Minutes of DfT Executive Committee

Date: Tuesday 14 September 2010  
Time: 0900-1110  
Venue: Room 5/13, Great Minster House

ExCo Members
Robert Devereux (Chair)  
Mike Mitchell  
Bronwyn Hill  
Steve Gooding  
Clare Moriarty (item 4 onwards)  
Richard Hatfield  
Christopher Muttukumaru

Attendees for Papers
Valerie Vaughan-Dick (Item 1)  
Kate Jennings (Item 3)  
xxxx  
Noel Shanahan (Item 6)

Other Attendees
xxxx (Private Office)  
Alison Rutherford (Secretariat) (not item 4)

Item 1: Collaborative Procurement Savings  
EC(10)54

1. This paper invited ExCo to note and endorse the proposed reductions in budgets arising from the procurement savings identified to date; and to note the scope for further savings. ExCo agreed with the proposals and gave Finance a remit to ensure the revised budgets were put in place.

Action: Valerie Vaughan-Dick

Item 2: Round the table catch-up

2. ExCo members gave brief summaries of key events in their area. Bronwyn Hill explained that the paper on Regional Priorities following the abolition of the Government Offices had been deferred to allow it to take account of new HMT advice about funding such priorities.

3. There was a brief discussion on how best to handle advice to ministers on policy areas of indirect interest to DfT. ExCo agreed that Legal would continue to advise on legislative proposals by other departments; and that all policy officials needed to be alive to the implications for DfT work of other Government Departments’ initiatives.

Action: all ExCo members to ensure teams advising ministers understand need to take broad view of policy areas.

Item 3: Reducing regulation – “One In, One Out”  
EC(10)55

4. This paper explained that all departments had to report to the Better Regulation Executive (BRE) by 17 September on proposed regulations, and the extent to which these were to be offset by reductions in other

The names of non-SCS staff have been redacted in accordance with DfT’s publication policy.
regulations. The immediate problem was to find a process that would allow ministerial clearance of DfT proposals in the time available.

5. ExCo noted the complexity of the spreadsheet required by BRE and the time required for internal assessment of Impact Assessments, as well as the need for ministerial approval prior to submission. ExCo agreed to send the information across in 2 batches, starting first with the proposals that were legacies of the previous government, and following with new proposals. Indications from BRE were that this would be acceptable.

6. ExCo also agreed that, subject to agreement from ministers, Mike Penning should review all the proposed regulations, and Robert Devereux would ask him to make time in his diary available over the next two weeks for this task. Kate Jennings’ team would work with Private Office to ensure that a “sponsor” for each group of proposals was available to the Minister, so that he would have enough information to make a robust decision. The Secretary of State would also wish to see the conclusions prior to submission, and it was possible that this would mean submitting the DfT return on Monday rather than Friday.

Action: Robert Devereux and Kate Jennings

Item 4: Birthday Honours List: Scoping discussion

7. This discussion was not minuted.

Item 5: Spending Review

8. Clare Moriarty gave a brief update on the recent discussions with HM Treasury. It was not clear whether DfT would reach an early settlement in advance of the bulk of negotiations which would be concentrated in October ahead of the Spending Review announcement. Robert Devereux asked Clare to pass on thanks from ExCo to all those who had worked so hard to inform the negotiations over the summer. Their work was very much appreciated.

Action: Clare Moriarty

Item 6: Organisational Change

9. Noel Shanahan gave an oral update on progress on organisational change. The Committee discussed the agenda for the meeting of Directors to be held later that day. ExCo agreed that it would be helpful to be consistent in the use of the phrase “building blocks” and to ensure that the definition was clearly understood; that Directors would expect clarity about timing and extent of changes to reporting lines; and that a key concern would be the timing and process for moving from existing to new structure.
Any Other Business

10. None

Board Secretariat
16 September 2010