

**Minutes of the Management Board meeting
held on Thursday 16 July 2009**

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

In attendance: Philippa Helme (Board Secretary)
[s.40] (Private Secretary to Clerk of the House)
Bob Twigger (Director of Information Services for Members,
Department of information Services, for items 4 and 5)
Rob Clements (Director of Service Delivery, Department of
information Services, for item 4)
Aileen Walker (Director of Public Information, Department of
information Services, for item 4)
[s.40] (Managing Director of FDS, for item 5)

1. Matters arising from previous meetings

- 1.1.** Further to item 1 **John Borley** said that information on stand by power for Tothill Street would be brought to the Board together with further work on electrical resilience in September. **Alex Jablonowski** said that the Board should consider what leverage might be applied on the company concerned to ensure an adequate level of service, particularly if any further problems occurred.
- 1.2.** Further to item 2 **Philippa Helme** said that work to communicate the equality scheme to staff was underway.
- 1.3.** Further to item 7 **Philippa Helme** said that the Finance and Services Committee had considered a paper on business planning. It had given some steer on which of the options presented should be pursued.
- 1.4.** Further to item 12 **Andrew Walker** said that he and Philippa Helme had recruited a team to take forward the House's response to the IPSA. Matthew Hamlyn and Harun Musho'd would lead the team, which would engage directly with Directors General. Matthew would be the primary point of liaison with the Ministry of Justice team charged with

implementing the IPSA. The Board agreed that, while responsibility for implementing the IPSA lay with the Ministry of Justice, it would be important for the House to seek to minimise the possible impact of any difficulties in implementation. One important factor would be how quickly the interim Chief Executive was appointed.

2. Risk and performance

2.1. The Board considered the latest balanced scorecard.

2.2. *In discussion the following points were made:*

- The traffic light for DF on p.6 and p.23 should be amber rather than green.
- There was a lack of clarity about whether departments were being scored for progress against their action plan or for their overall level of achievement.
- Although the Board needed to avoid getting bogged down in detailed financial matters, there was a need for more financial information to be included in the scorecard each month.
- The Board needed information about current forecasts. Managers should be held to account for their forecasting.
- Directors General would encourage their teams to deliver good quality data to make the scorecard as useful as possible, by the autumn.

2.3. The Board considered the latest risk management information.

2.4. PICT had escalated a risk to the Board (network infrastructure and the danger of virus attack). The risk related to the practices of users within Departments. It was difficult for PICT to be sure whether agreed principles relating to IT security were being implemented. The Board noted the risk and noted that the ICT security policy, which would be brought to the Board in September, would help to mitigate the risk.

2.5. The Board discussed whether the process for escalating risks to the Board was working properly; it seemed odd that the only escalated risk was about computer viruses at a time when the House was undergoing a significant period of change. At present much of the content of the risk report was included because the OCE had decided it should be, rather than because relevant risks had been escalated from Departments. Directors General agreed that they would ensure that Departmental risk registers were interrogated each month to see which risks needed to be escalated to the Board. Risk owners should provide updates on their management of risk as part of their reporting under the balanced scorecard.

2.6. *Action: Risk facilitators to liaise with Risk Owners about the risk escalation process and to improve the integration of risk into the balanced scorecard.*

2.7. The forthcoming creation of the IPSA and risk of swine flu had been highlighted as risks for the Board's consideration. The creation of the IPSA change team was considered adequate mitigation for the risks posed by IPSA at present. The Pandemic Planning Group was addressing the potential impact of swine flu on the House Service in general. It was important that the business criticality of 7 Millbank was not overlooked. The Board agreed it should receive a report on the latest situation for the September Board.

2.8. *Action: Pandemic Planning Group to update the Board on planning for swine flu at the September Board.*

2.9. The Board agreed that it should, at a future date, discuss the recent crystallisation of corporate risks. There were many lessons to be learnt and it would be helpful for the Board to have an opportunity to reflect and consider the risks and opportunities created.

2.10. *Action: OCE to make plans for a workshop to enable the Board to consider lessons learned from events affecting the House Service during 2009.*

2.11. The Board considered a report from the Internal Audit service reviewing risk management in the House. The findings of the report were consistent with the view of Board members, as expressed in feedback, that, while much progress had been made, risk management was too process oriented and not sufficiently integrated into management. The Corporate Risk Management Team accepted the findings of the report and was developing an action plan to address them. The Board's initial view was that the House should continue to aim to achieve a "risk embedded" model of risk management.

3. Oral up-dates from Director Generals

3.1. Andrew Walker said that:

3.1.1. the recommendations of the senior pay panel regarding senior pay and bonuses were with the Clerk for agreement. In view of the economic situation and climate there would be no increase in bonuses. Following his promotion to Clerk Assistant, Robert Rogers would need to be replaced as a member of the bonus panel. The Chairman of the bonus panel had identified some variation in practice

3.1.2. he would shortly approve a business case for the issue to staff of up to 60 more PDAs, in addition to the 20 already supported. PICT had the capacity to support the additional devices, but the costs would be borne by departmental budgets. Some emergency devices would be issued over the summer; others would be provided from the autumn.

3.2. Douglas Millar said that:

3.2.1. he had set up a group in cooperation with the House of Lords to prepare for the renegotiation of the broadcasting contract from 2011.

3.2.2. at the Board's next meeting he would ask it to take note of a report on copyright.

3.2.3. it would be important to provide for the possibility of a recall of Parliament during the summer recess.

3.3 Joan Miller said that the House of Lords Information Committee had published a report titled "Are the Lords listening? Creating connections between people and Parliament". Some of its recommendations related to the availability of online material about the House of Lords.

3.4 John Borley said that:

3.4.1 a paper about progress on the M&E programme would be considered by the Commission at its meeting on Monday. The matter would not be reported to the Lords House Committee until after the recess.

3.4.2 he had set up a project board to produce a business case for the Offsite Vehicle Consolidation Centre.

3.4.3 the Facilities Management Board had held an away day. Discussion had included the progress of the transformation programme and the identification of efficiency savings.

3.4.4 he was focusing on the Estate strategy, which he hoped would be considered by the PEB in August, and by the Board in October.

3.5 John Pullinger said that:

3.5.1 at its meeting on Monday PICTAB would review progress against the PICT healthcheck report.

3.5.2 the Administration Committee had agreed that, for the first time, a full programme of tours should continue during dissolution.

3.5.3 he was aware of some anxiety amongst managers in his Department regarding the new system for bonuses for staff in

bands A to D. The timing had proved difficult and the system had imposed an additional burden on managers. It was agreed that the operation of the system should be reviewed once the first round was complete.

4. DIS Departmental Activity Report

4.1. Senior managers from the Department of Information Services updated the Board on their Department's activities.

4.2. Rob Clements said that the reorganisation following the Tebbit review had restructured DIS into two parts, resource management and service delivery. Much of the Department's work was house-wide and many of the Public Information Services were bicameral. A key focus for the Department was on continuing to meet and anticipate the needs of Members and the public. It seemed likely that there would be a significant turnover of Members at the forthcoming election, and that these Members would have different expectations. The new Speaker had also affected the dynamic. A good measure of success would be if new Members felt that their first ten contacts with the House service could not have been better. At present, significant issues for the Department included: accommodation (with staff currently located in Derby Gate moving to 7 Millbank); joining up information management across both Houses; and, pressure of visitor numbers.

4.3. Bob Twigger said that DIS had retained and built on the Library "brand" following the Tebbit reorganisation. The research and information service responded to specific inquiries as well as providing pre-prepared briefings, traditional library services and training on how to use information services. Debate packs prepared for non-legislative debates were increasingly popular. Members were very satisfied with these services but, with the advent of the internet, it was important to continue to demonstrate that Library services were "better than Google". The Department's aim was to provide services that were used by the widest possible range of Members. The challenge was for the services to remain relevant in a changing world and for the Department to build on its strengths of impartiality, topicality, accuracy and timeliness. The internet was a particular area of rapid change.

4.4. The Chairman asked about use of services by Members' staff. **Bob Twigger** said that the balance of service provision had changed now that Members each had more staff. Members' staff were treated as inquirers in their own right but 30% of inquiries were still directly from Members.

4.5. Aileen Walker said that the post-Tebbit realignment had brought together services to the public so that they formed a more coherent whole. Many of the services were bicameral. The Public Information Directorate had a good working relationship with the Parliamentary Archives, Lord Speaker's outreach programme and Lords Information Office.

4.6. The directorate aimed to increase the number of people who had contact with Parliament from tens of thousands to tens of millions. This could be achieved through online and mainstream media, visits to Parliament, and outreach to communities across the UK. Partnerships and networks were key to making contact with as many people as possible. The outreach service worked with the Citizens Advice Bureau, National Council of Voluntary Organisations, museums and libraries. 40 new citizenship teachers had attended the 2009 Teacher Institute held at Westminster to help them teach about Parliament with greater confidence. Social media channels were also being used to reach new audiences; Parliament had 11,000 followers on Twitter. The outreach team had worked with the Treasury select committee to hold an online discussion through the website Moneysavingexpert.com, which had 3.25 million subscribers. Topic pages on the Parliamentary website enabled people to access information on topics that interested them.

4.7. The Department also engaged with visitors to Parliament. The Education service had increased the number of educational visits to Westminster three-fold in the last four years (from 11,000 to 37,000). Visits were now at capacity for the space available; there was a continuing need for a dedicated education centre. A transport subsidy pilot had been successful in bringing more schools to Westminster from outside London and the South East. Visitor assistants provided a proactive and friendly welcome to people arriving at Parliament. It was thought that Parliament received around one million visitors a year. Tensions arising over the management of visitors were being addressed.

4.8. *In discussion the following points were made:*

- The feedback received by the outreach service focused on the institution of Parliament rather than on Members.
- Some Members had been sceptical about the service at first but now found that it supported their role in engaging with the public.
- It was extremely rare for information provided by the Library which was used in debate not to be accepted as impartial.
- Mr Speaker was keen to implement many new outreach initiatives, working through the existing outreach service. He had already endorsed a new outreach document and visited a south London school.
- DIS provided an extremely high quality service which was important to the reputation of Parliament. Research papers and many standard

- More could be done to market DIS products to the public but Members were the most important audience.

5. Survey of Services

5.1. Bob Twigger, Chairman of the Project Board, introduced [s.40], Managing Director of FDS International, who presented the results of the Survey of Services. The survey had been conducted in the same way as the 2007 survey. Additional questions had been included to inform the Balanced Scorecard. Response rates were lower than last time (25% of Members and 28% of staff, compared to 45% and 54%) but were still representative of the make up of the House and compared favourably with the response to the 2003 survey. The fieldwork period had coincided with the Telegraph's publication of Members' expenses data and the arrival of the Conficker virus. In 2007, telephone reminder calls had had a beneficial impact on response rates. This time many people had indicated they were too busy to complete the survey.

5.2. The results of the survey were good overall. 60% of Members and 55% of staff were either extremely or very satisfied with the overall service they received and only 4% and 2% were dissatisfied. The majority of responding Members and staff felt there had been no change in the effectiveness of the House of Commons services over the past year. Around a third of Members and their staff considered that the House should pay more attention to providing the advice and services to enable them to do their job better and to promoting public knowledge and understanding of Parliament. A minority thought less attention should be paid to the latter.

5.3. Information and research services and Hansard had performed very well. Members' staff were more dissatisfied than Members with procedural services. The Department of Resources had received high levels of satisfaction; unsurprisingly dissatisfaction with the administration of allowances had increased but only to 17%. Feelings of security on the Estate had remained constant from 2007. A minority of those responding (14%) felt that security was inconsistent. Vending machines and queues were the key areas of criticism in relation to catering. Minimising environmental impact was an area of significant dissatisfaction, including a lack of environmental information. There were low levels of satisfaction with the cleanliness of toilet facilities close to Members' offices. Satisfaction with PICT had remained constant since the last survey but

was low overall. Those responding were more satisfied with PICT staff than the services and hardware they provided. Training was identified as an issue by constituency staff, partly because of the cost and time involved in travelling to London. The Members' Centre was new since the last survey and had performed well.

5.4. *In discussion the following points were made:*

- Overall the results were good, with only small numbers of those responding expressing dissatisfaction with services.
- The results suggested a need to do more to meet the needs of constituency staff.
- Targets could be established against the survey but many of the questions covered a relatively wide range of services. The best approach would be to work out what drove satisfaction and focus on those areas.
- The results of the Survey might lead to the conclusion that the House should invest more in IT off the Estate, including constituencies and mobile devices, but other factors had to be considered.
- The survey gave the Board information which it could use to focus its efforts and those of managers and staff.
- The level of satisfaction with IT was relatively high compared to other organisations. Satisfaction levels with different services were not necessarily comparable.
- It would be important to communicate with those who had participated in the survey so that they could see their contribution had been worthwhile.
- The Project Board would be holding a “wash up” session to consider lessons learned from the survey.

5.5. The Board agreed that the Commission should be asked to agree that the high level results of the Survey of Services should be published on the Parliament website. The OCE should ensure that lessons from the Survey were taken forward in the business planning process and communicated to the Management Board in September.

5.6. *Action: OCE to ensure that lessons from the Survey of Services are taken forward in the business planning process and communicated to the Management Board in September.*

6. Staff Survey

6.1. The Board considered the Headline Report of results from the staff survey.

6.2. Andrew Walker said there had been an increase in the response rate over the last survey. Overall the results were encouraging, particularly as the survey work was carried out at a difficult time. Most scores had improved across all categories with the exception of “Change” which had decreased slightly. PICT and Facilities were below the overall average. Scores for PICT had improved since the last survey. Communications had improved dramatically, as had involvement, cooperation and engagement of staff. Worryingly, scores for fairness and respect had fallen across all pay bands. Such feelings were closely linked to morale. Morale was currently high but could be vulnerable. Scores for leadership, including that of the Board, were low. The findings relating to the Management Board indicated areas for improvement.

6.3. Andrew Walker said that the Board would receive a fuller analysis of the findings in the autumn. Directors General would be able to reflect on the results for their own Departments, which they would receive early in the summer recess. A full report would be available from mid-August. Departments should manage their own responses to the findings of the survey. Corporately actions resulting from the survey should be incorporated into wider actions rather than being addressed through a separate action plan.

6.4. The Board agreed, subject to certain changes in presentation, that the headline report should be circulated to staff before the summer recess.

6.5. Action: *Following presentational changes, headline report of results of the Staff Survey to be circulated to staff before the summer recess.*

7. Information Management

7.1. John Pullinger said that his paper on information management followed from a Board discussion in February, which had supported the development of a corporate information management policy. Two workshops had been held involving senior staff from both Houses. These had considered how information might be managed differently to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of Parliament. Discussions had been energetic and bold, and had concluded that channels of communication were not being used as effectively as they should be. The Board agreed that work in this area should be taken forward over the summer, including the establishment of a Group on Information Management (GIM) to improve the coordination of initiatives on information management.

7.2. John Pullinger said that the Records Management Audit was complete. The Board noted the findings in the final report and agreed that a records management healthcheck should take place in April 2010.

7.3. John Pullinger said that the Board had agreed to consider the strategic implications of major investment decisions before business cases were approved. The SPIRE business case had been circulated and the Board now had an opportunity to consider whether it had the appetite to take this initiative forward.

7.4. In discussion the following points were made:

- The Records Management Audit had demonstrated that without the external discipline of a common information management system, it was difficult to ensure that staff adopted appropriate records management practices. Training would be important.
- The document management systems used by the LSO and OCE had proved useful.
- EDRM systems had a high rate of failure. Success would require strong leadership, management commitment to changing behaviours and the quality of project management in implementing the system. There would inevitably be requests for adaptations of the system which could jeopardise its effectiveness.
- The system would have to be simple and easy to use if people were to be persuaded to use it. Otherwise they would find avoidance routes or revert to old practices.
- Some staff were highly effective even without good systems to manage information, but the rapidly growing quantity of information would make the control of information increasingly difficult and expensive unless appropriate systems were put in place. Service levels would eventually reduce.
- There were environmental implications of the House's current "print to paper" policy. Paper filing systems were fine when everything was working well, but the scope for misfiling was high. Version control could also be a problem.
- The potential savings set out in the supporting paper were difficult to validate at this stage. Realising the savings identified in the paper would rely on other budgets being cut.
- The proposal that all information should have a named owner who took responsibility for the accuracy of that information, was excellent.

7.5. The Board gave in principle support and noted that the SPIRE business case would come forward for financial approval later in the year.

8. Incident Management Framework

8.1. Douglas Millar said that the paper from the Chair of the Business Risk and Resilience Group presented a revised Incident Management Framework (IMF). Some further changes to the documentation were

required to reflect the lessons learned from the exercise in June. The Lords were keen to reduce the size of the gold team to four “core” members (two from each House). In practice the approach would need to be flexible.

8.2. The Board agreed that, once the documentation had been amended to reflect the lessons learned, the Framework should be implemented, and that the proposal for a “duty Silver” rota should be implemented immediately.

8.3. *Action: OCE to circulate the revised Incident Management Framework documents to the Board for agreement by correspondence.*

9. Capability Framework

9.1. Andrew Walker asked the Board to endorse the direction of the work which had begun to develop a House Capability Framework. The Framework was intended to ensure that the House Service developed the organisational capability it needed to meet the challenges of the future. Planning would be taken forward and a business case prepared. One priority was to develop a replacement for the SMDP. It was important to recognise the talent which the House Service required, to make sure staff had opportunities to demonstrate their talent and to allow staff to progress to the next level. The Capability Framework would not include normal job-specific training or specialist training in particular areas.

9.2. *In discussion the following points were made:*

- The House currently spent between £1.5 million to £2 million a year on training. It was anticipated that approximately a quarter of this spending would be displaced by the capability scheme.
- The SMDP had cost £0.25 million a year for between 30 and 40 participants.
- The SMDP had been particularly intrusive this year in terms of staff time.
- There was a risk that staff who undertook training but failed to achieve promotion would be demoralised.
- It was envisaged that the capability programme would be delivered internally to a greater extent than the SMDP had been.
- It would be a worthwhile investment for the House to pay for the training of internal trainers.

9.3. The Board endorsed the direction of travel set out in the paper, subject to its further development and the costing of proposals.

10. Any other business

- 10.1.** The Chairman said that, as Douglas Millar was travelling with the Chairman of Ways and Means in September, this had been his final Board meeting. He thanked him for his constructive and acute contributions to the Management Board. Douglas Millar thanked other Board members for their collaboration.

[adjourned at 18.25

Philippa Helme
Secretary

Malcolm Jack
Chairman

29 July 2009