Minutes of DfT Executive Committee

Date: Tuesday 05 January 2010
Time: 0900-10.10
Venue: Room 5/13, Great Minster House

Attendees: Robert Devereux (Chair)  Bronwyn Hill  Mike Mitchell  Clare Moriarty

Apologies: Christopher Muttukumaru

Attending for papers:

Item 2: Pia Wilkes

Alison Rutherford (Board Secretariat)

Item 1: Update from Directors General

1. ExCo was updated on the week’s developments within the DfT Groups.

Item 2: Working with Devolved Administrations EC(10)01

2. The Committee welcomed the paper, and agreed with its proposals to improve handling of devolution issues, including the proposed "Star Chamber" to resolve issues on devolution; and the proposals to issue further information & guidance for staff.

3. ExCo noted that the work done by the team so far had identified areas of the department where awareness of the need to work with Devolved Administration was low. Typically this was where the requirement was intermittent or occasional. This research would allow the team to target areas of greatest need first.

Action Pia Wilkes

Item 3: FOI internal review processes EC(10)02

4. This paper proposed that the In House Policy Consultancy unit (IHPC) act as the independent reviewer for the majority of FOI complaint cases, instead of using a series of SCS volunteers. The aim was to achieve quicker turnaround and better quality reviews of complaints.

5. ExCo broadly agreed the paper, but they were concerned about the proposal to incur additional and currently unfunded costs. After some discussion, they agreed to use IHPC as the independent reviewer for most FOI complaint cases, with the proviso that the costs of using IHPC be met in each case from the existing budget of the DG area referring the case for review, and would be invoiced and paid for as any other IHPC work.

6. ExCo noted that there was a risk that this approach might mean some DG budgets had less resource available for non-FOI work that they might...
otherwise have asked IHPC to undertake; but felt this was preferable to trying to find “new” money to fund this work in the current financial climate.

**Action:** Steve Gooding/Phil West

Board Secretariat
21 January 2010

The names of non-SCS staff have been redacted in accordance with DfT’s publication policy.