MINUTES OF DfT EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Date: Tuesday 26 July 2011
Time: 0905-1105
Venue: Room 5/13, Great Minster House

ExCo Members
Lin Homer (Chair)
Richard Hatfield
Steve Gooding
Clare Moriarty
Christopher Muttukumaru

Attendees for Papers
Mervyn Thomas (Item 2)
**** (Head of Internal Communications)(Item 2)
Malcolm Twite (Item 3)
Valerie Vaughan-Dick (Items 4 and 5)
Nick Ilsley (Item 6)

Other Attendees
**** (Private Secretary to Permanent Secretary)
**** (Board Secretariat)

Apologies
Lucy Chadwick

Item 1: Weekly Update

1. ExCo agreed that a strategic communications approach must be agreed for future procurements.

   Action: All

Item 2: Outcome of Pulse Survey

2. Mervyn Thomas presented the results of the Pulse Survey which had finished the previous week.

3. ExCo decided:
   
   i) that top level results and the results by directorate should be published on Transnet;
   
   ii) that Directors would be provided additionally with their Directorate’s results broken down by building block (team);
   
   iii) that team leaders would be provided with their team’s aggregate results;
   
   iv) that the results of the People Survey, due to commence in mid-September, would be published down to building block level – where there were ten people or more within a building block;
   
   v) that Lin Homer would use highlights from the Pulse Survey results in her weekly blog; and

The names of non-SCS staff have been redacted in accordance with DfT’s publication policy.
vi) that highlights of the Pulse Survey results would be presented to the senior management engagement sessions, along with highlights from the previous week’s DfT Board AwayDay.

**Item 3: GMH Re-Stack: Stocktake**  
EC(11)69

4. ExCo noted the progress of the re-stack to date and discussed the proposed next steps.

5. Exco agreed the need for people to minimise their printing – and particularly their colour printing - and for this to be factored into the design of documents wherever possible so they would be clear when printed in black and white.  

**Action: ExCo members to cascade**

6. ExCo noted the date of earliest lease break for GMH North and the presumption under the current Cabinet Office National Property Controls that all lease breaks would be exercised.

**Item 4: Forecasting Review**  
EC(11)70

7. Valerie Vaughan-Dick highlighted the key findings and recommendations arising from the Review of Forecasting that was conducted between March and May 2011. The need for better forecasting had been made even more important by

- the introduction of the Budget Exchange Regime, requiring Departments to identify any underspend by November;
- the Clear Line of Sight initiative, requiring greater transparency of forecasting by bodies sponsored by DfT, such as the British Transport Police and London and Continental Railways;
- a communication from HM Treasury stating that Departments will need to fund any increases in AME by reductions in their DEL budgets.

8. Key recommendations from the review included quarterly reporting focused on project and programme milestones, and utilising the Rail Board to obtain detail and increased visibility of Support for Passenger Rail Services (SPRS).

9. Another key recommendation was that budget-holders should be responsible for their own forecasts – and that these should not be subsequently amended by financial managers.

10. Valerie proposed reporting to ExCo in October on progress on implementing the recommendations, with a paper being submitted to the DfT Board for its 9 December meeting.

11. ExCo thanked Valerie for producing her paper so quickly, and asked that she arrange for names to be allocated to each action.  

**Action: Valerie Vaughan-Dick**

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12. ExCo agreed that it should scrutinise financial reporting more closely in future. This will be considered over the summer when governance arrangements are reviewed more generally.

**Item 5: Quarterly Finance and Efficiency Report**

EC(11)71

13. Valerie Vaughan-Dick highlighted the need by late September/early October for DfT to be ready to provide Supplementary Estimates data to HMT, who had asked for these to be submitted to them by November this year. In discussion the following points were raised:

- There was a need to improve the sequencing of financial information provision, to enable DGs to receive their Group’s information, and to discuss it with their teams, before it was reported to the Board;

- There was also a need for clarification over whether Government Department or local authority accounting rules – particularly with regard to carrying funding over to future financial years - would apply in the event of slippage to a local authority-led transport project partially funded by DfT;

- ExCo requested further work on fulfilling the Secretary of State’s request for milestone reporting on projects; a risk-based approach to selecting DfT Agencies for more detailed reporting to the Board for a particular meeting; and also requested regular information to the Board on discretionary spend.

14. Valerie thanked ExCo for its comments and undertook to enhance quarterly reporting to the DfT Board in line with its requests.

**Action:** Valerie Vaughan-Dick

**Item 6: Transparency**

**Oral Item**

15. ExCo discussed the Cabinet Office’s desire for DfT to establish a Sector Transparency Board. The proposals will be considered further over the summer.

16. Christopher Muttukumaru undertook to report back to ExCo on any developments to the Freedom of Information regime.

Board Secretariat
27 July 2011

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