MINUTES OF DFT EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Date: Tuesday 14 December 2010
Time: 0900-1115
Venue: Room 4/11, Great Minster House

ExCo Members
Steve Gooding (Chair)
Mike Mitchell
Bronwyn Hill
Richard Hatfield
Clare Moriarty
Christopher Muttukumaru
Alison Rutherford (secretariat)

Attendees for Agenda Items
Helen Morris (Item 1)
Mervyn Thomas, ****, **** (Item 2)
Malcolm Twite(Item 3)
**** (Item 4)

Apologies
Robert Devereux

Post-Board Round-Up

1. ExCo agreed that it would be important in phasing announcements over the next few weeks to take account of potential “bunching” of items of local or regional interest, and to ensure Ministers were aware of any resulting clashes or overlaps.

   Action: All

Item 1: Resourcing Choices

2. Helen Morris confirmed there were 3 areas of work in hand, though none was yet ready for full discussion: a) choices or decisions for Ministers or DGs; b) list of what has already been stopped or reduced, or could be in future; and c) review of standard processes and expectations, being conducted by a member of Helen’s team.

3. Subject to good responses from all, she hoped to have a paper for discussion on each of these for the meeting on 21 December. DGs offered to provide an overview of the returns on a) and b).

4. Helen’s team would review the responses against design principles and against Equality Impact, as well as trying to ensure the emerging organisation looked coherent and internally consistent.

5. ExCo agreed that they needed to review emerging pressures against the 25% target to ensure that adequate resource was available to deal with new work. This might mean that even those who had successfully delivered 25% savings might subsequently be asked to find more to fund work elsewhere.

The names of non-SCS staff have been redacted in accordance with DfT’s publication policy.
6. Christopher Muttukumaru raised the scope for allowing a PB1-7 secondment pending the selection process. ExCo agreed he should put forward a proposition setting out the expected rate of secondment or loan for his staff, taking account of the priority need to ensure sufficient advice for in-house requirements. ExCo would then take a decision about the overall allocation of Legal Services as between in-house and “out”.

   Action: Christopher Muttukumaru

Item 3: Staff Survey

7. Mervyn Thomas gave a brief introduction to the latest Staff Survey. It had been conducted in October. ExCo agreed to
   i) brief Directors on the findings at the forthcoming Directors’ meeting;
   ii) issue the full survey results as soon as possible, and
   iii) ensure an overall corporate message linking the messages in the survey to the Change Programme.

   Action: Mervyn Thomas

Item 4: London Accommodation Strategy

8. Malcolm Twite introduced the paper on London Accommodation Strategy. The committee endorsed the guiding principles of the strategy and broadly agreed the detailed proposals, with minor modifications and caveats.

9. Malcolm Twite agreed to revise the strategy in line with the discussion, and to re-submit it to ExCo. ExCo members would reflect on how best to populate a group to act as a sounding board for Estates in taking forward the strategy; and to ensure adequate consultations specifically with disabled staff and those representing them.

   Action: Malcolm Twite and ExCo members

Item 5: Impact Assessments

10. ExCo noted the problems with some recent Impact Assessments (IAs) and the risk to future business if the quality of departmental IAs was not improved. It agreed the risks to effective regulation needed to be better managed. It noted the Secretary of State’s personal commitment to the RRC, and the policy implications for this Department of the reducing regulation agenda.

11. ExCo agreed that:
   i) the proposed new sign-off arrangements should come into force;
   ii) improved guidance should be placed on Transnet, and this should include examples of successful IAs, and examples of IAs that had been turned back as unsatisfactory;
   iii) senior managers needed to engage with those producing IAs at an earlier stage in the process to ensure sufficient coverage and content; and this could usefully be trailed to directors at the next Directors’ meeting; and

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iv) it might be worth a further push on targeted training, aimed at those actually producing IAs.

Action: xxxx

Item 6: AOB

12. Steve Gooding gave an oral update on current initiatives and possible staff changes in agencies.

13. It was agreed that the Directors’ meeting scheduled for 15 December would be postponed. When re-convened, the main topics would be Staff Survey and IAs, as above.

Board Secretariat
14 December 2010