Minutes of DfT Executive Committee

Date: Tuesday 20 October 2009
Time: 0900-1000
Venue: Room 5/13, Great Minster House

Attendees:
Robert Devereux (Chair)
Mike Mitchell
Richard Hatfield
Steve Gooding
Clare Moriarty
Christopher Muttukumaru
Kate Jennings (Items 2 and 3)
xxxx (Items 2 and 3)
xxxx (Items 2 and 3)
xxxx (Secretariat)

Apologies:
Bronwyn Hill

Item 1: Update from Directors General and the Legal Services Director

1. ExCo was updated on the week’s developments within the DfT Groups and the Legal Services Directorate.

Item 2: Better Regulation – new ideas for simplification

EC(09)59

2. This wide-ranging paper both set out both savings achieved in the current Simplification Plan and explained the proposals for the new Simplification Targets, to cover the period from 2010 to 2015.

3. ExCo was being asked to consider a draft definition for the policy costs of regulation, for inclusion in the new Simplification Targets. It was also being asked to consider a proposed cross-departmental, thematic approach to the new targets and to agree the draft Simplification plan for 2009.

4. ExCo:

- agreed that it was reasonable for fee-funded costs to be included in the definition of policy costs, on the grounds that costs funded from efficiency measures could potentially make it possible to freeze fees, to the benefit of industry and individuals;
- agreed that public transport fares should not be included as a cost of regulation;
- agreed that DfT should resist the themed approach on the grounds that it muddled accountability;

The names of non-SCS staff have been redacted in accordance with DfT’s publication policy.
agreed that simplification measures needed to be factored into business plans, with emphasis on identifying cases where simplification would yield an obvious, clear, cash saving – for DfT and others.

Action: DGs to alert their Heads of Division

Item 3: EU Better Regulation

5. This paper invited ExCo to note the background on the EU Better Regulation Agenda, including the EU Agency review, and to note the high cost of EU regulation, the impact and potential risks for UK businesses and proposals to minimise or resolve these risks.

6. ExCo:

welcomed the efforts of the Europe International & Better Regulation Division in identifying simplification opportunities at the EU level and its work with the Better Regulation Executive to research the level of Impact Assessment within the Commission;
endorsed the need for a clearer focus on building alliances with member states – if necessary to assist in forming blocking minorities where a measure offended better regulation principles;
agreed that there would be gains from capturing information on contacts from other member states and within the EU Directorate-Generals.

Action: Kate Jennings

agreed that DGs would inform their Heads of Division that they should approach EIBRD division before visiting the European Commission, to check whether there were any issues it wished them to raise;

Action: DGs

Board Secretariat
27 October 2009