

Financial Ombudsman Service Limited

Minutes

Minutes of the meeting of the directors, held on 24 April 2023

Present	Baroness Zahida Manzoor CBE	Chair of the board
	Jacob Abboud	Non-Executive Director
	Bill Castell	Non-Executive Director
	Nigel Fretwell	Non-Executive Director
	Shrinivas Honap	Non-Executive Director
	Ruth Leak	Non-Executive Director
	Sarah Lee	Non-Executive Director
In attendance	Abby Thomas	Chief Executive & Chief Ombudsman
	James Dipple-Johnstone	Deputy Chief Ombudsman
	Jane Cosgrove	Chief People Officer
	Karl Khan	Chief Operating Officer
	Jenny Simmonds	Chief Finance and Risk Officer
	Nicola Wadham	Chief Information Officer
	Alison Hoyland	Board Secretary
	Louise Corley	Secretariat

1. Conflicts

The Chairman asked if there were any conflicts of interest to note. It was confirmed there were none pertinent to the business due to be discussed, but Bill Castell noted his role at Gamma Communications in the context of a service supplier relationship with the Financial Ombudsman Service and Ruth Leak noted a relevant consideration in relation to her NED role at Smart Metering Systems.

2. Board and committee meetings

The Board noted the minutes and actions arising from the Board and Nomination Committee meetings on 20 March 2023.

The Board agreed the actions for closure and asked for a few amendments to clarify when some actions would be cleared. In relation to the forward agenda, it was noted that draft itemised agenda would be prepared on a rolling 3-month basis and shared with the Chairman for agreement.

Actions:

- Discussion on the service’s Environmental, Social and Governance framework (ESG), to be added to the Board and ARAC forward agenda.
- Future Board meeting to be arranged in Manchester in 2024 when Hub fully embedded to provide an opportunity for Board members to meet colleagues recruited as part of the Northwest ‘hub’ pilot.

3. Chief Executive and Chief Ombudsman update

The Chief Executive and Chief Ombudsman provided an overview of the key highlights from her summary report and performance against the strategic measures in the final quarter of 2022/23.

The Board noted updates about the recent consultations taking place as part of support and casework restructures. The Executive team explained that there had been good meaningful engagement with staff and shared some of the early feedback.

Actions:

- The Technology and data summary to provide more context and insight in relation to the data.
- Consideration to be given about whether some of the technology projects marked as red in the update due to previous delays should now be reviewed and re-baselined.

4. End of year performance review and 2022/23 and Collective Reward Scheme (CRS)

The Board reviewed overall service performance for 2022/23 against the strategic measures, some which had been exceeded and some of which had fallen short. Overall, good progress had been made at a time of significant change and against the backdrop of lower case-handling FTE, compared to budget.

Taking account of overall performance in the round, the Board agreed that 95% of the CRS budget should be made available for release and distribution to staff under the 2022/23 appraisal and performance review. The Remuneration Committee would consider the options for the distribution methodology at its meeting in May.

The Board noted plans to refresh the reward strategy from April 2024 and that, as part of that, the CRS award would no longer exist in its current form from 2023/24 onwards.

Action:

- Proposals for a future framework/approach to discretionary awards to be developed as part of the future reward strategy.

5. Away day business

The remaining part of the meeting was reserved for strategic discussions focused on the service's digital and data journey: Maturity today and the vision for 2025.

AOB:

Board Effectiveness Review

The 2023 external Board evaluation was underway. The Board noted that the provider had commenced the desktop review and noted the timetable for the meetings the provider would attend to observe proceedings. The final report was due to be presented to the July Board.

Thank you

The Board expressed their thanks and extended their best wishes to Zoe Borja – PA to the Chair and Board Co-ordinator, who would be leaving the service at the end of the week to take up a new role, after more than 10 years at the service. The Board noted the broad and attentive support Zoe had provided during her time, and how much it had been appreciated.

There being no further business, the meeting ended at 16.00.