

Management Board

Realignment Proposals

Tebbit Change Team

Purpose

1. This paper puts proposals to the Management Board on the realignment of the House of Commons Service under the departments of Chamber and Committee Services, Facilities, Information Services, and Resources. These are detailed in the organograms and explanatory notes in Annexes 1 and 2.
2. The Change Team was asked to propose to the Management Board the organisational model within each department, with reporting lines in place, to support the new structure of the House of Commons Service. The structures shown drill down to the level required for staff to understand reporting lines.

Conclusions and Decisions

3. In the majority of areas, the Change Team believes that there is a clear rationale for placing a function in a particular department, based on the criteria outlined in paragraph 11 below. The Board is invited to consider and agree the departmental structures detailed in the annexes:
 - Annex 1 – Organograms
 - Annex 2 – Explanatory notes.
4. Positions on the organograms shown as “Acting” are either existing acting positions, because of current vacancies, or positions arising from the realignment which will need to be filled on an interim basis as they are new posts, or there is more than one potential candidate at the grade of the post.
5. On Visitor Services (see paragraphs 12-13), the Change Team recommends that interim arrangements be made pending work already under way. The Board is invited to agree to these arrangements.
6. The Change Team suggests that the work it has been commissioned to undertake for January be taken in two parts: work required by 1 April will be identified at the January Board meeting, but the full programme will be discussed at the February Board meeting following further consultation with senior management (as requested at the Senior Management Development Programme event on 10 December) and trade unions.

Consultation

7. The proposed realignment structure was circulated to all staff in a consultation document on 9 November 2007. Staff were invited to respond by 30 November and a Change Team consisting of Heather Bryson, Catherine Fogarty, Jill Pay and Ross Young was set up to manage the consultation process. The team was later joined by John-Paul Flaherty.
8. The Change Team estimates that there were over 150 hours of consultation. Representatives from most areas were seen, either individually or in groups. Written submissions, written comments and emails were received from a wide range of staff.
9. Formal meetings were held with the TUS on 27 November and 5 December.
10. Departmental HR, learning and development, finance and procurement are the subject of a separate consultation, launched by the Director General, Resources. Where these areas are shown on the organograms, they represent interim arrangements in order to provide robust support during the transition, subject to Management Board decisions on this subject.

Criteria

11. In analysing information gathered the Change Team used the following criteria as a test:
 - Functionality – consideration of the primary function of an area rather than the peripheral functions undertaken as a result of where it is currently located;
 - Synergies between skills and competencies;
 - Business as usual – risk involved in disrupting current arrangements;
 - On-going reviews of certain areas such as Works and Estates, and Select Committee support.

Visitor Services

12. Visitor Services performs two primary purposes: monitoring and facilitating access, and providing information at the perimeter of the Palace of Westminster and through tours of Parliament. It also deals with the Summer Opening of the Visitor Route. The Visitor Services manager initially put the case that the difficulties the team was required to resolve meant that it was best placed under the Serjeants. The view of SAA management is that the Visitor Assistants were recruited to staff the Visitor Reception Building, which is due to open soon. Their role is to

provide a consistent, improved, informed welcome to visitors to Parliament in line with Modernisation Committee recommendations (June 2004) and to prioritise access for officials from Government Departments who are supporting Ministers in the Chamber, for officials and witnesses attending Committees of both Houses, and for those visitors who have individual appointments with Members. The team later argued that its primary task is to provide an interface with the public and to provide information, placing it in Information Services. Four Visitor Assistants are funded by the Library at present to support Education Services activities.

13. The VRB is a high-risk project which has already been delayed. In light of the risk associated with the project, the Change Team recommends that Visitor Services be placed in the Serjeant at Arms Directorate of Chamber and Committee Services until 1 October 2008, when it moves to Information Services. In the interim, a project board overseen by the Director Generals of Chamber and Committee Services and of Information Services will agree service level agreements between key stakeholders, and review visitor management arrangements and lines of authority following the opening of the VRB.

Next steps on realignment

14. The attached annexes will be amended following decisions by the Management Board and will form the basis of the communications with staff to be issued on 18 December.
15. On 14 December the trade unions will be informed of the Management Board's decisions.
16. Following that meeting, directorate heads, staff whose line managers are changing and other directly affected staff will be informed of the changed arrangements.
17. On 18 December the Management Board's decisions will be communicated to staff by email, with a link to the annexes.
18. A letter from the Director General to all staff in each new department is being prepared for issue in early January to greet staff on their return to the House.

Future Change Programme

19. At the Management Board meeting in November it was agreed that the Change Team's second deliverable was, for discussion on 17 January 2008, to produce a costed and timetabled plan for the completion of the change process.
20. Over the past month the Change Team's focus has been to consult on, and develop, recommendations on the realignment of the House of

Commons Service into the four new departments. This has meant that there has been little opportunity properly to consider other issues.

21. The Change Team is aware that, because of the title "Change Team", some staff have believed that the team had a programme management role. This was not the team's remit, at least at this time, although the lack of overall programme management meant there was some concern about co-ordination of cross-cutting work. The team tried to pick up these issues when it could, but it was not always possible, or welcome, in the absence of any authority to do so.
22. The Trade Union Side felt that there was inadequate opportunity for them to be consulted on the re-alignment proposals, and this has damaged improvements in employee relations over the previous year. In addition, senior managers at the SMDP event on 10 December asked to be involved in taking the change programme forward.
23. The Change Team suggests that the work it has been commissioned to do for January be taken in two parts: work required by 1 April will be identified at the January Board meeting, but the full programme will be discussed at the February Board meeting following further consultation with senior management and trade unions. This measured approach might then allow others to buy into the programme, which will produce greater dividends in the longer term, and allow the lessons learned from the first phase to be considered in taking the programme forward.
24. The current Change Team members, and their managers, have also been given different expectations of the time they have been loaned to the team. If possible, it would be beneficial to the change programme if the current Change Team members were to continue in this role until the end of February to allow them to use the information and experience they have acquired in the last month to shape the future programme, and ensure its successful delivery.

Action

25. The Board is asked to agree:
 - the departmental structures shown in the annexes (see paragraph 3) and to agree with the approach taken to Visitor Services (see paragraphs 12-13); and
 - proposals to put to its meeting in January an initial paper on work required by 1 April, and to consider a further paper at its meeting in February, following additional consultation with senior management and trade union representatives.

Tebbit Change Team
December 2007

