. The Deal and Managers' Competency Framework do need ongoing reference and publicity to remain at the forefront of staff's minds. Consider a one-pager that captures the spirit of both and the key expectations (e.g. regular one-to-ones, team meetings) in a one-page PHSO Charter that can be easily publicised and referenced. (4)
11. Keep on building levels of **trust** in managers and leaders. There is an ongoing need to ensure that the senior managers in the organisation are trusted. It was striking that those who have joined in the last three years were significantly more positive than some of those longer-serving members of staff. The organisation has plenty of myths and conspiracies but some of these (e.g. 'don't speak up') fall into the 'perception is reality' camp in the minds of the individual and no amount of dismissing and debunking will change their view. The perception or reality theme emerged without prompting in almost every interview so it can not be dismissed. That there are good intentions at the top is not in doubt, but leaders need to prove it to a cynical public and media, some of whom make up the PHSO workforce. Be relentless in continuing to listen-challenge-respond to staff's issues of the day (e.g. this year it is targets, next year it will be something else) to convert the remaining cynics into advocates of PHSO. (5, 7)
12. The organisation is investing in introducing **coaching** for managers. Ensure that the benefits of this investment are maximised. Once established this should strengthen the corporate message of individual responsibility for development and that the individual and manager drive development at that level, not the centre. (5)
13. The **reward and recognition** approach is reviewed intermittently by the top team to ensure it remains effective and competitive. There may be value in reviewing and formalising the strategy through consultation with all staff and representative groups to

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ensure that the strategy reflects what staff want within the constraints of being a public sector organisation. Reward and recognition was explored with some finding the Performance Recognition Scheme divisive and demotivating in its current format. People seek greater clarity around performance awards and a more transparent system. (6)

14. The Communications Team have shown what can be done in terms of transforming performance and perception in a short space of time. It was suggested by some in Operations that other **back office** functions need a similar revolution and need to get better at working with, rather than alongside, Operations. (7)
15. Seek to develop ever more sophisticated approaches at the organisational level to **evaluating** the impact of learning and development and people management strategies on performance indicators and, in particular judging the return on investment gained. How much more productive is PHSO as a result of learning and development interventions? Managers need to set strong impact measures for learning and development interventions upfront that stand up to EB/POD scrutiny. If PHSO has a good story to tell on learning and development and its return on investment, then share it more widely with staff and stakeholders. (9)



■ **Assessment Findings**

Indicator 1: Business Strategy

EVIDENCE REQUIREMENTS														
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13		
✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25			
✓	✓	x	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	x			

***The organisation has a vision/purpose, strategy and plan (Core Standard)
Clear core values relate to vision and strategy (ERs 7, 11, 13, 17, 19, 24)***

- Top managers were able to discuss and describe a very clear vision and strategy that have been reviewed with staff involvement. Everyone had the opportunity to comment on the latest version of the Corporate Business Plan and the priorities are set out at the All Staff Event each year. The vision is ‘to provide an independent, high quality complaint handling service that rights individual wrongs, drives improvements in public services and informs public policy’. The Organisational Review (Organising for the Future) of 2007 and the clarity of leadership have given PHSO a very clear direction and structure. A typical comment about the organisational review was that it was difficult at the time but it has delivered the right structure and a better organisation.
- There are a set of values in place that everyone was able to discuss. These are ‘excellence, leadership, integrity and diversity’ and managers were able to explain the values and how these relate to the work and the way they manage people. People confirmed that PHSO was a values-led organisation and confirmed that the values have been the subject of conferences, away days, meetings, form part of training and senior managers discuss them regularly. Staff reported recognising senior management leading by example on the values far more consistently and felt that the values were ‘genuine’ and embedded now. The value that people felt remains the most challenging for the office is diversity. The strongest value was considered to be excellence.

***People are involved in planning (Core Standard)
People and stakeholders are involved in strategy development (ERs 8, 14, 20)
Representative groups are consulted when developing the plan (Core Standard)***

- There is a clear purpose and staff were able to discuss this as a given and how it motivated them in their own role. It was encouraging to hear people talk in terms of PHSO being an organisation that enabled them to deliver work they are proud of and make a positive difference in society. Staff and members of representative groups confirmed a more inclusive approach to planning overall and senior management were able to describe how the views of people and stakeholders were incorporated into this latest version of the Corporate Business Plan.
- Both staff-side and management were generally positive about employee relations. There is a monthly formal meeting between Trade union representatives and HR and quarterly Whitley Meetings that include one a year with the Ombudsman in attendance. There is consultation on procedures and

some examples emerged of both sides constructively influencing the other's thinking on issues.

[REDACTED]

Key performance indicators are used to improve performance (ERs 9, 15, 21)

- There is an annual Corporate Business Plan that has performance and improvement measures in the form of objectives and goals. Everyone considered that PHSO now has more of a performance management culture.
- All staff interviewed were absolutely clear about their objectives and those of PHSO as a whole. They were equally clear about how they are expected to contribute to developing and achieving them. Staff were able to describe the 'golden thread' from the business plan themes to divisional plans to individual objectives. Targets on the Operations side are clearer and better communicated. This has had the effect of some people finding the organisation becoming 'too target-driven' which can on occasion drive behaviours which some felt were at odds with the management competencies. Examples raised included how slow the Office can be in making reasonable adjustments for sickness or disabled staff and this carries over to people's thinking on how deep the commitment to Diversity extends. Appraisals (PDRS) are working well with high levels of compliance. The system has been identified as being somewhat cumbersome and members of the Extended Management Group have taken the initiative to make changes for the 2011/12 process. The one-to-ones are valued and keep a good focus on performance management with most managers balancing this with general support and personal development.

[REDACTED]

Social responsibility is taken into account in the strategy (ERs 10, 12, 16, 18, 22, 25)

- Given the role of the PHSO it is easy to argue that social responsibility is entwined with the whole strategy of driving improvements in public services and within the Ombudsman's Principles. In addition, there are numerous internal initiatives such as the work on environmental issues such as recycling, that fall under the social responsibility heading. The challenge from staff though is that it is not enough to say social responsibility is in the fabric of what the Office does. People were able to describe social responsibility in relation to their external work, but were less convinced that is an overt part of the Office's internal culture. The feedback is that it does not constitute an explicit part of the strategy and staff feel the Office does not do enough to encourage community engagement (such as volunteering) between its own staff and the wider world.

Indicator 2: Learning and Development Strategy

EVIDENCE REQUIREMENTS														
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	x	✓	✓	✓	x	✓	✓
16	17													
✓	✓													

Learning priorities are clear and linked to the plan (Core Standard)
The learning and development strategy builds capacity (ERs 5, 8, 12)
Resources for learning and development are made available (Core Standard)
The impact will be evaluated (Core Standard)

- The three-year PHSO People Strategy was launched in 2009 and encapsulates a vision for the workforce, ‘the deal’ between PHSO and its workforce and priority areas for action. Amongst these key areas of focus are Customer Service, Leadership and management capability, Diversity, Engagement, High-Performance Workplace and Learning and Development. In all of these areas the Assessor and staff can see clear evidence of progress. It will be interesting in writing the next three-year Strategy for 2012 to reflect how far the organisation has come and what the next areas for action need to be. The action points relating to learning and development have moved forward well, particularly through interventions such as START for staff at paybands B, PA and C. The Corporate Learning and Development Plan is documented annually and there is undoubtedly a clear, shared understanding of the approach that is being taken to ensure that PHSO has the skills, capacity and capability to deliver support and improvement. Current priorities in the plan include Casework Skills and Knowledge, Equality and Diversity and Management and Leadership Development. Each of these is linked to the Corporate Business Plan and has an anticipated outcome. The extent to which impact measures are truly identified upfront and linked to measurable objectives and KPIs is an area that could still be further developed.
- Divisional L&D Plans are in place and link to PHSO’s nine L&D priorities. The more consistent use of the PDRS process is also ensuring that managers are building capability through individual personal development plans. Although some people suggested that there was currently less emphasis on development and more on performance management, particularly in one-to-ones. Most managers were very clear on the business and people objectives and could describe how training interventions with staff were focused on immediate and future needs of the business. Staff themselves were very aware about the skills needs of the organisation to deliver the vision and confirmed that learning and development has been planned and is delivered. There were exceptions to this though that prevent it from being an entirely consistent picture. Some teams do not feel that learning and development has a high enough local focus in the minds of their managers. Some Investigators still do not feel that their specialist L&D needs are being satisfactorily addressed. There was also some feedback that barriers to entering the Trainee Caseworker Scheme (e.g. ‘not enough experience’) were causing some people to feel that PHSO still had a little way to go to really deliver on career pathways.

Learning and Development is innovative and flexible (ER 6)
People help make decisions about their own learning (ERs 9, 13, 14)

- Virtually everyone, including top managers, spoke very highly of the learning and development offered by PHSO. The L&D offering has been strengthened and has evolved to ensure it is tightly focused on the PHSO's strategic objectives.
- The PDRS is being used more effectively by managers meaning that all staff are now having their training needs regularly reviewed. The PDRS provides greater structure around learning and development ensuring that each individual has a development plan that is reviewed at least twice a year, frequently more via the one-to-ones. There has always been a great deal of personal ownership and responsibility for learning and development at PHSO but people are now saying that there is an improved process, resources and structure around that philosophy now. This is meaning, in most cases, that they are better placed to make informed decisions about their own learning guided through discussions with managers and needs are better satisfied through the improved quality of learning provision. As such learning and development is matched to learning styles and there is no shortage of different methods and activities on offer.
- The range of learning and development is vast and creative solutions have been identified for example, the START programme or Aspiring to Management. Traditional courses, coaching, mentoring, attendance at casework conferences or Assessment Panels and technical workshops, the Learning Resource Centre, e-learning, secondments, lunchtime talks, visiting other teams, working on projects were just some of the many approaches identified. People can use a truly blended learning approach to their development at PHSO, if they choose to do so but the reality is that some do not and have not reached the stage where they are taking full ownership of their L&D needs. When exploring why some didn't, the general view held was that they did not have enough time to meet targets and get involved in what would be considered extra-curricular activities even though they may be ultimately beneficial in improving work performance. Others cited having managers who were not willing to engage in anything other than artificial discussions around learning and development at PDRS and one-to-ones (where these happen).

There is a culture of continuous learning (ERs 7, 16, 17)

- The overall culture of the organisation very much projects the message that learning and development is valuable. The L&D Plan and People Strategy sets out the approach, commitment and the priorities around skills, capabilities and leadership.
- Managers have demonstrated their own commitment to personal and professional development with most of those interviewed describing extensive personal and professional development, not to the extent of acting as role models in some cases though. The 360-degree feedback is welcomed by most and is helping managers to discuss their own development needs and what actions they are taking to address those.

[REDACTED]

Indicator 3: People Management Strategy

EVIDENCE REQUIREMENTS													
1	2	3	4	5									
✓	✓	✓	✓	✓									

There is equality of opportunity for development and support (Core Standard)

- Understanding of, and respect for, diversity at both organisation level (e.g. ethnicity, age and gender) and individual level (individual differences in style or confidence, for example) is improving across the organisation. The development of the Equality and Diversity Strategy 2011-2015 is encouraging, though some suggested it has been a long time coming and only goes so far.
- Everyone interviewed recognised that a genuine effort had been made to improve this area and highlighted improvements such as the establishment of staff diversity forums and progress against external frameworks such as the Stonewall Index (doubling PHSO score in the last year). The organisation has delivered diversity training which most found helpful in developing their awareness. The criticisms of this area tended to be around there having been a great deal of talk in the past, but little tangible action and outcomes. Other organisations who have struggled to progress have taken the proactive approach of working with other organisations such as LGID (Local Government Improvement & Development) to develop an Equality Standard and have benchmarked themselves against this to develop an action plan. In the same way equality impact assessments regularly take place and have a higher profile in other public sector organisations. This all reflected wider feedback that there was still some embedding, mainstreaming and behaviour change required around equalities and diversity before people are comfortable confirming that managers are consistently promoting equality and proactively managing diversity in the workplace. Diversity was felt to be the core value that PHSO struggled with the most.
- Equality of opportunity in relation to learning and development was considered to be embedded at PHSO and through regular appraisals and one-to-ones virtually everyone felt that they had equal access to opportunities.

[REDACTED]

People are encouraged to contribute ideas (Core Standard)

- Genuine efforts are made to encourage staff ideas and involvement. Everyone recognised that there had been a shift in the attempt to listen and involve people and draw out ideas. Projects groups and the range of forums were frequently referred to as being a particularly effective way of putting ideas forward and these include IIP and equalities. People described more two-way meetings now where their views are sought and encouraged. At the local level people, particularly via

team meetings and the way in which these are run, confirmed that their opinions and ideas were valued. Yet, for some all the efforts were seen as tokenism and that there remained a lack of true consultation on ‘the things that matter’.

Indicator 4: Leadership and Management Strategy

EVIDENCE REQUIREMENTS													
1	2	3											
✓	✓	✓											

Managers are clear about the capabilities they need to lead, manage and develop people (Core Standard)

People know what effective managers should be doing (Core Standard)

- Overall, managers and leaders at all levels were able to describe with a good degree of clarity what is expected of them. There is a clear Management Competency framework in place that is largely understood by managers and staff. Everyone was clear on their own responsibilities but also what constitutes effective management. Competencies include those around self and personal skills (i.e. delivering quality outcomes, working together, leading and managing self and others, managing the business). The Management Competency framework is tightly aligned to the organisation’s values and is used in recruitment. It was suggested by some staff that having identified the good traits of managers and applied this to recruitment, PHSO are minimising the effect of common biases.

[REDACTED]

- Managers recognise that there is now a far clearer criteria in place to review performance against, although the extent to which this is genuinely happening in relation to people management is not so consistently apparent to people. This happens twice a year as part of the PDRS discussion but managers themselves often said that they would expect more constructive feedback on their performance as managers than they get in reality. Others suggested that the organisation remains better at ‘measuring numbers than behaviours’.
- The organisation continues to be very strong on how people can gain leadership and management skills. There were many positive comments about Management Development Programme, Aspiring to Management and the EMG meetings – the latter in particular being valued by managers as a way of keeping them up-to-date on leadership thinking as well as reminding them of the importance of good leadership and management.
- Aspiring to Management has raised the awareness of what constitutes good management and has made non-managers more keenly aware of what managers should be doing, and how. Although people have access to the Manager’s Competency Framework the reality is that it is not a well-known set of expectations amongst staff and some consideration could be given to reminding staff of what their manager should be doing to lead, manage and develop them effectively.

[REDACTED]

Indicator 5: Management Effectiveness

EVIDENCE REQUIREMENTS													
1	2	3	4										
✓	✓	✓	✓										

Managers are effective and can describe how they lead, manage and develop their people (Core Standard)

- There is a high level of leadership and management capability in place at PHSO and this has been achieved through a deliberate strategy and investment specifically through the Management Development Programme. Managers are keen to continuously improve their practice as evidenced by attendance at Management courses and the Management meetings. The perception of leadership and management from staff appears to have improved significantly since the last assessment with some describing a critical mass being reached where being well led and managed is the norm now. The rare exceptions where this is not the case are fast becoming an open secret that people are less likely to tolerate. There are few hiding places for the remaining rogue managers. People feel that efforts to be more visible and accessible (e.g. Assessment Panels) have all helped to build more consensus across the organisation and has achieved a more cohesive, accessible top team.
- In some teams people were able to describe how their managers try and manage them in line with the organisation’s values. Most considered that as a team EB had gained the respect and trust of the staff (in most cases) and were demonstrating some role model leadership. However, this was not consistent across the organisation, and there were some concerns expressed around behaviours and ability as effective people managers. Many staff described ‘excellent’ working relationships with their line managers, who were seen to largely live up to the responsibilities and ideals set out in the competency framework, but for others this was not the case. There is more work to be done to ensure that all managers consistently offer role model behaviours. It was suggested that in the minority of areas or management chains where the commitment to good people management seems weakest there does not appear to be the will, in the view of staff to challenge or tackle these management behaviours of certain ‘sacred cows’ that exist in the organisation. There has been no shortage of input for managers through training, coaching and other forms of development. There has been no shortage of feedback through 360-degree, one-to-one and staff surveys. If change is not apparent despite all of this, what are the consequences, and is good people management really valued in PHSO? These are the rhetorical question some staff find themselves asking.

[Redacted text block]

- There is a good level of feedback from managers to people through one-to-ones and the bi-annual PDRS. The appraisal process is clearly regarded as important, and compliance with the process is monitored. The level of feedback from staff to management is encouraged in most areas and processes for encouraging upward feedback are in place through 360-degree feedback and staff survey. Within the appraisal there is the opportunity to discuss aspirations and while this is working really well in some teams it is not the case in all that people feel they get sufficient guidance to build and develop their career.

[REDACTED]

Indicator 6: Recognition and Reward

EVIDENCE REQUIREMENTS													
1	2	3											
✓	✓	✓											

People believe they make a difference (Core Standard)

People believe their contribution is valued (Core Standard)

- There is a lot of strong evidence of seeking to value and celebrate good performance, with a whole range of interventions including lunches and social events, as well as events such as the All-Staff Event and Casework Conference where achievement is celebrated, not to mention a culture of saying ‘thank you’. The Performance Awards Scheme is, in the main, seen to be effective and many people commented on how this had made them feel appreciated for their work and effort. The individual and team awards are publicised through the ‘Inphomation’ newsletter. As is normal, there were those who found it divisive, not transparent and for those reasons not an effective motivator. Some organisations have found a more regular Instant Recognition Scheme which rewards over and above performance at point to be more successful, but all schemes have their supporters and detractors.
- There is a large amount of discretionary effort by staff who are often deeply committed to making a difference for the complainants and the organisations that PHSO touches. Within teams there were good examples of teams celebrating the successful delivery of targets, investigations and reports through team events. Most people reported good levels of day-to-day praise from their managers, but also colleagues.
- Leaders and managers appear to understand the importance of motivating their people and to have a feel for how to do so with good examples provided of individual’s preferences being taken into account, for example, public or private recognition. Several managers described how they had got better at acknowledging the important contribution made by people as a result of management development.

[REDACTED]

Indicator 7: Involvement and Empowerment

EVIDENCE REQUIREMENTS													
1	2	3											
✓	✓	✓											

People are involved in decision-making (Core Standard)

- The organisation has put a lot of effort into developing accessible ways of encouraging people to contribute their views, ideas and concerns. These range from improvements made to the meetings framework (more two-way and consistently happening) to regular one-to-ones and perhaps the biggest shift, the more open culture that exists. Communication in general was reported to be very good from the top of the organisation down. There was widespread praise for the recent work of the Communications Team and media such as Cascade, Inphomation and Monday News Alerts. This goes to show what can be achieved through listening and delivering to what staff are actually looking for as successfully done through the Internal Communications Audit. It was suggested by Operations staff, that other back office functions could adopt a similar approach with their internal customers.
- There has been a steep rise in the number of opportunities people have to get more involved through working groups and projects. Many of those interviewed were part of one forum or another and appreciated this opportunity to have a voice in the organisation. It was interesting that not everyone made the link between these fora and the organisation listening to people. The work done on Knowledge and Information Management Strategies (KIMS) is improving knowledge management already with more to come. The use of technology (e.g. Sharepoint) and other social media have evolved recently and some people clearly like using these as communication tools. These have been important developments in ensuring that staff feel kept up-to-date and part of the communication loop. Although not everyone takes advantage of all of these channels of engagement, people do appreciate that they are in place and available to them. People are also clear that there is more to come via KIMS and some look forward to taking part in Communities of Practice, for example, in the future.

[REDACTED]

- The general view of staff was that the organisation is on a journey to improving consultation arrangements with staff and involving them in decision making. This is not to say that there is not a great deal already happening e.g. the many effective groups that can and do have a positive influence on organisation thinking. PHSO is genuinely challenging the perception of individuals around

being a listening organisation and many more staff at this visit confirmed vast improvements in this area.

[REDACTED]

Ownership and responsibility are encouraged (Core Standard)

- Most, but not all, people feel trusted in their roles and confirm that they are given the space and autonomy to make the decisions they feel are necessary on a day-to-day basis. There is a high degree of ownership and pride in working for the organisation, and the difference PHSO makes. A number of people had noticed that the way in which people are being managed has improved with a greater balance struck between autonomy and support.
- Although the culture from the top of the organisation has shifted in a positive way to be more accessible not everyone was convinced that it had got to the stage where people believe they can challenge the way the organisation works and speak up. This would be the next step and would be helped by improved consultation arrangements and ongoing visibility of EB.

[REDACTED]

Indicator 8: Learning and Development

EVIDENCE REQUIREMENTS													
1	2	3	4	5	6	7							
✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓							

People learn and develop effectively (Core Standard)

- The PDRS, the evolving structure and quality of training interventions, the proactive work of teams such as POD, LRC and Outcomes & Learning have all combined to ensure that learning has a very high profile at PHSO. PHSO invests heavily in learning and development. Everyone described how through the work they were conducting (developmental in itself in most cases), everyday learning through the local teams, visits to Trusts and punctuated by more formal courses and sessions all ensured that learning is part of the culture at PHSO. People recognise that this is not always typical of organisations and people ranked the ongoing learning and development as one of the reasons they choose to stay at PHSO. They also confirmed that they received recognition for their skills development via one-to-ones, celebration events and at PDRS time.
- Managers are generally proactive in helping individuals to learn and also put the learning into practice. Excellent use is made of both internal and external resources. Solutions to training needs are based on what is most cost-effective

and what will deliver the most benefit to the participant. These increasingly include coaching and a number of people described having a mentor and how this had helped them to develop.

[REDACTED]

- Newer staff described the organisation as a welcoming place to join, and outlined an effective introduction to their work with support from their manager and colleagues. A particularly good induction is provided to all and this was considered to be very reassuring to new staff. Induction for staff moving into new roles was more variable especially around ensuring people have their development needs in the new role reviewed and delivered. It was also noted that when people go for an internal promotion, feedback after the interview was not always proactively provided.

Indicator 9: Performance Measurement

EVIDENCE REQUIREMENTS													
1	2	3	4	5									
✓	✓	✓	✓	✓									

Investment in learning can be quantified (Core Standard)

- There is a clear understanding of the significant investment in time, money and resources in learning and development. The organisation track training activity and resources needed and this is discussed and understood by the top team.

Impact can be demonstrated (Core Standard)

- Evaluation of learning and development is taking place and is reported to the Executive Board twice a year. These reports capture cost and volume, quality and provide updates on key interventions. Steps have been taken to improve the reporting of Impact of the learning and development programmes and there is also a section on areas for improvement to complete the training cycle. Examples included the Casework Training Scheme contributing to meeting targets, although much of the other examples of impact tended to be less quantifiable. The reports are discussed at EB level and help inform future planning around learning and development and people management strategies.
- Individual managers and team members were able to discuss the impact of their own learning and to describe how this has impacted upon their performance, and that of their team. Examples included at the organisational level the investment in equality and diversity courses that have helped raise awareness and understanding. Managers were able to discuss how the investment in the MDP has increased management capability.

[REDACTED]

- While there were good anecdotal examples of how learning and development has contributed to the ongoing success of PHSO, it is not straight-forward to link learning and development to measurable KPIs and outcomes. This makes it more difficult to demonstrate impact, particularly in a quantifiable way. More could be done as an organisation to establish clearer impact measures upfront and this would enable even greater understanding of the value created from learning and development.

[REDACTED]

Indicator 10: Continuous Improvement

EVIDENCE REQUIREMENTS													
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9					
✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓					

Evaluation results in improvements to people strategies and management (Core Standard)

Self review and information from external review are used (ER 4, 5)

- There is a real desire to ensure that the organisation’s people strategy is evolving and improving continuously, with much discussion of the issues at senior level and a range of general improvements introduced since the last liP assessment. There is little sense of complacency as evidenced by the use of internal review (e.g. staff survey) but also external review (e.g. benchmarking via the BIOA and Investors in People health check).

Effective feedback methods are used understand people’s views on how they are managed (ERs 6, 7)

People’s views on how they are managed improve (ER 9)

- Feedback to individual managers on their performance using upward or 360-degree arrangements have moved forward and all EMG managers have taken part in 360-degree feedback. There are also some Action Learning Sets up and running which is positive and another vehicle for reflection. A number of managers were able to discuss how they had improved their management style and approach through attending training activity but also through coaching interventions and attendance at the EMG meeting. Staff confirmed that the profile of effective leadership and management has risen over the last three years and has helped change people’s perceptions. There is still a way to go in some individual cases but the direction of travel is very encouraging. For example, the last staff survey showed a leap in employee engagement index from 67% to 76%.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

■ **Recommendation and Next Steps**

Having carried out the assessment process in accordance with the guidelines provided for Assessors by Investors in People – United Kingdom Commission for Employment and Skills, the Assessor is fully satisfied that the Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman meets the requirements of the Investors in People National Standard at the Bronze level.

Investors in People recognition is granted indefinitely, with a proviso that reviews take place no greater than 3 years apart. Reviews can be undertaken at any time and the organisation should discuss the timing of their next review with their Assessor, using the Improvement Planning Meeting to agree the best strategy for future use of the Investors in People framework.

[REDACTED]
8th April 2011

[REDACTED]

■ **Support Available**

Investors in People Interactive

This free online support tool is designed to guide you through development activities and help you maintain the benefits of using Investors in People as an organisational development tool. Obtain an on-going understanding of your organisation's current strengths and development areas by using the tool's diagnostic function which is built around 5 management practices which relate directly to the Investors in People indicators


You can also review and update your progress within the tool and access a wide range of downloads, good practice tips, templates and other resources to inspire and inform - no matter where you are on your Investors in People journey

www.investorsinpeople.co.uk/interactive

Promoting continuous improvement

IBP offers an integrated advice and assessment support service, as well as workshops, surgeries and networking events to promote continuous improvement and maximise the benefits of working with The Standard. We also work with a team of highly experienced consultants to offer an extensive range of tailored business support and organisational development solutions to help improve business performance. Details of the support available to you can be found on: -

Internet: 

Telephone: 

Email: 

www.ibp.uk.com

[0800 612 3098](tel:08006123098)

info@ibp.uk.com

Annex A

Outcomes Table

Evidence Requirements Framework Matrix

Core Standard										
	Indicators									
ERs	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10
1	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
2	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
3	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
4	✓	✓	✓		✓				✓	
5	✓		✓						✓	
6	✓									

Core Standard Fully Met and 38 out of 42 additional ERs met = Bronze

✓ = Assessed and Met

✓ Assessed but not Met

Wider Framework – 42 additional ERs selected, 35 Met										
	Indicators									
	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10
4	Core	Core	Core		Core			✓	Core	✓
5	Core	✓	Core					✓	Core	✓
6	Core	✓						✓		✓
7	✓	✓						✓		✓
8	✓	✓								✓
9	✓	✓								✓
10	✓	✓								
11	✓	✓								
12	✓	✓								
13	✓	✓								
14	✓	✓								
15	✓	✓								
16	✓	✓								
17	✓	✓								
18	✓									
19	✓									
20	✓									
21	✓									
22	✓									
23	✓									
24	✓									
25	✓									
26										
27										
28										
29										