MINUTES OF DfT EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

Date: Tuesday 30 November 2010
Time: 0900-1110
Venue: Room 5/13, Great Minster House

ExCo Members

Robert Devereux (Chair)
Clare Moriarty
Steve Gooding
Bronwyn Hill
Mike Mitchell
Richard Hatfield
Christopher Muttukumaru (from 0910)
Alison Rutherford (Secretariat)

Other Attendees

Item 1
Jonathan Sharrock ****, **** (Olympics Division)

Item 2
Rupert Furness, ****, **** (Environmental Policy and Delivery)

Item 3
Valerie Vaughan-Dick

Items 4 and 5
Helen Morris
Noel Shanahan
Pauline Reeves

Item 1: Olympics – DfT and Whitehall Travel

1. The paper reported on plans for DfT(c), as a central London employer, to reduce travel demand during the Olympics; and proposals to encourage others in Whitehall to do the same.

2. In discussion the following points were made:

- the biggest single impact could be made by getting people to stay at home, whether on holiday or working there; so where possible flexible working should be encouraged, and we should explore other innovations such as use of Skype with cheap webcams if IT were satisfied as to security of equipment;
- the most important area to avoid would be tube stations in Zone 1, though other areas would also be affected;
- in general terms it was likely to be more helpful if people aimed to arrive and leave work early (rather than arriving late and coinciding with 10 am Olympic events start time);
- people would need detailed information nearer the time so they did not inadvertently make unhelpful choices;
- Annex A should be amplified to include some of this information and to clarify what further information would be available nearer the time;
- the “dress rehearsal” in August 2011 would need to be repeated or reinforced somehow for those on holiday at the time;
3. In conclusion, ExCo agreed:

- Annex A should be amended as discussed and used as the basis for planning;
- there should be a dress rehearsal week in August 2011 to test travel reduction plans;
- the data gathering plans in para 18; and
- that Robert Devereux would write jointly with Jonathan Stevens to colleagues, asking them to engage with the planning, and in particular to nominate an SCS representative from their department to attend a workshop in February.

**Action: Jonathan Sharrock**

**Item 2: Air Quality**

4. ExCo was invited to note the risks to DfT and agencies from the EU Ambient Air Quality Directive, agree to work with Defra to re-open the case with the EU, and look at further mitigation.

5. In discussion, the following points were made:

- the UK was not on course to meet the nitrogen dioxide (NO2) limit in the Directive; nor were other countries;
- this reflected the fact that technological solutions anticipated at the time of the directive (eg cleaner vehicles) had not delivered the expected benefits in urban areas; so that the only certain way available now to reduce emissions in the timescales would be to dramatically reduce traffic;
- one possibility for long term improvements in air quality would be to look further at a hub system for heavy goods, by which freight was shifted on to less polluting modes of transport for onward journeys into areas where pollution levels were high;
- the mitigation strategies in the paper were not convincing either in terms of effectiveness or of feasibility.

6. ExCo requested that the paper be rewritten for the Sec of State so that it was immediately clear to the reader that meeting the Directive was impossible (not just difficult, or unpalatable); that the recommended steps be set out in it that would deliver the most cost-effective improvements in air quality even if these were on a timescale that was not consistent with the time pressure of the EU deadline; that the achievement to date of other countries be summarised; and that the Secretary of State be invited to write to the other interested departments, including Business and Energy as well as Defra, to engage them in lobbying at EU level for a balanced approach to the implementation and forthcoming review of the Directive.

**Action: ****
Item 3: Financial position (emerging underspend)  EC(10)78

7. Clare Moriarty introduced the paper, explaining that there was an emerging underspend, and inviting colleagues to suggest areas where expenditure could be legitimately brought forward from the next financial year to utilise any underspend (subject to Treasure consent).

8. Suggestions included SE Trains, money to improve ITSO, and possibly some Local Authority Major schemes.

**Action:** Finance team to pursue with relevant Directors

Item 4: Emerging Resourcing issues  oral item

9. Helen Morris had been asked previously to identify areas of emerging pressure and/or where the 25% reduction was at risk. She gave an oral update on areas she had identified to date. There would be more substantive discussion of this at later ExCo or DG meetings to be scheduled before Xmas (and potentially early in the New Year).

**Action:** Helen Morris/Secretariat to schedule

10. Initial areas for further discussion included Press Office; Agency interface with DfT(c); the exact number of transitional roles to be allowed, with the definition of transitional roles being those that would close by end of 2011; lorry road user charging; rail franchising; and Private Office.

Item 5: Organisational change  EC(10)79

11. Pauline Reeves introduced the paper on organisational change which outlined the arrangements to support and redeploy surplus staff following DfT(c) restructuring. She said the feedback from staff who had visited the Southside building accommodation had been uniformly positive.

12. Her intention was to provide the bulk of training and support in-house, but there was a lead time to getting staff trained up for this. She therefore sought agreement to spend up to £800 per head on SCS staff, who were being made surplus imminently; and up to a total of £10000 to supplement in-house efforts in dealing with PB1-7, eg to buy in some specialist support if required.

13. ExCo agreed to the budget spend up to these totals. They also agreed that the budgetary cover and management responsibility of the surplus staff should lie with HR Director and the Head of the Redeployment Centre. ExCo also agreed the proposed success criteria, and the proposal to continue with formal performance management, partly to ensure that individuals applying for jobs had continuous performance management data available.

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14. ExCo did not accept that it was for line managers and individuals to “agree” departure date, handover requirements or any other negotiables, as there was scope for delay and disruption in the event of no agreement. It must be for the line manager to set the timings and dates relating to entry to the Redeployment Centre. Subject to that, the paper was agreed.  

Action: Pauline Reeves

Board Secretariat
8 December 2010