Minutes of DfT Executive Committee

Date:             Tuesday 29 June 2010
Time:             0900-1015
Venue:            Room 5/13, Great Minster House

ExCo Members

Robert Devereux (Chair)
Mike Mitchell
Bronwyn Hill
Richard Hatfield
Steve Gooding
Clare Moriarty
Christopher Muttukumaru

Apologies

None.

Attendees for Papers

Noel Shanahan
Becky Thoseby

Other Attendees

xxxx (Private Office)
Alison Rutherford (Secretariat)

Item 1: Update on recent events

1. Steve Gooding offered to draft a letter for the Secretary of State to send to Vince Cable about the benefits and risks inherent in the current 5 day payment target. He would agree the draft with Clare Moriarty.

   Action: Steve Gooding and Clare Moriarty

2. Clare Moriarty would update Bronwyn Hill outside the meeting on emerging Cabinet Office views on possible approaches to Smarter Travel options and to regional funding.

   Action: Clare Moriarty

3. Clare Moriarty explained that all DfT(c) Directors would be receiving a breakdown of their unit staff in post on 31 May 2010, listed by grade. They would be asked to check and confirm the figures. These figures would be the baseline for measuring subsequent reductions in staff numbers. Vacancies would be excluded from the figures. A separate exercise would be conducted to confirm the baseline figure for contractors and consultants.

   Action: all to ensure returns were signed off when available

4. There were numerous new initiatives emerging from within Government. ExCo agreed it would be helpful to try to produce a summary sheet. Steve Gooding and Christopher Muttukumaru had both begun work on such a summary.

   Action: Steve Gooding and Christopher Muttukumaru to produce a joint summary for wider circulation.

The names of non-SCS staff have been redacted in accordance with DfT’s publication policy.
Item 2: Resourcing business needs and redeployment of surplus staff

5. Clare Moriarty introduced the paper, which proposed interim arrangements during the on-going recruitment freeze for redeploying staff internally. ExCo agreed that it was inefficient for vacancies to lie where they happened to fall, and that continued internal recruitment might simply move vacancies around without regard to overall priority of work.

6. ExCo therefore agreed to review SCS posts and potentially available staff each week. Becky Thoseby would provide a weekly update for discussion. ExCo agreed it might need to extend its role to consider PB6/7 posts and staff as well. In the meantime it would be helpful if ExCo members could share information on any PB6/7 vacancies they were intending to fill by advertising.

Action: Becky Thoseby to produce SCS list and secretariat to schedule

7. For staff below SCS, the proposal was to manage the Priority Movers’ List (PML) more pro-actively, and to make additional help and support available to those on it. ExCo asked HR to clarify how many people were on the PML, where they were located, and how long individuals had spent on the PML.

Action: Clare Moriarty

8. ExCo agreed that staff at all grades could still be re-deployed within Groups to accommodate shifting priorities and workloads.

Item 3: Organisational change

9. Noel Shanahan gave an oral update. ExCo agreed that in setting staff reduction targets to deliver required cuts in spending, it would set a target to reduce the number of “Full Time Equivalents” rather than simply reducing headcount, as this would allow more flexibility of response.

10. Noel described some possible processes for selecting individuals for specific posts in a new DfT structure. No decisions were made on processes; but ExCo agreed it was important that any such processes, once finalised, should be both fair and transparent. They agreed that if a process involving applications were to be used to match people to posts, it would be reasonable to allow individuals to apply for more than 1 post. Exco noted the risks to any re-structuring posed by pressure of other work.

11. ExCo agreed that for the next two weeks, in Christopher Muttukumaru’s absence on leave, ExCo would rely on Giles Buckenham for legal advice on these issues.

Action: Noel Shanahan, Christopher Muttukumaru

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Any Other Business

12. ExCo agreed to defer the other agenda items to a subsequent meeting; to discuss organisational change and Spending Review at every ExCo meeting from now on; and to use the slots previously allocated to CICC meetings (usually 10-11.30 on the first Tuesday of each month) to extend ExCo once a month to a longer meeting (9-11.30) to allow additional items to be taken.

Action: Secretariat

Board Secretariat
1 July 2010