MINUTES OF DfT EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Date: Tuesday 15 March 2011
Time: 0900-1045
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
**** (Risk Policy Manager)(Item 2)
**** (Head of Departmental Security, Continuity and Vetting Team)(Item 2)
**** (Departmental Security, Continuity and Vetting Team (Item 2)
Pauline Reeves (Item 4)
Kieran Rix (Item 5)

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

Item 1: Weekly Update

1. Lin Homer emphasised, following the previous week’s meeting of Permanent Secretaries, the importance of keeping staff up to date on the situation with regard to civil service pensions.

2. BIS had recently launched their ‘Every business commits’ initiative and all Departments had been asked to consider how, as businesses, they could meet these commitments. Payroll giving and increasing numbers of apprenticeships had been highlighted. Clare Moriarty undertook to follow up within DfT. It was noted that Graham Dalton had a specific role in relation to skills development as Transport Sector Skills Champion.

   Action: Clare Moriarty

3. A special meeting of Permanent Secretaries had taken place the previous day to discuss the promotion of growth by Government Departments.

4. DfT would soon be receiving details of the next phase of Capability Reviews. It was hoped that these would be predominantly self-managed reviews. Once details had been received by DfT, they would be discussed by ExCo.

5. ExCo discussed the forthcoming round of end-of-year staff performance reviews. Guidance had been issued to explain that line managers could draw on the evidence gathered for the selection process, but should focus on achievement against objectives during 2010/11. Lessons learned from the selection process, including keeping assessments succinct, would be reflected in developing future performance management arrangements.

The names of non-SCS staff have been redacted in accordance with DfT’s publication policy.
6. Steve Gooding introduced the paper, saying there were two specific Business Continuity Management (BCM) challenges for DfT – the 2012 Games and the rationalisation of buildings in London occupied by DfT.

7. The view was that BCM is better in the DfT customer-facing areas than elsewhere in the Department. To the extent that some areas had already achieved a creditable standard, there was nonetheless scope to enhance performance still further. A need had been identified for a DfT BCM policy to provide the framework for further embedding BCM.

8. ExCo agreed DfT should aim to achieve Tier 3 level in all areas of the BCM maturity model but it would be worthwhile testing the non-executive Board members’ risk appetite, recognising that they may feel DfT should aspire to Tier 4 in at least some areas.

9. Actions agreed by ExCo as necessary to achieve this aim included:
   - the Board should be invited to agree that a DfT BCM policy should be prepared;
   - development of robust unit level BC plans following the reorganisation of DfT, building on good practice that already exists and addressing new demands where they need to be accommodated;
   - a need to separate transport disruption challenges from DfT business continuity but recognise the overlap;
   - using the Olympics as a catalyst, encourage improvements to DfT’s BCM arrangements;
   - a need for staff to have the necessary authority to make decisions;
   - a senior management BC exercise in summer 2011;
   - basic BC training prior to the exercise;
   - a need for training and preparation to be as adaptable as possible, bearing in mind that the crisis that occurs is never the one expected;
   - a need for a cadre of staff, including some in leadership roles, to have receive BC training;
   - a need for record-keeping to separate information-gathering from decision-making; and
   - subject to these specific points, the BCM response needed to be proportionate to the risks we face.

10. ExCo requested the following changes to the BCM paper and cover note prior to it being submitted to the DfT Board for its 1 April meeting:
   i. the actions in Paragraph 9 of the paper to be prioritised and to include the ones listed in Para 9 above;
   ii. some key priorities to be included in the recommendations;
   iii. Key priority b in Annex D to be split up and linked to the recommendations;

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iv. DfT’s risk appetite and BC maturity model to be brought out in the cover note; and
v. the cover note to set out how DfT’s business continuity is affected by transport disruption – preventing staff from getting to work.

Action: Steve Gooding/Risk Policy Manager/ Departmental Security, Continuity and Vetting Team

Item 3: Change Programme Update

11. Clare Moriarty updated ExCo on the week’s progress. The timetable for selection and allocation was on track. Effective performance management would be a focus of future arrangements for DfT(c), building on the work that had gone into the self-assessment and scoring process.

Item 4: Change Implementation – Staff Directory

12. Pauline Reeves introduced the paper, which invited ExCo to agree the outputs and timing for a replacement DfT(c) staff directory that would support DfT’s restructuring and the wider system changes being introduced in May 2011.

13. ExCo endorsed the recommendation that the Shared Services Centre (SSC) be requested to provide a SAP-based solution delivering DfT’s essential criteria and specified key benefits. The key benefit of having a SAP-based staff directory was that data would only need to be entered once, reducing the need for manual updates. In line with the new client/supplier relationship being implemented with Shared Services, DfT would be specifying outcome requirements rather than one particular product.

14. The SSC had been asked to confirm by the end of March whether the May 2011 target for a replacement system was achievable. If not, the fallback was to maintain the existing PIMS-based product until the replacement SAP-based product was ready to come into service.

Item 5: DfT Budget Allocations

15. Kieran Rix introduced this paper, which covered a number of aspects.

16. Support for Passenger Rail Services (SPRS) was a key variable in the budget. Although passenger growth was recovering from the recession more quickly than had been expected, there was a warning that job losses, especially in the public sector, were expected to continue for some time. Further work was still to be undertaken on forecasting under the auspices of the Rail Finance Committee.

17. ExCo noted that definitive pay budgets could not be set until the PB1-7 selection process was complete. ExCo agreed that, rather than setting indicative budgets now and revising them later, delegation of admin budgets should be delayed until more accurate data were available. Lin

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Homer suggested that this could be picked up at the proposed Board session to consider forward planning and priorities for the Department.

Action: Secretariat to consider with Clare Moriarty

18. ExCo agreed that consultancy budgets should be delegated to directorates, with a contingency budget being held centrally. Arrangements for training budgets would be reviewed when the implications of Next Generation HR was clearer. ExCo members were asked to ensure that this was not interpreted as a lack of commitment to training.

Action: ExCo Members

Board Secretariat
18 March 2011

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