

# Minutes

- Title of meeting:** DWP (Department for Work and Pensions) Serious Case Panel
- Date:** Friday 19<sup>th</sup> April 2024
- Location:** Virtual
- Attendees:** David Bennett, Non-Executive Director (Chair)  
Liz Fairburn, Director for Customer Experience  
Peter Schofield, Permanent Secretary  
Catherine Vaughan, Director General for Finance  
Helen Edwards, Director for Business Strategy  
Julie Blomley, Director General for People and Capability  
Henry Ripley, Director for Legal  
Joanna Wallace, Independent Case Examiner  
Katherine Green, Director General, Labour Market, Policy and Implementation  
Bill Thorpe (obo Katie Farrington), Director General for Disability, Health and Pensions  
Neil Couling, Director General for Change and Resilience  
Gail Allsopp, Chief Medical Advisor  
Robert Currens, Deputy Director Advanced Customer Support
- Presenters:** Redacted, Customer Experience Directorate  
Redacted, Service Planning and Delivery  
Prathiba Ramsingh, Work and Health Directorate  
Martin Hill, Contract Management and Partner Delivery Directorate  
Redacted, Contract Management and Partner Delivery Directorate  
Nick Riddle, Work & Health Area Director  
Redacted, Customer Experience Directorate
- Apologies:** Amanda Reynolds, Director General for Service Excellence  
Barbara Bradley, Director General for Work & Health Services  
Sophie Dean, Director General, Labour Market Policy and Implementation  
Katie Farrington, Director General for Disability, Health and Pensions  
Richard Corbridge, Director General for Digital

## 1. Welcome and introductions

- 1.1 David Bennett opened the meeting and welcomed attendees, introducing Julie Blomley (Director General for People and Capability) to her first panel meeting following her recent appointment.

## 2. Emerging Issues

- 2.1 Liz Fairburn and redacted provided a summary update on the Work & Pensions Select Committee inquiry following the Orals session on 26<sup>th</sup> March 2024. They noted that the Committee's report is expected by summer 2024.

### **3. Action Updates**

- 3.1 Liz Fairburn and redacted briefed panel members on the current contract timeline for the Payment Exception Service (PES) through to June 2025; the panel were content with the updates provided.
- 3.2 Gail Allsopp provided the panel with an update on activity so far in her role as Chief Medical Advisor to strengthen DWP's clinical governance with a clear priority of putting the customer first. Panel members provided positive feedback on the impact of this work thus far.
- 3.3 Martin Hill opened a discussion about DWP's health assessment contracts and the quality assurance of the standards underpinning this provision. The panel endorsed a focus on the quality of the customer experience in the health assessment customer journey.

### **4. For Discussion**

- 4.1 Nick Riddle discussed insight and learning from the perspective of attending coroner's inquests as a DWP witness. The panel discussed his observations with particular emphasis on how DWP can contribute to the inquest process, ensuring that Coroners have the information they need to reach their conclusions.
- 4.2 Robert Currens and redacted updated panel members on the background and activity of the Advanced Customer Support Senior Leaders (ACSSLs) and the impact they are having in supporting vulnerable customers, focussing on the relationships they develop with external partners that supports a multidisciplinary approach. One of DWP's ACSSLs provided feedback and learning from their recent activities to support vulnerable customers.

### **5. AOB and Close**

- 5.1 No AOB raised. David Bennett and members of the Serious Case Panel thanked the presenters and their teams for their updates.

**Next meeting:** July 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2024