

**Minutes of the Management Board meeting  
held on Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2014 at 3.30pm**

**Those present:** Dame Janet Gaymer DBE (non-executive member) (Chair)  
Myfanwy Barrett (Director of Finance)  
John Borley CB (Director General of Facilities)  
David Natzler (Clerk Assistant and Director General of  
Chamber and Committee Services)  
Andrew Walker (Director General of HR and Change)  
Barbara Scott (non-executive member)

In attendance: Tom Goldsmith (Board Secretary)  
Ben Williams (Assistant Secretary)  
John Benger (Acting Head, Department of Information Services)  
Matthew Taylor (Acting Head, PICT)  
Paul Martin (Parliamentary Security Director) (items 3 & 4 only)  
Amanda Colledge (Head, Management Accounting)(item 4 only)  
Lee Bridges (Director of Public Information) (item 5 only)  
Ken Gall (President, Trade Union Side) (item 6 only)

**The Chair** welcomed Matthew Taylor to his first meeting of the Management Board.

### **1. Actions arising**

1.1 No issues were raised under actions from previous meetings.

### **2. Oral Updates**

2.1 Due to the number of items on the agenda, written updates from Board Members had been circulated in advance of the meeting. In addition to those updates, **John Borley** informed the Board that Mel Barlex would be leaving the House Service at the end of the month.

### **3. Security Arrangements Renewal Programme**

3.1 **Paul Martin** briefed the Board on further developments since the paper had been produced.

3.2 The Board considered the paper on the Security Arrangements Renewal Programme. In discussion the following points were made:

- The outcome of the Jenkins review on security governance would need to be factored into the planning of any new security model.
- The impact of any new model on other parts of the House Service would need to be considered.
- Regardless of the model chosen it was likely that the first year of the new arrangements would be a transitional period.

- The new model would need to be able to adapt to possible changes in Parliament's needs arising from any decision on the restoration and renewal of the Palace.

3.3 The **Chair** summarised the Board's discussion. Option B appeared to be the most suitable option. The outcome of the Jenkins review would need to be implemented before the details of the new security arrangements could be taken forward. If at all possible the negotiation team should secure a new contract with the MPS before the end of the current financial year.

#### 4. Finance

4.1 Myfanwy Barrett introduced the papers. The Board had been sent the documentation supporting the additional bids for resources. The Board had also received the Finance Department's proposal for how funding could be allocated staying within the Estimate. Following the Board's discussion it would see a revised MTFP at its October Quarterly Performance meeting ahead of this being sent to the Finance and Services Committee.

4.3 The **Chair** proposed the Board should establish its priorities and use that as the basis of deciding between bids, rather than discussing the details of each business case.

4.4 The Board discussed the finance paper and supporting materials.

4.5 The Board agreed to consider a revised version of the Medium Term Financial Plan at the October Quarterly Performance Meeting, which would reflect the outcomes of the Board's discussion.

#### 5. 2015 Events

5.1 **Lee Bridges** introduced his paper.

5.2 The Board discussed the paper on the 2015 programme of events. During discussion the following points were made:

- There was a lot political support for the current programme of events.
- Following the outcome of the Scottish referendum and the fact that 2015 was likely be a year of constitutional debate some of the messaging around the 2015 events was changing to place more emphasis on the changing and evolving nature of UK democracy over time.
- There would be communications with staff to encourage them to participate in the programme of events.

## 6. Respect Policy

- 6.1 The Chair thanked Ken Gall for coming to see the Board about this important issue.
- 6.2 Ken Gall said that the House Service should be proud of its achievement in agreeing the Respect policy. The Unions wanted to work with management to ensure the policy was as effective as it could be. However it would require a significant cultural change within the organisation to make the policy successful and this change would need to be led at Board level. The Board needed to send a clear message to staff that there would be zero tolerance of any abusive behaviour by Members towards House staff.
- 6.3 The Board discussed the Respect Policy. During discussion the following points were made:
- There was no point having a policy and then not ensuring it was effectively enforced. The Board was grateful for the Unions' support in getting the policy agreed and was not complacent about the challenges of implementation. However, the Board was willing to dedicate the effort required to make the policy work in practice.
  - The Respect Policy would be discussed at the senior leaders' event in October.
  - The tender had been let for the provision of training and the successful company would be providing a course tailored to the House Service's needs. There would be enough capacity for at least 500 staff to attend the training before the end of the year. Board Members were asked to ensure that staff attended the training course.

## 7. Staff Survey

- 7.1 **Andrew Walker** introduced the paper on the staff survey. The free text comments would be made available to staff. While there were a large number of negative comments, the responses to the survey questions were more positive than in previous years. There were a number of themes arising from the comments, some of which, such as poor performance management, recurred from previous surveys. One new theme was fairness in the recruitment and promotion process and it was recommended that further work be done on this issue.
- 7.2 The Board discussed the findings of the staff survey. During discussion the following points were made:
- There were a number of comments from staff about pay and terms and conditions. In light of these comments, heads of department would want to recall that the changes to working conditions, agreed as part of the settlement would start being implemented in November with an end to departmental variations in leave and recess arrangements. Guidance for managers was currently being prepared.

- All management communications to staff should, where possible, show how actions and proposals addressed issues raised in the staff survey. This should be an ongoing process, rather than one large communication with too much information.
- Some senior leaders had said it would be helpful to see the departmental designation on the free text comments, so they could read those from their areas of the business. HR would consider whether this was possible but staff concerns about the anonymity of comments needed to be respected.
- The staff survey was a form of staff engagement. It might be helpful to link it more clearly with the people strategy and/or the work to be undertaken on customer service, in relation to internal customers.
- There were a number of negative comments about ICT support. This might be linked to the disruption caused by the rollout of new services which coincided with the survey period. It might be worth doing some follow-up work to see if satisfaction levels had changed once the changes had had time to settle in.
- In future consideration was being given to performing a full staff survey biennially with more regular short surveys on specific themes

7.3 The Chair summarised the discussion. The Board had **agreed** to a more multi-faceted approach to following-up on the findings of the staff survey and agreed to take a paper at its next meeting on options for the future of the staff survey. Once a decision in principle had been taken on the future of the survey the Business Management Group would be asked to take forward the detailed implementation. **Action: Andrew Walker** to provide a paper for the November Board meeting on the future of the staff survey.

## 8. AOB

8.1 The **Chair** asked the Board to agree to hold an informal discussion on the governance review after the October Quarterly Performance meeting. The Board **agreed** to this proposal.

[Adjourned at 6:00]

**Dame Janet Gaymer**  
Chair

**Tom Goldsmith**  
Secretary