

**Management Board**  
**2010 Members' Survey of Services**

*Paper by the Head of the Office of the Chief Executive*

**Purpose**

1. This paper is to make the Board aware of proposed arrangements for the delivery of the 2010 Survey of Members' Services.

**Actions for the Board**

2. The Board is asked to **take note** of the proposed arrangements for the 2010 Survey of Members' Services.
3. Board Members are invited to nominate representatives from their department to sit on the Project Board. by the end of June.

**Consultation**

4. A draft of this paper has been reviewed by the Director of Information Services for Members (Bob Twigger).

**Background**

5. In the light of the recommendation of the Tebbit Review the House Service has committed to conducting regular 'rolling' surveys of Members. Following a competitive tender process completed in 2009, FDS International are currently contracted to provide 3 surveys on a roughly annual basis. FDS delivered the first survey of their contract in July 2009.
6. The 2009 survey did not achieve as high a response rate as in 2007, perhaps because of the coincidence of the survey with the unofficial publication of information about Members' expenses. Overall, 160 Members (25%) completed the questionnaire; those Members responding were broadly representative of the House (by party, role, age and service).
7. The 'lessons learned' report produced at the end of the project to deliver the 2009 survey made several recommendations on how the survey could be improved. The report found that the project approach had been beneficial and that subsequent surveys would benefit from having a Project Board to perform the same role as in the 2009 survey.
8. In order to deliver the survey in November, FDS will need to be approached and instructed by the beginning of July.

## Costs

9. Under the 3-year contract with FDS the survey will cost £24,510, which is significantly less than the first year cost of £38,070. Provision for this has already been made within the OCE budget.

## Project Governance

10. It is proposed that the same governance model be adopted as before, with a project board, reporting to the Head of the OCE as SRO, comprising departmental representatives. The Administration Committee will be invited in due course to nominate a Member to sit on the board if it wishes.
11. Bob Twigger has volunteered to reprise his role as Project Chair. This would provide continuity with the supplier, coupled with a familiarity with the 2009 project and its results.

## Role of the Project Board

12. The Project Board will have considerably less work to do than it did for the 2009 survey, especially considering the fact that a procurement exercise will not be necessary. However, given the short timescale, and taking recess into account, it will need to meet frequently in September, October and the beginning of November in order to develop and finalise the questionnaire with the supplier. The lessons learned from 2009 showed that achieving consensus for the questions across the House Service and PICT took considerable effort. It is assumed that the survey will not reiterate the 2009 questions wholesale as:
  - there will be topical questions to ask;
  - after the 2009 some departments expressed a wish to improve their questions in future surveys; and
  - questions should be considered in the light the new strategy and the current climate in order to provide *supporting* evidence for prioritisation of resources for delivery of services to Members.

## Questionnaire Design

13. The 2010 survey will be an ideal opportunity to gather structured feedback from both new and returned Members about post-election services. It is anticipated that these will be consolidated rather than scattered throughout the survey along departmental lines.
14. The questionnaire design for the next survey will be improved. The revised approach taken by DIS in the 2009 survey in order to ensure that Members could steer the development of new services was effective. Other departments should consider a similar approach – to ensure that probing questions are asked with a constructive outcome in mind – i.e. beyond reaffirmation that an excellent service is being provided.

15. Further attention will be given to the satisfaction scale (in 2009 'Extremely satisfied / Very satisfied / Fairly satisfied / Not very satisfied / Not at all satisfied'). The previous Project Board discussed it at length before the survey launch, but elected not to change it. Upon reflection it was agreed that it would be beneficial to change the scale in 2010 so that there is less scope for difference of interpretation. This would lose a degree of direct comparison with those questions with a satisfaction scale from the 2009 survey, but it would not preclude comparison altogether.

Philippa Helme  
Head of the Office of the Chief Executive  
June 2010