



HOUSE OF LORDS

Management Board

11th Meeting
Monday 28 July 2014

MINUTES

Present:	David Beamish Liz Hallam Smith David Leakey Andrew Makower Joan Miller Tom Mohan Edward Ollard Simon Burton Carl Woodall	Clerk of the Parliaments Information Services Black Rod's Department Financial Resources Director of Parliamentary ICT Human Resources Parliamentary Services Corporate Services Facilities
Audit Committee members:	Liz Hewitt Ian Luder	
In attendance:	Alison Couch (for item 2) Chloe Mawson (for item 4) Simon Nicholls (for item 4)	Internal Communications Manager Clerk of the Journals Business Development Manager

I Pensions: Proposed Merger with the PCSPS

MB/2014/63

1.1 Tom Mohan introduced the paper and noted that further information about the proposed merger had been circulated to the Board on 25 July.

1.2 The Finance Director considered the target date to be ambitious but achievable. Both staff and member communications would be important.

1.3 The Board noted that the Cabinet Office would have to approve the merger in due course.

1.4 A Board member asked if the merger would raise any data security or exchange issues. Tom Mohan replied that it should not, particularly as the administration for the current scheme was provided by MyCSP, who also administered the PCSPS, but that this would be checked.

1.5 The Board noted that a temporary pensions administrator would be recruited to provide "business as usual cover" for the Pensions Manager who would take the lead on the merger project.

1.6 The Board **agreed** that the negotiations to merge the HOLSPS and the PCSPS should continue, and that the same assurances as were given to the Commons should be sought.

2 2014 Staff Survey

MB/2013/64

2.1 Tom Mohan introduced the paper and said that the intention was for the Staff Survey to inform the implementation of the People Business Plan, including actions arising. He suggested that a shorter, annual, staff survey might allow the Administration to gauge more accurately the effect of changes in people policy or practice.

2.2 Alison Couch said that the 2014 Staff Survey was more focused than previous surveys due to greater input from BMG on action planning both at Administration and Office level, the role of Heads of Offices discussing the findings with their staff, and the synergy achieved with the focus group work on the People Business Plan. Communication was key and the Board needed to demonstrate that action was being taken in response to findings in order to address the perception that the Board had not taken action in response to previous surveys. She suggested that this could be achieved by way of a more robust seminar programme. More work was also required to develop parity of esteem for all specialisms, whether professionalised or not, within the Administration.

2.3 The Board discussed possible options for communicating with staff.

2.4 The Board discussed the paper and the following points were raised in discussion:

- A Board member agreed with the need for achieving greater mutual understanding and respect among different professions and specialisms. The People Business Plan provided a good opportunity for the Board to demonstrate action in response to the Survey. A key issue for many staff arose from the discrepancies in leave arrangements between Offices. A desire to offer flexible working arrangements was undermined by the small number of staff in particular Offices.
- A Board member suggested that a new Digital Service KPI about staff satisfaction with ICT support should be developed. The Board noted existing work in this area by the Strategic User Network and Digital Service Preparation Team. Another Board member said that such a KPI should be based upon user satisfaction as a whole rather than making a distinction between staff and members. Two other Board members considered that the distinction between staff and members would be useful as they had different requirements.
- A Board member said that the proposed Red Carpet News article would need to make the links between the Survey and the People Business Plan very clear to demonstrate that action was being taken. If a further survey were to be conducted in spring 2015 it should be on the low points in the Staff Survey rather than on the People Business Plan initiatives, which would still be in their early stages.
- A Board member said that the results of the Survey appeared to suggest there was a cultural issue, with staff not feeling valued. As a first step it would be important for the Administration to get under the response rates; assess the balance of communication in the organisation; engage with staff at the departmental level rather than just through Red Carpet News; take steps to avoid survey fatigue, and concentrate on

communicating clearly on a limited number of issues at a time.

- A Board member said that it was primarily the responsibility of departmental managers to engage with staff about their concerns and that a period of unhappiness was inevitable when implementing change.
- A Board member said that pay had had a very significant impact on the Survey, which had taken place before the pay offer had been made. Caution should be exercised regarding the inclusion of definite wording on flexible working as expectations should not be raised among staff regarding a policy which would be difficult to formulate and implement. Another Board member said that recess periods provided an opportunity to explore some form of flexible working.

2.5 Tom Mohan responded to the points raised. He agreed with the observation that responses to many of the issues raised in the Staff Survey required action at Office level, including the development of Office action plans. Regarding flexible working, the aim was to develop a clear position on this by the end of the pay review, including agreement on accurate recording of patterns of work, with this data being used at a later stage to inform the Administration's preferred approach.

2.1 *[Additional information – Restricted Access]*

2.2 The Board **agreed** that the actions arising from the 2014 Staff survey should be incorporated into the People Business Plan and that a separate staff survey action plan was therefore not necessary; that Tom Mohan would circulate a revised version of the paper to the Board with a view to publication in the autumn, and that the possibility of running a further survey next spring to measure progress would be considered further following targeted work by Heads of Offices on low response rates.

3 **People Business Plan**

3.1 Tom Mohan introduced the paper and emphasised that the People Business Plan belonged to the Board as a whole rather than the HR Office. The Plan focused on pay, terms and conditions, career development and people services. He proposed that the first three parts of 'Working with the House of Commons' under the *My career* theme should be merged into one, with this work taking place under a mandate from the two Clerks.

3.2 The Board discussed the paper and the following points were raised in discussion:

- A Board member asked if the HR Office had adequate resources to deliver the content of the Plan, and if any quick wins could be achieved regarding the pay and grading elements, which otherwise had long implementation timescales.
- A Board member said that there was a danger that the Plan could raise unrealistic expectations among staff. It was also important for senior management to communicate and engage more with junior staff including on a day to day basis. *[Additional information – Restricted Access]*. Seminars worked well and were appreciated by staff. Communications as a theme could perhaps be explored in the quarterly senior management

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MB/2014/65

meetings. Another Board member agreed.

- A Board member welcomed the Plan but expressed disappointment that there was no explicit reference to equality issues under the *Culture and change* theme. Opening up career paths, and the possibility of moving between offices, could work well in practice and enrich an organisation as a result, which was in line with Investor in People principles. Under the same theme clarifying staff's working relationship with members was a key concern and should perhaps be made more explicit. Existing guidance in this area could benefit from revision and work could also take place with the WENs on training.
- A Board member welcomed the Plan as commendably brief and very ambitious, and encouraged Tom Mohan to bid for "resources for change". The Board member considered that the reference in the introduction to the strategic aims was unnecessary. With respect to the *My pay and reward* theme the Board member said that senior staff were bound to ask what had happened following the JESP review of 2011. The promise of a review of procedural work under the *My career* theme was significant and would be welcomed but the Plan should not promise something that the Board was not prepared to see through. It raised the related question of Clerks doing non-procedural jobs. Another Board member agreed. With respect to the *Culture and change* theme the Board member was opposed to strengthening the connection between performance and pay, and said that the focus should instead be on better performance management. The Board member regretted the lack of reference to informal leave and Diversity & Inclusion in the Plan.
- A Board member welcomed the Plan and emphasised the main points as being pay, how people feel about working for an organisation, and their motivation. The Board member asked how the Plan related to the activity data recorded in the quarterly performance report.
- A Board member said that it was important for the Administration to be clear about the areas in which it intended to deliver and those it did not.

3.3 David Beamish said that some proposals under the Plan would need to be brought back to the Board, including the opening up of procedural opportunities. A Board member suggested that development positions, including procedural ones, could be designated. Another Board member noted that recruiting for potential was an attractive notion which they understood had worked well in PICT. The Board noted that a number of Lords and Commons staff had transferred to PICT as a result, without prejudice to internal applicants.

3.4 Tom Mohan responded to the points raised, which he considered to be helpful. Talent management could be handled in many different ways. The Administration did nothing at present and should manage talent more regularly, but not necessarily on a quarterly basis. Regarding job mobility, more consideration was required, including greater clarity around which posts were "generalist" and which were specialised and professional positions. He noted that the Commons were committed to developing performance-related pay but had not yet defined how. The JESP report remained unpublished but the scores would be revisited in the review of pay

and grading. It was not intended that the implementation of the Plan would be run as a programme, as some of the content was business as usual and responsibility for some of the strands did not fall within the HR Office.

3.5 The Board **agreed** that Tom Mohan should refine the People Business Plan further before reverting to the Board for its approval by correspondence; and that the Plan, once approved, should serve as the principal response to the 2014 Staff Survey, and approved the proposed outline communication plan, which would begin in October 2014.

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4 **Publishing of core information**

MB/2014/66

4.1 Ed Ollard introduced the paper, which he explained was the product of consultations with affected Offices and interested parties.

4.2 The Board discussed the paper and the following points were raised in discussion:

- A number of Board members welcomed the paper and noted that the timetable was ambitious.
- A Board member said that the paper signified an important change of policy, which amounted to digital first but printable if required. The risk assessment could benefit from reflecting member concerns. Existing work by the Enabling Technology Programme may prove useful in supporting the technical aspects of the proposed approach.
- A Board member noted that the performance report assessed member take-up of digital services as red and said that there should be a more explicit reference to the Digital Service under the dependencies section. With regard to the e-publishing project there should be an explicit reference to information and cyber security.
- The Finance Director said that he hoped to be able to meet the outline funding requirement for this programme, and he looked forward to seeing the business case. On the wider financial environment he said that there were particular issues in the ICT MTIP, with bids for spend this year and next significantly exceeding the control totals for resource. The Finance Directors had adopted a hard line against departments funding ICT investment from BAU budgets, which undermined the MTIP control totals.
- A Board member said that it was important not to underestimate the amount of technical work that would be required to implement the proposed changes and noted that options for technical support to the programme had been forwarded to Ed Ollard.

4.3 Ed Ollard noted that Tim Youngs, a business relationship manager in PICT, had been particularly helpful with the development of the programme.

4.4 The Board **agreed** a new approach towards publishing core parliamentary information, and to the establishment of a new House of Lords Printing and Publishing Programme to implement the new approach before the current contract for printing and publishing services ended on 31 March 2016, while taking note of timing and resource issues. The Board noted that similar plans were being developed in the House of Commons and that the

intention was for the two Houses to work together on areas of common interest, but to retain the ability to act independently of each other where their interests did not coincide.

5 **QI 2014/15 Performance Report**

MB/2014/67

5.1 The Board discussed the performance report and the following points were raised in discussion:

- A Board member said that the figures for appraisals completed on time was very poor and showed what challenges were presented by the People Business Plan. With regard to the Future of Archives Accommodation programme, contrary to what was stated in the report, a budget for the Outline Business Case had not yet been identified. With regard to the CRS subsidy, contrary to what was stated in the report, CRS was 21% over the subsidy target rather than under and CRS faced the additional challenge of delivering the new debt measures alongside the CRS Change Programme.
- A Board member noted the 25% drop in take-up of Library Notes by members. The Director of Information Services replied that this reduction was offset by the increase in take-up of briefing packs, with an overall rise in research transactions.
- The Director of Information Services noted that the measure of members' use of online services had been red for the last few quarters and suggested that a group could be established to address this. Another Board member agreed with this suggestion.
- The Director of Facilities said that, following a Gateway review of the CRS Change Programme, the assessment of the programme's long-term future was no longer green, as indicated in the performance report, which would be reflected in subsequent reports. He considered the performance reports to be a very useful tool.
- With reference to the security section of the report Black Rod suggested that the business continuity/resilience sections could be distinguished from the security section in future reports. He also indicated that the financial RAG rating for the Relocation Contingencies Programme was now amber, rather than green as indicated in the report, as the in-year and ongoing requirement for resources had been greater than had been expected when the project was established.
- A Board member suggested that the activity data sheet appended to each report should be disaggregated between standing data and data which the Administration could influence, divided between different functions. The Board member noted the lack of environmental measures on the activity data sheet and the need for it to correlate with the business plan.

5.2 The Board **took note** of the QI 2014/15 performance report.

6 **Tracking of outstanding audit recommendations**

MB/2014/68

6.1 The Board **took note** of the outstanding audit recommendations ahead of the Audit Committee's October meeting.

- 7 Annual Corporate Events 2014/15** **MB/2014/69**
- 7.1 Simon Burton introduced the paper and noted the intention for a common thread to connect all of the events.
- 7.2 The Board discussed potential guest speakers for each event.
- 7.3 A Board member suggested that the All Staff Meetings could take place more frequently than once a year, with an additional meeting taking place just before the summer recess.
- 7.4 The Board **took note** of the more holistic approach to the annual corporate events that was proposed and agreed that the themes, speakers and attendees for each event should be agreed offline. **MBT/SPB/DRB**
- 8 Business Planning Group Membership** **MB/2014/70**
- 8.1 The Board confirmed the appointment of the existing BPG members and **agreed** the replacement of one existing BPG member in September and the appointment of a new BPG member.
- 9 Any other business**
- 9.1 Tom Mohan provided an update to the Board regarding the pay negotiations.
- 9.2 On behalf of the Board, David Beamish thanked the Director of PICT for her contributions to the Board over many years and wished her well for the future.
- 10 Parliamentary Programme and Project Assurance Office: Q1 2014/15** **MB/2014/71**
- 10.1 The Board **took note** of the Parliamentary Programme and Project Assurance Office Q1 2014/15 report.
- 11 Commons dashboard portfolio** **MB/2014/72**
- 11.1 The Board **took note** of the Commons dashboard portfolio.
- 12 Minutes of the meeting on 2 July 2014**
- The minutes had been previously agreed by correspondence.
- 13 Papers agreed by correspondence**
- 13.1 On 10 July the Board **agreed** the BPG's Review of Performance Management Framework (MB/2014/60), including the:
- Proposed changes to the reporting of programmes and projects.
 - Proposed changes to individual measures.
 - Proposed changes to existing activity data and proposals for new activity indicators.
 - Proposal to make the performance report more widely available to members of Lords staff.
 - Proposal to include Lords-only programmes/projects within the scope of the Commons Portfolio Manager's role.

13.2 On 10 July the Board **agreed** the Review of Corporate Risks (MB/2014/61), including the proposed amendment of the Facilities risk but deferred consideration of the security risk until 10 October.

13.3 On 22 July, the Board **agreed** the draft Annual Report for 2013/14 (MB/2014/62) and took note of work on the possibility of combining the Annual Report and Resource Accounts, in future years, which was being conducted at the request of the Audit Committee.

Next Meeting: Friday 10 October 2014 at 10.00am

Management Board Secretary
30 July 2014

ACTIONS

Meeting date	Minute item	Action	Owner	Deadline/ Status
28 July 2014	2.7	Circulate revised version of the 2014 Staff Survey paper to the Board with a view to publication in the autumn. The possibility of running a further survey next spring to measure progress to be considered further following targeted work by Heads of Offices on low response rates.	TVM Heads of Offices	31 August 2014
28 July 2014	3.5	People Business Plan to be revised and circulated to the Board for its approval by correspondence.	TVM	31 August 2014
28 July 2014	7.4	Agreement of the themes, speakers and attendees for each annual corporate event.	MBT/ SPB/ DRB	31 August 2014