

70 Whitehall
London SW1A 2AS

From the Chief Executive

1 Horse Guards Road
London SW1A 2HQ

CO_053_1921-Q1 20 Oct 2021 Patricia Dreghorn

CEO, UKSV, Government Security Group

To: Patricia,

Re: Appointment as Senior Responsible Owner (SRO) for the Vetting Transformation Programme (VTP)

We are writing to confirm your appointment as Senior Responsible Owner (SRO) for the Vetting Transformation Programme (the 'Programme') with effect from 01/04/2021, directly accountable to me as the Cabinet Office accounting officer and under the oversight of the Department's Ministers.

This will be a part time role which requires 50% of your time per month. You will carry out this role alongside your other responsibilities and must ensure that you allocate sufficient time to enable the effective delivery of the role and responsibilities, as set out in this letter. This will be periodically reviewed to ensure that an appropriate balance is maintained across your portfolio of activities.

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

Like all civil servants, you remain accountable to Ministers, as set out in the Civil Service Code, and should deliver the project in accordance with the objectives and policy intent as set by Ministers.

In addition to your internal accountabilities, SROs are personally accountable to Parliamentary Select Committees. You will be expected to account for and explain the decisions and actions you have taken to deliver the project (or specific milestones). In your case this means that from the date of signature of this letter you will be held personally

accountable and could be called by Select Committees to account for delivery of the Programme.

More information on this is set out in [Giving Evidence to Select Committees – Guidance for Civil Servants](#), sometimes known as the Osmotherly Rules. It is important to be clear that your accountability to Parliament relates only to implementation, within the terms agreed in this letter. It will remain for the Minister to account for the relevant policy decisions and development.

Tenure of position

You are required to undertake this role until achievement of project closure planned for 31/03/2023. Progress towards this will be reflected in your personal objectives.

Objectives and Performance Criteria

The policy intent supported by this project is to build upon the Vetting Reform Programme outcomes through further transformation. Proposed changes to the project scope which impact on this intent or benefits realisation must be authorised by the Vetting Transformation Board; Cabinet Office Portfolio Office (COPO); and Cabinet Office Approval Board (COAB), and may be subject to further levels of approval.

The objectives and vision of the programme are to make vetting the exemplar shared service across HMG, delivering a high quality and efficient vetting enterprise. The service will be aligned across all stakeholder organisations creating a simplified end to end vetting process with the capability to manage personnel security risk in a constantly changing world. As SRO, you will direct all activity workstreams in order to achieve the aims of the programme including: reduced processing times, portable vetting, better people and risk management, seamless user experience and a strengthened international reputation.

As SRO, you are expected to run your project in accordance with the [Government Functional Standard for Project Delivery](#). Further details on your role and responsibilities as SRO are set out [in IPA guidance on the role of the senior responsible owner](#), and you are expected to follow that guidance, and other IPA guidance on the management of major projects.

Extent and limit of accountability

1. Finance and Controls

HMT spending controls will apply on the basis set out within your department's delegated authority letter. Where the programme exceeds the delegated authority set by HM Treasury, the Treasury Approval Point process will apply and the details of each approval process must be agreed with your HM Treasury spending team. You should consult departmental finance colleagues on how to go about this.

You should also note that where expenditure is considered novel, contentious, repercussive or likely to result in costs to other parts of the public sector, HMT approval will be required, regardless of whether the programme expenditure exceeds the delegated authority set by

HM Treasury. If in doubt about whether approval is required you should, in the first

instance, consult departmental finance colleagues before raising with the relevant HM Treasury spending team.

The overall budget for the projects including staffing and project support team is £19.6 million, excluding VAT,

The current approved expenditure figure is £5,083,872.57, which provides cover to 31 March 2022. This is broken down as follows;

Paybill	£2,411,873.33
Contractor costs	£1,945,449.24
Other non-paybill	£726,550.00
Total	£5,083,872.57

You should operate at all times within the rules set out in [Managing Public Money](#). In addition, you must be mindful of, and act in accordance with, the specific Treasury delegated limits and Cabinet Office controls relevant to the Vetting Transformation Programme. Information on these controls can be found here: [Cabinet Office controls](#)

2. Delegated departmental/project authority

- you are authorised to approve expenditure of £100,000 per spend request, within your overall expenditure limit of **£5,083,872.57**, as this is below the CO DAL of £15m.
- you are authorised to agree project rescheduling within Vetting Transformation Programme Board agreed tolerances of agreed milestones, but rescheduling beyond that must be re-agreed with the Programme Board; COPO and COAB.
- you are also responsible for recommending to the Programme Board, COPO and COAB the need to either pause or terminate the programme where necessary and in a timely manner.

Where issues arise which you are unable to resolve, you are responsible for escalating these issues to the Portfolio Board, COPO and COAB.

Project Status

The Project Status at the date of your appointment is reflected in the most recent quarterly return on the programme to the Infrastructure and Projects Authority. This is the agreed position as you assume formal ownership of the programme.

Major Projects Leadership Academy (MPLA)

Due to the nature of your SRO role alongside your Director responsibilities, you will not be required to enrol on MPLA, given that you have 20 years experience managing multi million programmes across the private and public sector. This combined with the leadership of a fulltime Transformation Programme Director, Karen Parkes, ensures you have sufficient

support in place. Karen has been officially sponsored by the Cabinet Office to attend the next MPLA cohort. This has been agreed with the Infrastructure and Projects Authority Professions Team.

To widen experience and understanding of the role, SROs are expected to become accredited Major Project reviewers and to lead or participate in such reviews for other areas of the Cabinet Office, other Government departments, or the wider public sector as appropriate. You will be required to participate in such assurance reviews at least once every 12 months to maintain your accreditation.

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

Yours sincerely,



Alex Chisholm
Permanent Secretary
Cabinet Office



Appointment
Nick Smallwood
Chief Executive
Infrastructure and Projects Authority

Confirmation of Acceptance of

I confirm that I accept the appointment of Senior Responsible Owner for **Vetting Transformation Programme**, including my personal accountability for implementation, as set out in the letter above.



Patricia Dreghorn
SRO
Vetting Transformation Programme