

**Minutes of the Management Board meeting  
held on Thursday 24 April 2008**

**Those present:** Malcolm Jack (Chief Executive) (Chairman)  
Douglas Millar CB (Director General of Chamber and  
Committee Services)  
John Pullinger (Director General of Information  
Services)  
Andrew Walker (Director General of Resources)  
John Borley CB (Director General of Facilities)  
Joan Miller (Director of PICT, external member)

**In attendance:** Philippa Helme (Head of the Office of the Chief  
Executive)  
[s.40] (Private Secretary to the Clerk of the House)  
[s.40] (Project Director (HR, Finance and  
Procurement Re-modelling), for item 4)

**1. Matters arising from previous meetings**

**1.1.** Further to item 1 **Andrew Walker** said that he had met with Peter Mason to discuss progress with data security and confidentiality issues. Andrew had emphasised that the Board wished to receive a report as soon as possible.

**1.2.** Further to item 3 **John Borley** said that he had received a draft of the five year plan of work and a 25 year strategy. A lot of work had been done, but further progress did need to be made on validation and presentation. It would be shared with the Board at its May meeting.

**2. Risk and performance**

**2.1.** The Board considered the performance information monthly report. The **Chairman** drew the Board's attention to the items listed for possible discussion. The Board agreed that in future it would be useful to have fewer items for discussion but with more commentary and analysis of them, and information on trends.

**2.2.** **Andrew Walker** said that since the report had been produced the performance relating to payment of Member's claims had increased from an average of eight to 15 days. This was due to changes in arrangements for payment of expenses, and the decision to publish certain types of information in the autumn. The Department of Resources were recruiting more staff, and talking to other Departments regarding interim assistance.

**2.3. John Borley** said that the report showed that energy consumption was above target and he intended to take action to reduce it. The Board noted that this was an important issue. John Borley suggested, and the Board agreed, that he should present options to the Board at a future meeting.

**2.4.** It was agreed that Director Generals would raise risks under the next item of business.

### **3. Oral updates from Director Generals**

**3.1. Andrew Walker** said that:

**3.1.1.** There were risks surrounding service performance in his Department which he had mentioned under the previous item;

**3.1.2.** The Human Resources Group had recommended that routine access to social networking and blogging websites be switched off for House Service staff, although not for Members or their staff. The Board noted that this was a complex issue and agreed that Andrew should present a paper on this issue to the next Board.

**3.2. Douglas Millar** said that:

**3.2.1.** The business continuity steering group was meeting the next day and would be moderating departmental BCDR plans. A BCDR exercise would be held in July.

**3.2.2.** A contingency exercise at location Delta would take place shortly. For the first time printing and the access control system would be tested.

**3.2.3.** The DCCS Management Group had reached some conclusions on the recommendations of the departmental change team report. These would be disseminated shortly.

**3.3. Joan Miller** said that:

**3.3.1.** There had been an increase in worldwide viruses since November 2007. PICT was capturing more viruses, and had upgraded its virus checker, which had caused some slowdown on the network.

**3.3.2.** The Joint Business Systems Board would discuss prioritising investment plans, and how JBSB saw its own role and its inter-relations with the Houses' two Management Boards.

**3.3.3.** PICT planned to issue to Members a catalogue of its services and service levels, and a charter on expectations and standards of behaviour for PICT staff and for Members when dealing with PICT staff, something which could have a read-across for staff in other direct service environments in the House. The Board agreed that this

was an issue that would best be addressed corporately, and that the Office of the Chief Executive should take this forward together with Paul Silk.

**3.4. John Borley** said that the top structure for the newly remerged Estates and Works Directorate had been agreed between himself and Mel Barlex, Parliamentary Director of Estates.

**3.5. John Pullinger** said that the Cromwell Green entrance had now been open a week, and was running smoothly.

**3.6. The Chairman** said that he thought that the recent open meeting for staff, held in 7 Millbank, had gone well. The second meeting would be held the next day in Portcullis House.

#### **4. Remodelling HR, finance and procurement**

**4.1.** The **Chairman** welcomed [s.40], who had led the project team which had considered the remodelling of HR, finance and procurement, and thanked him and the team for their report, which had been produced to a tight timetable.

**4.2. [s.40]** said that the report recommended the introduction of a business partner model in relation to HR and finance, and a coming together of procurement professionals under one Director who would be able to provide enhanced assurance to Director Generals and the Accounting Officer. The report suggested that there would be some rationalisation of HR resource as benchmarks suggested that the House's HR to staff ratio was high. It also proposed that line managers should take on more responsibility for day to day HR decisions for the staff that they manage. HR, finance and procurement staff had all been consulted during the process, as had the TUS. It was planned to hold meetings to consult with line managers once the Board's decisions were known.

**4.3.** The Board noted that in order for these changes to be implemented successfully the resources which needed to be applied to each HR task had to be clearly validated. For line managers to take on responsibilities currently carried out by departmental HR and Departmental Establishments Officers there needed to be revised Management and Staff Handbooks giving more guidance and advice, as well as enhanced training. Departmental HR would also need to ensure that it provided appropriate back-up. The Board supported the proposed reduction in overall HR resource, but confirmed its policy of redeploying staff, rather than redundancies.

**4.4.** Regarding procurement the Board agreed that procurement exercises

4.5. The Board agreed the proposals in the paper in principle and agreed that there should now be a period of consultation with staff, following which an implementation plan and a timetable would be presented to the Board for sign-off. The new system would come into effect on 1st April 2009.

## 5. Investors in People Re-accreditation

5.1. The Board considered a paper from Andrew Walker and agreed to its proposal that the House should go forward for Investors in People (IiP) re-accreditation in 2009.

5.2. The **Chairman** suggested, and the Board agreed, that it should give a clear steer to the IiP organisation as to the areas where the Board would find it helpful to have external validation of progress since the last evaluation in 2006.

## 6. Departmental business plans 2008/09

6.1. The Board agreed departmental business plans for 2008/09, and noted how they fitted in to the House's overall corporate objectives. It was noted that the business planning process for 2009/10 would integrate corporate and departmental planning further, with work to take this forward being led by the Office of the Chief Executive.

## 7. Any other business

7.1. The **Chairman** said that he wished to remind Director Generals of the importance of correct records management, and following agreed records disposal policies for paper and electronic records. It was likely that the House's records management policies would need to be reviewed once the results of Peter Mason's report had been received. On a related issue **John Pullinger** said that it was important to ensure that records that only existed digitally should be preserved in line with an agreed policy. The Board noted that the SPIRE Project Board had a locus in these issues. The Board agreed that John Pullinger should investigate these issues and report back to the Board at its next meeting.

7.2. **Andrew Walker** said that he had circulated to Board members a draft note to the Commission relating to the House Equality Scheme. A number of House staff, Members, Members staff and visitors were being interviewed on a one-to-one basis by an external consultant as part of the process. Once this work was completed it was agreed that it would be

presented to the Board.

**[adjourned at 6.10pm**

**Philippa Helme  
Secretary**

**Malcolm Jack  
Chairman**

8 May 2008