

Matthew Rycroft Permanent Secretary Home Office 2 Marsham Street London SW1P 4DF Cabinet Office

Nick Smallwood Chief Executive, Infrastructure and Projects Authority 1 Horse Guards London SW1A 2HQ

Sophie Conrad SRO HMPO Transformation Programme

By email only 10 February 2021

Dear Sophie,

Role as Senior Responsible Owner for the HMPO Transformation Programme

We are writing to confirm your appointment as Senior Responsible Owner (SRO) for the HMPO Transformation Programme, which forms part of the Government Major Project Portfolio (GMPP). You will be directly accountable to <a href="Abi Tierney">Abi Tierney</a>, Director General, UK Visas and Immigration, under the oversight of the Permanent Secretary and the Secretary of State for the Home Office.

You will undertake this SRO role alongside your other responsibilities and must ensure that you allocate enough time to fulfil the responsibilities that being an SRO entails - as set out in the Annex, these are expected to take up about 25-30% of your time. This will be periodically reviewed to ensure that an appropriate balance is maintained across the full range of your responsibilities

As SRO, you will have personal responsibility for delivery of the HMPO Transformation Programme and will be held accountable for: the delivery of its objectives and policy intent; securing and protecting its vision; ensuring that it is governed responsibly, reported honestly, and issues escalated appropriately; and influencing constructively the context, culture and operating environment.

Key decisions on GMPP level projects and anything which is otherwise novel, contentious or commercially sensitive, or which Ministers have asked to see must be submitted in a timely manner to the Permanent Secretary and Ministers as appropriate.

In addition to your internal accountabilities, you should also be aware that SROs are held personally accountable to Parliamentary Select Committees. You will be expected to account for and explain the decisions and actions you have taken to deliver this programme (or specific milestones). Your accountability for the delivery of HMPO Transformation Programme commenced in November 2020.

It is important to be clear that your accountability relates only to implementation; it will remain for the Minister to account for any relevant policy decisions and their development.

You should follow the guidance in the document at the Annex which sets out in detail SRO roles and responsibilities. You should also make sure you understand the guidance 'Giving Evidence to Select Committees – Guidance for Civil Servants' which is available at: <a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\_data/file/364600/Osmotherly\_Rules\_October\_2014.pdf">https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\_data/file/364600/Osmotherly\_Rules\_October\_2014.pdf</a>.

You should also make yourself aware of the Infrastructure and Projects Authority (IPA) guidance on management of major projects at: https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/infrastructure-and-projects-authority

#### Tenure of Position

You are required to undertake this role until the completion of delivery and subsequent closure of the programme which is estimated for 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022. This date will be refined when the programme plans its closure stage. SROs of GMPP projects and programmes are not permitted to leave their roles for other posts in central government without the consent of the Chief Executive Officer of the Infrastructure and Projects Authority.

### Extent and Limit of Accountability

You will be expected to progress the Programme in line with Spending Review and Home Office allocations, and as agreed by the Finance and Investment Committee (F&IC). F&IC funding authorisations will be confirmed separately and will kept under review in the light of delivery progress.

You are authorised to approve expenditure up to this limit and within your delegated financial authority. Appropriate authority should be sought for expenditure which breaches this allocation. The Chief Portfolio Officer (CPO) and the Corporate Finance Director should be involved in such discussions along with the Director General of Capability and Resources (DG-C&R). You should always operate within the rules set out in 'Managing Public Money'. Additionally, if relevant, you must be mindful of, and act in accordance with, the specific HM Treasury and Cabinet Office spending controls relevant to the HMPO Transformation Programme. Funding – especially underspends - must not be flexed within or between allocations without reference back to F&IC.

#### You must escalate to F&IC and DG-C&R:

- Proposed changes to the programme scope which impact on the intent or its expected benefits realisation, or which have wider impacts for other programmes or projects, or for Home Office transformation more generally
- Slippage or any proposed change which materially impacts on wider Home Office objectives, including ministerial objectives, or adversely affects completion of any of the Programme's tranches or its funding

• Issues which you are unable to resolve, including the need to either pause or terminate the programme where necessary.

Your role as SRO is a corporate responsibility and you are expected to:

- Establish and progress the Programme in line with the Home Office Project Delivery Framework, ensuring the effectiveness of its governance, assurance and programme management arrangements, including:
  - o Appointing, chairing and setting priorities for the Programme Board;
  - Ensuring the effectiveness and performance of the programme organisation;
    and
  - Ensuring appropriate first line assurance is in place backed up by the commissioning of timely assurance and audit reviews.
- Ensure that the Programme is progressed according to the Home Secretary's agreed portfolio prioritisation, recognising that under some circumstances resource may need to be diverted to higher priority programmes and discussing with the CPO's team any factors which may change the priority of your Programme.
- Submit the Programme's business cases and other reports as appropriate to F&IC, the IPA and HM Treasury. In doing so, you will:
  - Monitor the Programme's status, its forecast timescales, costs and benefits and key risks and dependencies;
  - o Report issues openly and transparently; and
  - Ensure that the Programme's business cases make specific funding allocations for networks, infrastructure and cyber security, should your programme need work performed on any of these areas, base these allocations on estimates agreed with the appropriate leads in Enterprise Services, and provide the funds identified for these purposes to those leads to deliver on your behalf.
- Ensure that the Programme's anticipated impacts upon business as usual operations are informing forecasts of those operations, including workforce planning and running costs.
- Lead the Programme in a way which maximises delivery of shared corporate capabilities, for use across the Home Office and wider government.
- Ensure that Home Office data management principles are adopted in taking forward the HMPO Transformation Programme to ensure that data is collected and stored in such a way as to enable sharing and reuse where appropriate, that it is protected in line with GDPR requirements.
- Take account of Home Office and wider government initiatives.
- Ensure that any legacy systems replaced by the Programme are decommissioned as appropriate.

# Objectives and Performance Criteria

To visibly and actively lead the HMPO Transformation Programme through to a structured closure, ensuring that all appropriate steps are taken to ensure that the benefits forecast by the programme are realised. In particular:

- Monitoring and controlling the progress of the programme at a strategic level, being honest and frank about its progress, risks and issues,
- Communicating effectively with senior stakeholders regarding programme progress and providing clear, appropriate and delivery-focused decisions and advice to the Programme Director.
- Escalating serious issues quickly and with confidence to senior management, and
- Ensuring a plan for both long term benefits realisation and on-going sustainability is agreed with key stakeholders as part of the process of transitioning the programme to "business as usual"

DG-C&R has asked the CPO to provide feedback on performance against these criter

# Description of the Programme

The HMPO Transformation Programme supports the Home Office's objective of attracting talent and taking back control by modernising the passport business through digitising the end to end process and by automating much of the application assessment work, thereby reducing HMPO running costs. Much of the project is already complete with the remaining key elements being:

- Scanning, Validation and Storage (SVS) which will enable the transformation by allowing all paper associated with applications to be digitised at the boundary of our organisation;
- Digital Application Processing (DAP) which will deliver the digitisation of the workflow and automation of the end-to-end application process; and
- Terminal Repository (TR) which will provide a cloud-based data solution.

## **Programme Status**

We note the report of the IPA assurance review which concluded on 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2020 as recording the status of the Programme at this point.

### Personal Development

We note with thanks the work you have already undertaken as the Deputy Director with responsibility for Strategy, Planning and Design of the HMPO Transformation. We also welcome your willingness to undertake the MPLA course which will provide you with the skills and tools to fulfil these responsibilities and your intention to apply for the next cohort (The PPD Capability Team will be in touch with the application forms once the cohort opens for applications).

In the longer term, we would also encourage you to share your learning and experience with colleagues across the Home Office to support the wider development of the project delivery profession.

We would like to take this opportunity to wish you every success in your role as SRO.

Yours sincerely,

Matthew Rycroft

Permanent Secretary

Home Office

Nick Smallwood

Chief Executive Officer Infrastructure

and Projects Authority