

**Minutes of the Executive Committee meeting
held on Thursday 14 January 2016**

Those present: Ian Ailles (Director General) (Chair)
David Natzler (Clerk of the House)
Myfanwy Barrett (Director of Finance)
John Borley CB (DG Facilities)
Rob Greig (Director of the Parliamentary Digital Service)
Penny Young (Librarian and DG, Department of Information Services)
Andrew Walker (DG HR & Change)

In attendance: Marianne Cwynarski, Secretary
Sarah Petit, Assistant Secretary
Jane Tinkler (for item 2)
Paul Dillon-Robinson (for item 7)

Apologies: John Benger (Clerk Assistant and DG, Chamber & Committee Services)

1. Matters Arising from previous meetings

1.1 The Committee discussed outstanding actions from previous meetings and noted that:

- Bob Twigger would take forward the proposals to set up the Safeguarding Board, prior to the arrival of the New Serjeant at Arms on 1 February;
- The Serjeant would also take responsibility for the additional actions in relation to whistleblowing and safeguarding;
- The Committee would be asked to consider a revised paper on cyber security, following the conclusion of the review commissioned by PDS.

2. Members' Interview Project: Members leaving Parliament

2.1 **Jane Tinkler** introduced the findings of the study, which was based on 53 interviews with Members leaving Parliament. Once it had been considered by the Administration Committee, **Penny Young** would work with the Executive Committee secretariat to ensure appropriate actions were taken forward by individual departments.

2.2 The Committee discussed the report, noted that the findings mirrored other sources of Members' feedback, and **agreed** to:

- Circulate the report to the Administration Committee
- Disseminate its key messages to staff to inform their understanding of Members' needs and priorities, as part of wider communication of the strategy for the House Service, once this has been agreed by the Commission; and
- Aim to widen the researcher base throughout the Service. **(Action: Penny Young)**

3. Members' Interview Project: update on stage 1 action plan

3.1 **Marianne Cwynarski** presented the paper, which provided an update against each of the actions to which the House Service had committed in 2014, after the first round of interviews with Members and their staff. The paper demonstrated that the vast majority of actions had been completed or were underway.

3.2 The Committee discussed the update, welcomed the progress that had been made, and **agreed** to:

- Circulate the update to the Administration Committee, subject to the minor amendments and additions proposed at the meeting (**Action: Committee Secretary**).

4. General election buddies

4.1 **Andrew Walker** gave a verbal update on plans to use the 2015 general election buddies to assist with staff induction. All new permanent staff joining the House Service after the Easter recess would be offered a buddy, and they would also be offered to any Members elected in by-elections. A number of buddies had already responded positively, and further buddy recruitment and training would take place shortly to increase capacity and prepare for the next general election.

4.2 The Committee supported this initiative and **agreed** to review feedback from new joiners at the end of June 2016 (**Action: Andrew Walker**).

5. Resourcing the programme for the Restoration and Renewal of the Palace of Westminster

5.1 **John Borley** presented the plans for resourcing the programme for the Restoration and Renewal of the Palace of Westminster.

5.2 The Committee discussed the plans and noted emerging findings from the capability and capacity review regarding the need to consider demand and resourcing across all projects and programmes.

6. 7 Millbank accommodation

6.1 The Committee discussed the continued uncertainty for House staff based in 7 Millbank and **agreed** to:

- Communicate the current position to staff based in 7 Millbank during the forthcoming Q&A sessions in February (**Action: David Natzler/John Borley**); and
- Consider a paper setting out options for improving working conditions in 7 Millbank (**Action: John Borley**).

7. Compliance Action Plan

7.1 **Paul Dillon-Robinson** presented the draft action plan, which had been drawn up in line with the discussion at the previous meeting of the Internal Audit compliance report.

7.2 The Committee discussed the action plan and **agreed** to:

- Present the plan to the Audit Committee alongside the Internal Audit report on 27 January, subject to clarification of the recommendations on password security and on purchase orders;
- Communicate it to teams, based on best practice of effective compliance.

8. Chamber Sound business case

8.1 The Committee **noted** this paper.

9. Central communications

9.1 The Committee **noted** this paper and **agreed** to:

- Add a standing item on staff communications to its agenda (**Action: Assistant Secretary**); and
- Discuss with the Head of Central Communications the suggestion in the paper that senior managers should be more visible to Members (**Action: Vasilis Gialias**).

10. Any other business

10.1 The Committee **agreed** to discuss the refurbishment of Canon Row at the Quarterly Performance Review the following week.

10.2 **David Natzler** informed the Committee that the Chief Whip, amongst others, had written to thank staff across the House Service for their work to implement the House's decision on English Votes for English Laws.

10.3 **Andrew Walker** informed the Committee that the position of Chair of the new Remuneration Committee had been advertised.

10.4 **The Chair** informed the Committee that, alongside **Myfanwy Barrett**, he would be holding challenge meetings with departments in March, to discuss their draft business plans and budgets.

Committee Secretary

25 January 2016