MINUTES OF DfT EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Date: Tuesday 22 February 2011
Time: 0900-1020
Venue: Room 5/13, Great Minster House

ExCo Members
Bronwyn Hill (Chair)
Richard Hatfield
Steve Gooding
Christopher Muttukumaru

Apologies
Lin Homer
Clare Moriarty

Attendees for Agenda Items

Other Attendees
Malcolm Twite –(Item 2)
Noel Shanahan (Item 3)
**** (Private Secretary to Permanent Secretary)
**** (Board Secretariat)

Item 1: Weekly Update

1. Sir Gus O’Donnell was currently reviewing his governance arrangements. Lin Homer would be the Permanent Secretary sponsor of the Association of Chief Executives. She would remain on the Infrastructure UK Advisory Group as well as on the ERG-sponsored group examining commercial contracts.

2. ExCo discussed and requested some amendments to the business plan 3-month forward look, which had been appended to the agenda. The Secretariat undertook to pass these onto Richard Bruce.

   Action: Secretariat

3. Christopher Muttukumaru would be discussing with Richard Bruce how best to capture DfT’s Better Regulation obligations. Bronwyn Hill asked for consideration to be given to new milestones to those Business Plan commitments beyond the announcements last November, e.g. Thameslink, Intercity Express Programme etc.

   Action: Christopher Muttukumaru/Richard Bruce

4. DGs expressed a need for the reintroduction of a weekly list of submissions awaiting a decision from Ministers. The Permanent Secretary’s Private Secretary agreed to discuss with her colleagues in the Ministers’ Private Offices how best this could be compiled and circulated.

   Action: Private Secretary to Permanent Secretary

Item 2: Carbon Reduction Strategy/Climate Change Week

5. Malcolm Twite introduced his paper, which contained three recommendations. The first of these – for DfT to sign up as a supporter of

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Climate Week (21-27 March) and the actions proposed to support the Week – was agreed.

6. Discussion concentrated on the second recommendation – for DfT to take the opportunity of Climate Week to trial two carbon reduction measures within Great Minster House; varying temperatures and operating times for the heating and air conditioning.

7. Malcolm informed ExCo that the trial would be well-publicised and that feedback would be invited, including from “critical friends” identified by his team.

8. Comments from ExCo included:
   - noting that many people in GMH regularly work well beyond 5pm – the time at which heating would be switched off during the trial; and
   - noting that the coolers in GMH had been re-configured and reconditioned on the basis of the number of people previously anticipated to be working throughout the building – people would in future be concentrated within the north wing of the building.

9. ExCo agreed to the paper’s recommendation to trial these carbon reduction measures.

10. ExCo agreed that Lin Homer and Clare Moriarty should decide between them who would represent DfT at the launch of Climate Week on Monday 21 March at Lancaster House.
    
    **Action:** Malcolm Twite to speak with Lin Homer and Clare Moriarty

**Item 3: Organisational Change Stocktake**

11. Noel Shanahan and Helen Morris introduced this item, noting that people’s concerns were now beginning to focus on the transition process once the selection and allocation process had been completed.

12. Helen had circulated a note proposing that i) staff selected to continue in a post similar to their existing post should expect formally to take up that post within a week of being informed of their selection; ii) staff selected for a post in a different directorate should expect to take up that post within two weeks and iii) there would be individual negotiations between directors where there was a case for varying this general approach.

13. ExCo asked the Change Team to clarify the message relating to physical moves, and noted that further communications would be needed shortly on the process for planning and organising the move of staff to the north wing.

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14. Richard Hatfield noted that there were also some details of the future governance of the Accident Investigation Branches, and of the disaggregated Transport Security organisation, which needed to be finalised before the restructuring of his Group was complete. He aimed to implement the remaining organisational changes in early May at the same time as we completed the selection and allocation process. He proposed to bring a paper on AIB governance to ExCo on 5 April at the same time as the scheduled paper on Transport Security.

**Action:** Richard Hatfield

15. Helen Morris agreed to discuss with Natasha Robinson the timing arrangements for filling posts (since Private Offices do not fall within a DG Group) and how best to fill imminently vacant private office posts.

**Action:** Helen Morris

16. ExCo agreed that Lin Homer’s message to staff would need to include how to deal with DfT staff currently out on secondment who were required to fill posts in the restructured Department. There would also need to be guidance on the issue of who was responsible for completing staff end-of-year appraisals.

17. Helen Morris agreed to update the Organisational Change Q&As to cover i) when staff declared surplus would be expected to move to the Redeployment Centre and ii) any opportunities – likely to be only in exceptional circumstances – for surplus staff to be considered for posts at a lower grade than their current one.

**Action:** Helen Morris

18. Noel and Helen thanked ExCo for its comments and suggestions and agreed to incorporate some into Lin Homer’s message to staff for the following week and to take forward others separately.

**Action:** Noel Shanahan/Helen Morris

**Any Other Business**

19. ExCo discussed the cross-group PB6-7 moderation and allocation process. It also discussed the handling of the special meeting of DGs, subsequently arranged for 1 March, and agreed that it would include the lead director from each Group.

**Action:** Noel Shanahan to feed the ExCo conclusions to Mervyn Thomas

20. Helen Morris would be visiting each DG individually to discuss follow-up work from the previous Friday’s event in Rogate. Helen would then have a meeting with Lin Homer before an ExCo discussion followed by a further visit to Rogate.

21. Noel Shanahan reported that several PB4-5 job descriptions for the new structure were still outstanding – two weeks after they were due to have

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been submitted. Noel would speak to DGs or their lead directors about outstanding job descriptions within their areas.

22. ExCo discussed DfT’s internal approach to alternatives to travel and flexible working, including an offer from a company to provide free video conferencing equipment and first year maintenance support to two or three Government Departments.

23. It was suggested that the company concerned be invited to fix DfT’s existing video conferencing equipment, which had proved to be unsatisfactory in several respects, and to consider equipment to enable people to have face-to-face conversations with their staff currently working from home on a regular basis.

24. ExCo agreed a need for a group to take this forward, including staff from the Change Team, IT, the Olympics Team (Adam Simmons) – which was encouraging minimal travel to work by staff during the 2012 Olympics – and the Sustainable Travel and Equalities Team. An SRO would need to be appointed to lead the work of this group. Steve Gooding would be SRO for the beginning of the process. It was pointed out that the Fast Forward team was currently looking for projects to lead.

Post-Meeting Note: It was subsequently agreed that the Estates Division should also be represented on the group taking this forward.

Board Secretariat
23 February 2011

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