

Title	Minutes of the Board Meeting
Description	Minutes of the Board Meeting held 5 February 2026
Paper owner	Heather Baily
Paper author	Ben Kirkham
Meeting date	19 March 2026

**The Board is invited to approve these minutes.**

Board members wishing to request clarification on a paper should contact the paper's owner in advance of the meeting (preferably by email). Material responses to the requests will normally be circulated to all Board members prior to, or at, the meeting.

### Freedom of Information

Reference to discussion on this paper at the meeting will usually be published in the Board minutes unless exempted under the Freedom of Information Act 2000. Board papers may be published or released on request unless exempted under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

**There are elements of these minutes that should not be released due to their nature and using exemptions under the following:**

Agenda Item 4 – Home Office Update – paragraphs 4.3, 4.5, 4.11

- Section 35 – Formulation or development of government policy (consultation on business licensing and statutory guidance).
- Section 41 – Information provided in confidence (Home Office funding discussions).

Agenda Item 7 – Budget and Fee Review 2026/27 – the position on the individual fee will be made known in April, however, the proposals to other changes are subject to HMT approval and should be withheld pending their agreement

- Section 35 – Formulation or development of government policy (statutory fee setting).

Agenda Item 8 – Martyn's Law Programme Update – parts

- Section 35 – Formulation or development of government policy (implementation of statutory guidance and sequencing of powers).

Agenda Item 9 & 10 – Operations Report – paragraphs on powers/limits and criminal checks

- Section 31 – Law enforcement (operational activity, investigations and enforcement methodologies).

Agenda Item 11 – Business Approval Scheme

- Section 35 – Formulation or development of government policy (proposed regulatory framework prior to public consultation).

Agenda Item 14 – Data and Digital Programme Update

- Section 43 – Commercial interests (supplier performance and contractual management).

Agenda Item 16 – ARAC Quarterly Report

- Section 36 – Prejudice to the effective conduct of public affairs (free and frank advice relating to audit prioritisation and financial resilience).

## Minutes of the Board Meeting on February 2026

**Date:** 5 February 2026

**Time:** 13:00-17:00

**Location:** 10 South Colonnade, London (in person)

**Chair:** Caroline Corby, NED Board Member and Deputy Chair, chaired the Meeting

**Attendees:**

Duncan Worsell, NED Board member  
Hannah Wadey, NED Board member  
Sarah Pumfrett, NED Board member  
Paul Glibbery, NED Board member  
Olivia Halfacre, Board Apprentice

Michelle Russell, Chief Executive and Board member  
Debbie Bartlett, Chief Operating Officer and Board member  
Pete Easterbrook, Executive Director of Inspections and Enforcement  
Tim Archer, Executive Director of Licensing and Standards and Board member  
Laura Gibb, Executive Director of Martyn's Law

Ben Kirkham, Governance Manager (secretariat)  
Alero Harrison, Head of External Communications  
Laura Johnson, Senior Change Lead  
Laura Peachey, Head of Finance and Procurement (items 6,7,12 & 13)  
[REDACTED] Communications Manager (items 5 & 6)  
Tony Stafford, Principal Policy Advisor Martyn's Law (item 8)  
Mike White, Design and Delivery Lead (item 11)  
[REDACTED] Senior Manager Assurance & Delivery (item 11)  
Andrea Noble, Digital Transformation Lead (item 14)

**External observers:**

Shaun Hipgrave, Director, Protect and Prepare, Homeland Security Group, Home Office  
Niall Donnelly, Head of Safeguarding Sponsorship, Home Office

**Staff Observers:**

[REDACTED] Research Lead  
[REDACTED] Quality Assurance Specialist  
[REDACTED] Project Manager

**Apologies:**

Heather Baily, Chair

Steve Grainger, NED Board member  
Phil Urquhart, Chief Digital and Data Officer and Board member  
Nicola Podd, Head of Strategy & Governance and Chief of Staff

## **1. Welcome, apologies, declaration of interest, minutes of previous meeting, matters arising.**

### **Welcome and apologies.**

- 1.1 In absence of the Chair, Caroline Corby as Deputy Chair, chaired the meeting.
- 1.2 There were apologies given from Heather Baily, Chair, Steve Grainger, Non-Executive Director, Phil Urquhart, Chief Data and Digital Officer and Nicola Podd, Chief of Staff.
- 1.3 The Chair extended a warm welcome to Laura Gibb, Executive Director of Martyn's Law.
- 1.3 The meeting was confirmed as quorate.

### **Declarations of interest**

- 1.4 There were no new declarations of interest made.

### **Minutes of previous meetings.**


- 1.5 The Board was asked to consider minutes from the last Board meeting for approval:
- 1.6 The Board confirmed and approved the minutes.

### **Matters Arising.**

**Action: Nov-25-01** All Board members to propose ideas for external facilitators for future creative thinking sessions for Feb 26 Board. In the Chair's absence this action was closed, agreeing all suggestions to be sent to the Governance Manager.

## **2. Chair's update.**

- 2.1 The Chair of the meeting introduced this item and reflected on recent engagements in Scotland, Northern Ireland and Dublin. The Chair noted that the substantive update on Northern Ireland and Dublin would be provided by the Chief Executive, as the Chair had been unable to attend those meetings.

- 2.2 The Chief Executive explained that recent visits to each of the devolved nations had served as both an opportunity to check in on key issues and to enable the Chair to bid farewell to relevant Ministers.
- 2.3 The Chair had met with the Minister for Victims & Community Safety in Scotland. The Chief Executive reported that, as the Chair had been unable to meet the Northern Ireland Justice Minister, that meeting had instead been undertaken by the Chief Executive and the Executive Director of Inspections and Enforcement, with the two respective Non-Executive Directors for Scotland and Northern Ireland, Sarah Pumfrett and Duncan Worsell, also joining the visits.
- 2.4 The Chief Executive advised that both meetings had been constructive, with a common emphasis on the SIA's role as a UK-wide regulator considering local interests.
- 2.5 The Chief Executive reported that both Ministers had been assured by SIA progress on work relating to Martyn's Law. It was noted that follow-up actions would be required, and that the Northern Ireland Department of Justice had expressed a clear view that it was not the lead department to be conduit for all Martyn's Law-related matters across Northern Ireland. The SIA needed to establish direct contact with the various individual other departments.
- 2.6 The Chief Executive highlighted that the Northern Ireland Minister had placed particular emphasis on continuing our work on countering violence against women and girls, underscoring the importance of ensuring that, alongside work on Martyn's Law, broader community safety and protective security considerations continued to receive appropriate attention.
- 2.7 
- 2.9 The Chief Executive formally thanked the Home Office team for the efficiency of the recruitment process, noting that this had ensured continuity of arrangements with no gap between the outgoing and incoming Chairs.

### **3. Chief Executive's Update.**

- 3.1 The Chief Executive highlighted recent engagement across the devolved administrations and noted, a constructive meeting also in Cardiff with both NPCC lead for security, ACC Jenny Gilmour and visit to three sites serviced by a local small security company.
- 3.2 The Chief Executive reported on a positive visit to Dublin the previous day with Irish regulator counterparts. It was observed that Ireland was more advanced in certain areas (business licensing), whereas the SIA was further ahead in other areas, including digital capability and work relating to countering training malpractice and standards of training qualifications set.

- 3.3 The Chief Executive explained that time had been spent sharing the SIA's approach to developing a new business approval scheme. She reflected that the engagement had been a valuable regulator-to-regulator exchange, enabling both parties to test and challenge their respective approaches. It was noted that several actions had arisen from the discussion.
- 3.4 The Chief Executive placed on record her thanks to the Chief Operating Officer and their team, acknowledging the particularly pressurised period relating to finance business planning, strategic planning and the fee review all at once.
- 3.5 The Chief Executive welcomed the newly appointed Executive Director for Martyn's Law, noting that they had joined at a challenging time but had engaged positively with the issues at hand.
- 3.6 The Chief Executive also thanked Ronnie Megaughin for his contribution and for holding the role of Interim Director over the previous six months, and Tony Stafford for his work on Section 12 guidance.
- 3.7 Turning to powers, the Chief Executive reported that, except for RIPA, most matters were understood to be progressing with the Home Office.
- 3.8 The Chief Executive flagged an ongoing risk relating to the volatility of the forecasting model, noting the helpful recent discussion at ARAC and emphasising the need for continued awareness of its sensitivity to change. The Chair noted that this would be picked up later in the meeting.
- 3.9 The Chair asked whether the Board welcomed the Home Office's announced plans to amalgamate the 43 police forces.
- 3.10 The Chief Executive responded that, from the SIA's perspective, the organisation was neutral but recognised that there could be potential benefits to engaging with fewer forces covering larger areas; the position would be kept under review as proposals developed. This position was endorsed by the Executive Director of Inspections and Enforcement.

#### **4. Home Office Update.**

- 4.1 The Director, Protect and Prepare, Homeland Security Group, Home Office, provided an update on SIA-related matters.
- 4.2 He reported on progress with the launch of MR7 and MR8 and the consultation relating to the Manchester Arena recommendations on business licensing, including proposals that all security services should be licensable. The consultation had been launched and was due to close on 12 March.

Efforts were underway to promote it to industry, including engagement across the UK to encourage responses from devolved authorities.

- [REDACTED]
- 4.4 Turning to funding, the Director advised that a detailed meeting had taken place earlier that day regarding the future Spending Review. The allocation for the SIA had been agreed and confirmed for the next three years, both in relation to the SIA's model and the funding to be provided by the Home Office for Martyn's Law.
- [REDACTED]
- 4.6 The Director then invited the Head of Safeguarding Sponsorship, Home Office, to provide a further update on sponsorship matters.
- 4.7 The Head of Safeguarding Sponsorship welcomed the timing of the new Chair's appointment and confirmed alignment with a forthcoming Ministerial Chair's letter to him setting out his priorities for the SIA for the year ahead.
- 4.8 They also advised that the existing Framework Agreement document between the Home Office and the SIA, which sets out the relationship and ways of working, was due for refresh. An initial review had been undertaken, and an updated version would be sent in draft to the SIA in due course.
- 4.9 The Chair invited questions and comments from members.
- 4.10 A Non-Executive Director asked when the results of the consultation would be available, cognisant that the SIA would commence its own consultation on the Business Approval Scheme shortly after.

■ [REDACTED]

## 5. Strategic Plan 26/29

- 5.1 The Communications Manager joined the meeting.
- 5.2 The Chief Operating Officer introduced the Strategic Plan 2026–29 presentation. She placed on record her thanks to the Communications Manager for integrating input from across the organisation into a clear document for publication to the public and partners.

- 5.3 The Chief Operating Officer reminded the Board that the organisation's new purpose had been agreed at the Board strategy session last autumn. [REDACTED]
- 5.4 She reported that the SIA's new values of respect, expertise and service, would be launched internally the following week and had already been well received. These would inform the organisation's refreshed approach to performance management, reward and recognition.
- 5.5 The Chief Operating Officer explained that the plan would include a section on key strategic shifts, setting out what would be different over the next three years, including a clearer focus on the regulation of premises and events. The plan would also reinforce the concept of "one organisation" – a single SIA delivering a dual purpose, rather than separate SIA and Martyn's Law functions.
- 5.6 A further section would set out the SIA's core regulatory role, returning to first principles to provide clarity to the industry and help avoid any misunderstanding about the regulator's remit.
- 5.7 The plan would also describe what the SIA intended to deliver over the next three years, structured around four priority deliverables: individual licensing, business standards, Martyn's Law, and investing in our people. It was noted that, as a significant proportion of funding was devoted to staff costs, effective delivery of the first three priorities depended on having the right capability and capacity within teams.
- 5.8 The Chief Operating Officer added that the plan would include a section covering other areas of work, including corporate services, development of powers, performance measurement and accountability.
- 5.9 She advised that a planned draft of the Strategic Plan would be circulated on Monday, with members invited to provide feedback to inform further refinement.
- 5.10 The Chair asked where the Business Approval Scheme would sit within the plan and emphasised the need for clarity about its position within the three-year strategy in light of the possibility of mandatory business licensing.
- 5.11 The Chief Operating Officer responded that the top-level wording of the Strategic Plan had been framed to encompass business licensing activity,

providing a clear basis for progressing both the Business Approval Scheme and mandatory business licensing if it was agreed to by government.

- 5.12 The Chief Executive referred to the organisation's previous statement of support for full business licensing and evidence in Manchester Arena Inquiry, noting that it was not possible to be definitive about timelines as these rested with Ministers and Parliament. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] On that basis, work on the Business Approval Scheme remained valid and valuable and would act as a bridge towards any future regime. She added that much of the emerging business and strategic planning centred on resetting business standards.

## **6. Business Plan 2026/27**

- 6.1 The Chief Operating Officer introduced the Business Plan 2026/27 and placed on record their thanks to the Strategy and Planning Manager for their work on the plan, notwithstanding their absence from the meeting.
- 6.2 They noted that the Key Performance Indicators and deliverables were set out in the Annex to the paper and assumed these had been reviewed by members ahead of the meeting. The majority of deliverables aligned with the four strategic priorities in the Strategic Plan, alongside a small number of enabling activities (including communications, intelligence and data, and enforcement).
- 6.3 In relation to KPIs, the Chief Operating Officer explained that these had been refined from the previous year's RAG-rated set and aligned with the four strategic priorities. The team had benchmarked the KPIs against comparable regulators, and they had been scrutinised by Directors. In some cases, indicative KPIs over a three-year cycle had been included, recognising that further measures (not least relating to Martyn's Law in April 2027) would be introduced over time.
- 6.4 They advised that, subject to any feedback from the Board now or over the next few weeks, the deliverables and KPIs would be finalised in the Business Plan for Board approval in March.
- 6.5 A Non-Executive Director welcomed the quality of the plans and asked, at a high level, how the SIA intended to measure its impact on public perception, appreciating this was not easy to do.

6.6 The Director, Protect and Prepare, Homeland Security Group, Home Office noted that this was challenging for all regulators, as much of the SIA’s work was not visible to the general public. He suggested that measures such as Business Approval Scheme (BAS) transition and uptake, alongside emerging public trust and confidence metrics, could provide a useful balance between inward-facing process KPIs and outward-facing impact.

█ [Redacted]

6.8 The Executive Director of Licensing and Standards observed that some of the proposed KPIs were challenging, particularly around licensing timelines, which were likely to come under pressure due to the new licensing criteria. He emphasised the need to balance ambition with realism, recognising both headwinds and tailwinds in delivery.

6.9 The Chief Executive reflected on the KPI relating to staff turnover, noting potential implications of the implementation of Martyn’s Law. One suggestion was whether it might be helpful to consider separate metrics for existing staff and for newly recruited Martyn’s Law staff. Also highlighted was the importance of retaining key KPIs, such as the 98% compliance measure, and noting the inherent complexity of measuring public confidence (KPI 20).

6.10 A Non-Executive Director sought clarification on KPI 4, specifically whether “working days” included or excluded waiting periods for third-party checks.

**Decision:**

The Board endorsed the key deliverables and proposed KPIs as set out in the draft Business Plan 2026/27 paper, subject to any minor clarifications being reflected in the final version.

█ [Redacted]

█ [Redacted]

█ [Redacted]

[Redacted text block]

■ [Redacted text block]

■ [Redacted text block]

■ [Redacted text block]

■ [Redacted text block]

■ [Redacted text block]

■ [Redacted text block]

[Redacted text block]

- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]

## 8. Martyn's Law Programme Update

- 8.1 The Principal Policy Advisor for Martyn's Law, joined the meeting.
- 8.2 The Executive Director for Martyn's Law thanked the Board for its welcome and introduced the paper, which set out progress across the programme.
- [REDACTED]
- 8.4 She advised that training was underway for SIA inspectors who would be testing operational assumptions, noting that they had raised helpful questions about the need for a unified SIA approach and the interaction between Martyn's Law functions and existing SIA powers. Work was also progressing on the workforce strategy, including how recruitment would be profiled over the coming years, with further clarity expected shortly.
- [REDACTED]
- 8.6 They also described ongoing work between the SIA, Home Office and KPMG on the sequencing of Section 12 guidance, Section 27 provisions and the

relevant statutory instruments, to ensure the SIA would be ready to exercise its legal powers when enacted. This included consideration of whether notifications received during public beta testing of the digital system could be handled on a voluntary basis, so that premises would not need to submit information twice once the legislation and SIA powers commenced.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

- 8.9 The Chief Executive placed on record her appreciation for the professional way in which both SIA and Home Office teams had managed the funding issue. She confirmed that the SIA would work to the revised funding envelope to design the best model available with the restricted funds, although noting that the SIA had made clear a requirement for minimum viable inspector numbers.
- 8.10 In response to the Chair, the Director of Protect and Prepare, provided assurance that no further reductions were expected to the figures for Martyn's Law funding as a result of the Home Office spending review outcome, nor to the figures the SIA was working to for its private security regulation financial figures.
- 8.11 The Executive Director for Martyn's Law then invited the Principal Policy Advisor to introduce the Section 12 statutory guidance item.
- 8.12 The Principal Policy Advisor explained that Section 12 of the Act required the SIA to produce statutory guidance on how it would exercise its regulatory functions and powers, in particular its investigatory powers. The final guidance must be published, subject to the requirement to obtain Ministerial approval. The Board was being asked, in line with the SIA delegations' framework, to approve the principles for public consultation on the SIA's draft guidance.
- 8.13 It was noted that this would be the SIA's first major public consultation with the new regulated community under Martyn's Law, and significant work had

been undertaken to make the material as clear and accessible as possible, including mapping out how best to reach affected new stakeholders.

- 8.14 The Chair observed that the draft guidance was a substantial document and queried whether a lighter, more accessible version could be produced to encourage engagement.
- 8.15 The Head of External Communications responded that work was underway to present it in an accessible format for consultees.
- 8.16 The Chair confirmed that the Board was being asked to approve proceeding to public consultation on the Section 12 guidance, and the principles to be consulted on, which the Board approved.

**Decision: The Board agreed to the principles set out and to proceed to public consultation on the draft Section 12 statutory guidance.**

## 9. Inspections and Enforcement report

- 9.1 The Executive Director of Inspections and Enforcement highlighted key points from the paper for the Board.



- 9.3 Where significant concerns had been identified, the SIA had taken direct action to mitigate risk while enquiries continued, including suspending or closing training centres. Over 20 centres had been closed in the year to date, a 25% increase on the previous year, reflecting the increased activity in this area.
- 9.4 The SIA had developed a range of inspection methodologies, from single-officer targeted visits to coordinated national operations, including a large-scale multi-site inspection in November.
- 9.5 At the most serious end of offending, the SIA had worked in partnership with policing, including a recent case that resulted in the arrest of a training centre director and the consequential suspension of over 700 SIA licences linked to that centre.
- 9.6 The Executive Director noted that the SIA's intelligence picture continued to mature and increasingly overlapped with issues such as labour abuse and immigration offending. Work was underway to examine patterns and links between training centres and the six awarding organisations authorised to

endorse SIA qualifications, with a particular focus on potential visa and immigration abuse within the training space.

9.7 The Executive Director of Inspections and Enforcement emphasised that, while much of the SIA's work focused on individuals at the point of licence application and within the industry, this programme was specifically targeting risks earlier in the system, before individuals obtained qualifications or licences.

9.8 Strategic and operational engagement with Ofqual remained productive, including Ofqual's participation in the November inspection, which had added significant value.

■ [REDACTED]

■ [REDACTED]

■ [REDACTED]

9.12 Finally, the Executive Director highlighted the successful approval of the SIA's application to access the Law Enforcement Data Service (LEDS), the replacement for the Police National Computer. This represented an important long-sought capability. The Board noted the sustained efforts of the Deputy Director of Intelligence and Reporting and their team in securing this outcome.

9.13 The Director of Protect and Prepare, Homeland Security Group, Home Office, noted that the Security Minister regularly received updates on this work and valued the progress being made. He offered to write to the Awarding Organisations to set out the importance of tackling malpractice and the Minister's expectations.

**ACTION FEB-26-02: Director, Protect and Prepare, Homeland Security Group, Home Office, to write to qualifications Awarding Organisations**

9.14 The Chair thanked the Inspections and Enforcement team for their work and the results achieved.

## 10. Licensing and Standards

- 10.1 The Design and Delivery Lead and the Senior Manager, Assurance and Delivery joined the meeting.
- 10.2 The Executive Director of Licensing and Standards provided an update on recent developments, beginning with changes to the “Get Licensed” criteria approved in December. The revised criteria and updated online criminal record indicators have now been published.
- 10.3 Since implementation, approximately 25,000 applications had been assessed under the new criteria. Eight absolute refusals had been issued, primarily involving multiple relevant offences or serious safeguarding concerns. A further 205 “intention to refuse” decisions had been issued. It was noted that applicants have 21 days to appeal and that internal appeal volumes were being monitored. January appeal levels were slightly higher than anticipated but remained manageable.



- 10.5 The Executive Director of Licensing and Standards then updated the Board on the strategic review of licensing qualifications launched in November, focusing on prerequisites including counter-terrorism training, English language requirements and first aid certification. Engagement activity had been extensive, including webinars attended by over 500 stakeholders and polling of approximately 3,000 licence holders. Expert working groups and an external advisory group had also been established.
- 10.6 Emerging themes included the need to strengthen core training content, greater emphasis on safeguarding (including in relation to drug-related vulnerability), and consideration of whether physical intervention skills should extend beyond the door supervision sector. A fuller update would be brought to the March Board with a view to seeking approval for public consultation.
- 10.7 Linked to this work, they reported on engagement with awarding organisations regarding assessment arrangements and training malpractice. Following an awarding organisation summit in November, a working group had been established to address vulnerabilities in written assessments. Awarding organisations had formally acknowledged the need for change from the current arrangement and were developing proposals to strengthen controls.

## 11. Business Approval Scheme

- 11.1 The Executive Director of Licensing and Standards then introduced the Business Approval Scheme update. They outlined refinements to the proposed structure following stakeholder feedback, including moving away from a pyramid model towards a clearer tiered framework.
- 11.2 The revised structure comprises foundation requirements, a strengthened Level 2 sector-specific accreditation (building on and enhancing the current ACS framework), and Level 3 specialisms recognising sector expertise and certain external accreditations. It was emphasised that the scheme would introduce greater transparency, strengthen standards, particularly in relation to labour supply chains, and move beyond the current “flat” ACS model.
- 11.3 The Design and Delivery Lead updated the Board on development of the new business register. Extensive industry engagement had generated positive feedback. Proposals include publishing clearer information about workforce composition, subcontracting arrangements and self-delivery levels to provide greater transparency for buyers of security services. [REDACTED]
- 11.4 In discussion, clarification was provided on transition arrangements from ACS to Bas and regarding supply chain limits. The proposal would restrict subcontracting to one additional tier beyond the primary contractor, while allowing multiple subcontractors within that first line tied where required. So responsibility would remain with the Tier 1 provider direct to the Primary.
- 11.5 The Executive Director outlined the proposed consultation approach, including a suite of supporting documents alongside a high-level summary to ensure accessibility. The Board was asked to approve the principles and proceeding to consultation, with final sign-off delegated to the Executive Director.
- 11.6 The Chair asked whether the Board was content to support the consultation.
- 11.7 The Design and Delivery Lead and the Senior Manager, Assurance and Delivery left the meeting.

**DECISION: The Board agreed to the principles and to proceed with a consultation on the Business Approval Scheme proposals.**

## 12. Finance and Procurement

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

- 12.4 The Head of Finance and Procurement confirmed that the position continued to be closely monitored.
- 12.5 In discussion, the Chief Executive noted that capital spend, particularly relating to the performance of [REDACTED] was being carefully managed against contractual commitments and delivery milestones.
- 12.6 The Chair thanked the team for the report.

### **13. Public Bodies Review**

- 13.1 The Chief Executive reported that action on the Public Bodies Review recommendations was progressing well and, following confirmation of the fee review, the intention was to close the programme and transition any residual actions fully into business as usual as part of our change programmes.
- 13.2 The Chair queried the status of OneLogin, which remained highlighted as a risk. The Chief Executive advised that use of OneLogin for identify verification to a level suitable for standard DBS checks, or an alternative solution, would only be possible where identity assurance met DBS standards. Government Digital and Data area for OneLogin had indicated that it would not be ready at least before Spring 2027 (and there were risks with that) and, as such, delivery within the asked timeframes of SIA was not possible.
- 13.3 The Chair asked whether the Board was content to note progress and close the item with no further updates required. The Board confirmed that it was content to do so on this basis.

**DECISION: The Board confirmed it was content for the closure of the public bodies review work and updates.**

### **14. Data and Digital Programme Update**

14.1 The Digital Transformation Lead joined the meeting.



14.3 The Digital Transformation Lead presented an overview of current projects, noting significant delivery improvements since October, with all projects now reported as green and delivery on schedule. The only area with minor movement was the People Portal CRM, where a two-week delay had been reported; however, [REDACTED] had confirmed to the SIA that overall delivery remained on track for March, supported by additional resourcing at their end.

14.4 The capital forecast confirmed that delivery remained within the approved capital budget on that basis.

14.5 The Chief Executive highlighted the importance of the programme to meeting Ministerial priorities, particularly changes to whistleblowing functionality via GOV.UK.

14.6 The Board viewed a demonstration of the licence checker application. In discussion, clarification was provided regarding a short administrative delay between licence grant and receipt of the physical licence. A query was raised regarding potential digital wallet functionality; it was noted this could be considered in future as a business proposition, though physical display continued to provide visible public assurance.

14.7 The Chair thanked the team for a comprehensive report and presentation.

14.8 The Digital Transformation Lead left the meeting.

### **15. Performance Report**

15.1 The Chair noted that the Board had reviewed the papers in advance and invited any comments. No issues were raised.

### **16. ARAC Quarterly Report**

16.1 The ARAC Chair provided an update from the January meeting, describing it as positive. The NAO had acknowledged resource constraints within the

organisation in the context of the forthcoming end of year audit and committed to maintaining open dialogue, including reprioritising their own resources where possible.

- 16.2 The ARAC Chair reported that GIAA had planned four internal audits; however, due to capacity pressures within the Finance team, ARAC had agreed to recommend removing the fourth audit to avoid placing undue strain on the team. This would enable focus on business as usual, the statutory audit and timely laying of accounts before Parliament.
- 16.3 The consequences where the GIAA would provide their annual opinion based on the three completed audits to date. ARAC acknowledge there was a risk that this may result in a lower opinion rating than may have been achieved but equally recognised there may be no impact to the opinion as the opinion needs to be set in the wider context. Mitigations were also in place to resolve the capacity cause of the change as finance team recruitment progressed. The NAO supported the proposal, recognising that delivery of statutory accounts and supporting Home Office group consolidation was of greater priority.
- 16.4 As the internal audit programme was a Board approved matter, the Chair invited the Board to endorse ARAC's recommendation to the change.

**DECISION: The Board endorsed the recommendation to remove the fourth internal audit from the current 2025/26 programme.**

- 16.5 The Chair requested an update from the Chief Operating Officer at the next meeting on recruitment and onboarding within the Finance team to strengthen its capacity.

**ACTION FEB 26-03 – Chief Operating Officer to provide a finance resilience update at the next Board meeting in March.**

## **17. EDI Committee Report**

- 17.1 The EDI Executive Committee Chair (Executive Director of Licensing and Standards) provided a verbal update from the November meeting. Activity during National Inclusion Week had included events, panel discussions, leadership messaging and workshops. Actions arising included the introduction of informal weekly insight sessions for new joiners.
- 17.2 The Committee had also discussed staff networks, recognising a need to reinvigorate engagement. A paper would be brought to the next Committee meeting setting out proposals to reset and strengthen staff networks to ensure colleagues feel supported.

- 17.3 The Home Office representative referenced a Civil Service toolkit for Ramadan and asked whether similar provision was in place at the SIA. The Chief Executive responded that while no formal toolkit was used, the organisation took a visible and supportive approach in practice.

**ACTION FEB-26-04 – The Director of Protect and Prepare, Homeland Security Group, Home Office to forward the Ramadan Civil Service Toolkit to SIA**

**18.AOB**

- 18.1 The Chair formally recorded thanks to the Chair of the SIA on behalf of the Board for her leadership and significant contribution to the organisation over the last 5 years. The Chief Executive echoed this on behalf of the executive and noted that the Chair had committed 47 years to public service. She confirmed there would be a farewell planned on her final working day in the office on 27 February.
- 18.2 The Director of Protect & Prepare at the Home Office also recorded the thanks of the Home Office to Heather Baily and that whilst he had only known her for about a year since the move of the SIA to the Security Minister's portfolio, it was clear how much work she carried out, often putting government business ahead of her personal commitments.

The meeting closed.

**Date of next Board meeting (budget and business plan special focus): 19 March 2026**