Minutes of DfT Executive Committee

Date: Tuesday 06 July 2010
Time: 0900-1130
Venue: Room 5/13, Great Minster House

ExCo Members
Robert Devereux (Chair)
Mike Mitchell
Bronwyn Hill
Richard Hatfield
Steve Gooding
Clare Moriarty

Apologies
Christopher Muttukumaru

Attendees for Papers
Helen Morris (item 1)
Tracey Waltho (item 3)
Michael Herron and Heather Field (item 4)
Valerie Vaughan Dick (item 5)
Becky Thoseby (items 2 and 6)

Items 1, 2 and 6: Organisational change, succession planning and possible SCS moves

1. Discussion of these items was not minuted.

Item 3 Spending Review 2010 – Emerging Results

2. Tracey Waltho summarised work still in progress, and emphasised that with the speed of on-going work, many figures were quickly being overtaken. She explained that the aim was to finalise and then freeze bidding figures as soon as possible, so that Ministers and officials could spend time considering more fully the implications of the figures to be put forward to Treasury, and the narrative to accompany them.

Action: Tracey Waltho

3. Robert Devereux expressed his gratitude for all the work done to date, and asked all present to thank their teams for their valuable input.

Action: All

Item 4: Risk Discussion – in depth review of Business continuity

4. Steve Gooding introduced the paper on business continuity in the event of adverse conditions of various kinds.

5. The operational nature of agency work meant that disruption (eg to driver licence issue, or to VED payment) could have a significant impact on the public, and probably more so than at least short term disruption to the central department. The agencies’ plans had been reviewed recently by

The names of non-SCS staff have been redacted in accordance with DfT’s publication policy.
Internal Audit (or were in the schedule for next year) to identify any required actions.

6. ExCo discussed two scenarios in which the DfT(c) access to a building could be crucial: first, if there was a transport crisis (such as dealing with volcanic ash) requiring central organisation or co-ordination; and second, if building loss disrupted time critical work (such as on the Spending review). ExCo noted that the current plan provided for essential people to move to Southside in the event of GMH not being available, and to Hastings if London was unavailable; and that there was widespread remote access. ExCo agreed that retention of Southside for business continuity only made sense if the Department was using its accommodation anyhow. ExCo agreed to explore the scope for a reciprocal deal with other Government Departments, where the critical factor would be the ability to link up remotely to the GSI.

**Action: Clare Moriarty to discuss with central property team**

7. ExCo further agreed that the resilience of the central department should be both better documented, communicated and better tested. The approaching Olympics offered the chance to heighten staff awareness of the risks of disruption. More testing of plans should take place, and DGs should be assigned specific roles in the event of disruption (eg if one DG was designated to deal with the event itself, someone else should be designated to deal with internal communications with staff and someone to deal with external communications). Consideration should also be given to a default alternative plan in the event of the death or injury (or indeed absence for any other reason) of a person so designated.

**Action: Michael Herron to update the DG responsibilities for the business continuity plan and circulate the relevant section; to develop proposals on testing the allocation of responsibilities in the event of disruption including building testing into planned training on Olympics resilience; and to bring back an updated report in 6 months for Board discussion.**

**Item 5: rolling review of consultancy contracts**

8. Clare Moriarty and Valerie Vaughan-Dick gave advance warning of a further new central requirement to review and report on all consultancy contracts every 3 months, with a view to bringing them to a close as soon as possible. Exact requirements and definitions would follow when available, but it was important for DGs to be aware of the initiative, which could have serious implications both for people required to undertake the reviews and – depending on the definition of terms - for delivery of tasks currently contracted to consultants.

**Action: Valerie Vaughan-Dick to issue guidance**
Any Other Business

9. None

Board Secretariat
13 July 2010