MINUTES OF DfT EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Date: Tuesday 22 March 2011
Time: 0900-1030
Venue: Room 5/13, Great Minster House

ExCo Members

Lin Homer (Chair)
Bronwyn Hill
Richard Hatfield
Steve Gooding
Clare Moriarty
Christopher Muttukumaru

Attendees for Specific Items

**** (CLG Honours Secretariat)(Item 2)
**** (Change Programme Team)(Item 3)
Judith Marshall-Camm (Item 4)
**** (Head of Reward)(Item 4)

Other Attendees

**** (Head of Strategic Financial Systems Programme – shadowing Bronwyn Hill)
**** (Private Secretary to Permanent Secretary)
**** (Board Secretariat)

Item 1: Weekly Update

1. Lin Homer reported back from a Permanent Secretaries’ meeting on promoting economic growth, which had highlighted the importance of reducing regulation.

2. Steve Gooding, with his opposite numbers in Communities and Local Government and the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, would be arranging a half-day session for the three Departments to agree a joint strategy for promoting economic strategy.

Item 2: DfT Approach to Honours Nominations

3. This paper set out some initial proposals for achieving greater impact from the honours system. Clare Moriarty noted that it was intended to form part of a broader strategy for celebrating success in DfT, about which – as feedback from the recent round of SCS sessions confirmed – the Department had historically been somewhat reticent.

4. A key recommendation was to set up a new sub-committee of directors and divisional managers (including Agency representatives) to review nominations for OBE and MBE after sift committees, making recommendations to ExCo. ExCo supported this proposal, suggesting it could be constituted as a “Recognition Committee” which could also consider other opportunities for recognition including Buckingham Palace lunches. Depending on the volume of nominations, the sub-committee

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might be able to replace the existing sift committees. The timing of its introduction should be handled sensitively, recognising that Directors and Divisional Managers had been heavily engaged in the Change Programme.

5. ExCo noted that non-state honours would not form part of the broader strategy for celebrating success in DfT. This might argue for treating them separately. However, there were strong arguments for developing expertise in dealing with honours nominations generally.

6. ExCo agreed that further work should be undertaken with a view to progressing proposed actions including:

- refreshing and reissuing guidance on writing citations
- encouraging directorate leadership teams to review their own staff lists regularly;
- developing the role of Honours co-ordinators; and
- creating an Honours (or Recognition) sub-committee

**Action: Clare Moriarty with Honours Secretariat**

7. ExCo also agreed to rebalance the distribution of Garden Party invitations towards Agency staff.

**Item 3: Organisational Change and Flexible Working EC(11)25**

8. This paper addressed the need for staff selected into the new DfT to be enabled to work flexibly whenever practicable. It recommended that line managers be required actively to ask staff selected to work for them whether they would like to avail themselves of any flexible working arrangements.

9. ExCo endorsed the recommendation that, where staff selected into the new organisation would be working to a line manager based in another location, conversations should take place about working and reporting arrangements prior to any announcement being made.

10. ExCo

- endorsed the principle of encouraging flexible working, subject to the needs of the business and to flexibility on both sides;
- agreed that any refusal by a line manager to a member of his staff adopting a flexible working arrangement would need to be cleared by the relevant DG as well as with the Change Team and HR;
- noted the ‘green’ aspect to flexible working in reducing peak-time travel; and
- asked that the note to staff should refer to the arrangements that staff will be encouraged to utilise to minimise peak-time travel to work during the 2012 Olympics.

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11. Christopher Muttukumaru volunteered to run a workshop to explain to managers how allowing flexible working would benefit them – by increasing the pool of applicants for posts. Attendees at the workshop would be encouraged to share best practice.

**Action:** Christopher Muttukumaru

12. **** thanked ExCo for its input and undertook to revise the note to staff on flexible working to incorporate ExCo’s comments and requests.

13. Christopher Muttukumaru undertook to investigate the legal position with regard to staff’s contractual rights to their existing flexible working arrangements on moving to a new post within DfT.

**Action:** Christopher Muttukumaru

**Item 4: DfT Approach to 2011 Pay Remit**

14. ExCo was briefed on the implications of the HM Treasury guidelines on pay for 2011. ExCo directed the Reward Team on the approach to be adopted in developing how non-consolidated payments might be distributed in 2011, taking into account ‘exceeded’ and ‘achieved’ ratings.

15. This paper had been submitted to ExCo for information. ExCo requested that PAs be enabled to participate in the one-to-one training that DGs would be receiving on SAP BPC. It was confirmed that they would be receiving this training at around the same time as their staff were receiving their classroom training.

**Item 5: Management Information Programme - Update**

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**Item 6: February Prompt Payment statistics**

16. This paper had been submitted to ExCo for information. However a DG had noted a reference in the paper to an invoice, attributed to one of his directorates, that was still unresolved after more than a year. The DG was concerned to have learned about this for the first time in an ExCo paper and the Purchase to Pay team was urged to bring any similar cases directly to the relevant DG’s attention in future. The Secretariat undertook to feed this back to the paper author.

**Action:** Secretariat

**Item 7: Ministerial Submissions**

17. Lin Homer’s Private Secretary would be circulating a list of submissions, listed alongside the initials of the private secretary handling them, currently awaiting Ministerial decision. Lin emphasised the need for recommendations and required decisions to be set out clearly at the beginning of a Ministerial submission.

**Action:** DGs to cascade

Board Secretariat
24 March 2011

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