

**Minutes of the Management Board meeting
held on Thursday 17 January 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)
Sue Harrison (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)
Jacqy Sharpe (Business Continuity Steering Group,
for item 2)
Heather Bryson (Tebbit Change Team, for item 4)
[s.40] (Tebbit Change Team, for item 4)
Mel Barlex (Parliamentary Director of Estates, for item
5)
Chris Ridley (Director of Financial Management, for
item 6)

1. Matters arising from previous meetings

1.1. Andrew Walker gave the Board an oral update on the report on data and information security. Initial findings had led to a recommendation to the Clerks of both Houses that the scope of the terms of reference be widened, to include issues such as the ability to download information from the system and the access that third parties are given to data.

1.2. The Board Secretary said that actions would be taken forward as was shown in the paper. Action 12, regarding InHouse magazine would be taken forward by the Office of the Chief Executive in conjunction with the House of Lords.

2. Risk and performance

2.1. The Chairman drew the Board's attention to those items listed for discussion. It was noted that the target of paying MPs claims within eight days was missed for the month of December, both due to the fact that pay runs were not run over Christmas and to temporary staff shortage. Introduction of a new system to deal with calls to the service desk and

staff vacancies had caused the PICT service desk waiting time to increase. The Board agreed to ask for a further report on the increase in energy usage that was reported in the paper.

2.2. *Action: Director General, Facilities to provide Board with further information on energy usage.*

2.3. The **Chairman** welcomed Jacqy Sharpe, Chairman of the Business Continuity Policy Steering Group, who gave the Board an update on its work.

2.4. **Jacqy Sharpe** said that good progress was being made on revising departmental contingency plans with a deadline of 22 February. The plans would then be moderated by the Steering Group. The Group recommended that consultants should be used to introduce the House to the Gold/Silver/Bronze framework, and that training should take place so that staff had a clear understanding of the GSB roles and the specific post holders who would occupy them. Whether a full tendering process was needed for this work was being investigated.

2.5. **Douglas Millar** proposed, and the Board agreed, that the Serjeant-at-Arms should be designated as the initial Gold and out-of-hours emergency contact. The Serjeant would then assess the nature of the incident and who in the House Service was best placed to lead the management of it.

2.6. It was noted that there were synergies between the Steering Group's work and the risk based assessment of critical systems in each building which had been commissioned by the Board at its previous meeting, with a view to a report in March.

3. Oral updates from Director Generals

3.1. **Andrew Walker** said that:

3.1.1. The Senior Salaries Review Body's report had been published and would be debated in the House the following Thursday. Once decisions had been made by the House the Board would need to consider implications for the House Service.

3.1.2. A business case for contracting for photocopiers centrally had been received. He asked for the Board's support for this joint procurement. The Board supported the principle of one contract for photocopiers, which took account of different business needs within it.

3.2. **Douglas Millar** said that the new Department of Chamber and Committee Services was getting immediate benefits from pooling

knowledge, relating to taxi and sound enhancement contracts for example.

3.3. John Pullinger said that:

3.3.1. The two Clerks had agreed to one single governance structure for the Intranet and Internet.

3.3.2. The terms of reference for a PICT health-check had been agreed by the Joint Business Systems Board.

3.3.3. Terms of reference had been agreed for a study recommended by the Tebbit report into co-operation between the Commons and the Lords Libraries.

3.4. Joan Miller said that the Commission's response to the Administration Committee's IT report had been published, and she had attended a meeting with the Committee to update them on progress against accepted recommendations.

3.5. Sue Harrison said that:

3.5.1. She had held the first meeting of the Department of Facilities which had been attended by over 100 staff.

3.5.2. Mel Barlex had asked Andy Makepeace to take on an interim management role of the maintenance and furnishings branches to cover the resignation of Roger Ward and while the senior posts in the new reunified directorate were filled. Project work would be covered by [s.40]. Andy would continue to undertake his current responsibilities with respect of accommodation.

3.5.3. The Visitor Reception Building was expected to be opened during the February recess.

3.5.4. The two cleaning contracts, currently held by Mitie for general cleaning and Emprise for kitchen cleaning would end in August and were currently out to tender. The Board noted that quality of cleaning would be important in the new contract specification and should be recognised in the assessment criteria.

3.5.5. The Parliamentary Estate Board had met on Monday last. It was agreed that Sue would circulate, via the Office of the Chief Executive, a précis of the Board's minutes to Management Board members.

3.5.6. Action: *Précis of Estate Board minutes to be circulated to Management Board members.*

4. Tebbit implementation

- 4.1. The **Chairman** welcomed Heather Bryson and [s.40], members of the Tebbit Change Team.
- 4.2. **Heather Bryson** said that the Change Team's paper sought to raise immediate issues and suggest a method for co-ordinating on-going work. A further substantive paper would be presented to the February Board. The Trade Union Side had been consulted on the draft paper and their views had been circulated to the Board. The paper recommended that responsibility for delivery of change within departments should lie with departmental change teams, under the direction of Director Generals, with central co-ordination from the Office of the Chief Executive, but that those involved should meet regularly as a group, and that the Board should receive regular updates on both departmental and cross-cutting workstreams.
- 4.3. The Board agreed that a critical priority for the 1 April was that agreed budgets should be set, and that Andrew Walker as Director General, Resources should broker the process with Board members.
- 4.4. The Board noted that it was important to communicate the benefits resulting from the creation of the new departments both to staff and Members, whilst acknowledging that for many staff the tangible change would result from cultural change and greater opportunities rather than changes in their specific role. Training would be an important element of empowering staff to feel able to embrace change rather than feel threatened by it, and the Board had agreed in October that Andrew Walker should take responsibility for delivering a training programme during 2008.
- 4.5. The Board thanked the Change team for their paper and their work, and Heather and Ross left the meeting.
- 4.6. The Board agreed that continuing co-ordination of change would be undertaken by the Office of the Chief Executive, with some resource from the Change team co-opted into that Office. This role would be especially important over the following few months in ensuring that a truly unified service was created, rather than four new departments with different identities. The priority for the Board would be to define success criteria for improvement of services to Members, and to further clarify and promulgate what a unified service meant, and for Director Generals to jointly lead staff in delivering it. It was agreed that the Chairman would write to the Change team members on behalf of the Board to thank them for this work.

5. Parliamentary Estates Directorate reunification

5.1. The **Chairman** welcomed Mel Barlex, the Parliamentary Director of Estates.

5.2. **Mel Barlex** said that the paper laid out a skeleton programme for achieving the new organisational structure for the combined Estates and Works functions. Workshops were currently ongoing regarding the new structure, and it was expected that draft job descriptions for senior posts would be available in February, with the aim that the whole of the new structure would be populated by the summer recess. Consultation with both the Unions and with staff would be important throughout the process. In answer to a question from the **Chairman**, Mel confirmed that the Board could have confidence that every effort would be made to ensure that the programme would be delivered to the timescale set out in the paper.

5.3. The Board noted that fully worked-up three year Estates and Works plans would be needed by the Director of Resources by mid-June to allow scrutiny of those business plans by him and the Board in advance of the Commission's requirement for three year plans to be delivered to them in the autumn. **Mel** confirmed that he was aware of, and working to, this deadline. Information on some projects which were not at an advanced stage of preparation would only be available in outline.

5.4. Finally the Board asked Mel about progress with the 25 year estate strategy, and noted that it was planned that the first iteration of the strategy would be available in late February or March.

6. Final forecast outturn

6.1. The **Chairman** welcomed Chris Ridley, Director of Financial Management.

6.2. **Chris Ridley** said that the forecast outturn was attached to the paper and gave information both on a departmental basis and as a whole. The departmental outturns were based on the departments in place before 1 January. The key decision for the Board was whether to recommend to the Commission a Supplementary Estimate on either resource or cash.

6.3. Chris said that the summary currently showed a balanced picture for both resource and cash, but this excluded the possible resource write offs for the Visitor Reception Building and some legacy ICT development work. That meant that position on resources was extremely tight and the Board would need to consider its risk appetite. Previous years' experience showed that it was likely that departments would underspend compared to their December forecasts, but if that was not the case and a

Supplementary Estimate for resource was not sought then the accounts would be qualified. The paper suggested that the Board should recommend to the Commission a £5m Supplementary on resource.

6.4. The Board agreed to recommend to the Commission that a Supplementary Estimate for resource should be sought, but that no cash Supplementary was necessary.

7. Staff accommodation

7.1. The Board considered a paper from the Director General, Facilities on future accommodation of House staff and progress on the feasibility study on the location of enhanced education facilities and windowless offices which had been requested by the Administration Committee.

7.2. **Sue Harrison** said that in the absence of an accommodation strategy the paper sought some direction from the Board on key accommodation matters. There was pressure from the Whips for more accommodation for Members in the Palace. The loss of 50 Member offices if the windowless offices plan went ahead would also need to be addressed, and the paper proposed that Derby Gate should be re-designated as a building available to Members.

7.3. Sue suggested, and the Board agreed, that the Board should go further than the limited feasibility studies proposed in the paper and should commission a study to establish criteria as to which groups of staff should be based where across the whole Commons Estate. A second paper would also be prepared as an aide-memoire for the Board setting out the rationale for House Service's accommodation in the Palace. This paper would be co-ordinated through the Office of the Chief Executive.

7.4. The Board agreed that regarding the windowless offices feasibility study the planning assumption should not be that Derby Gate would be the replacement facility for the displaced Members and that the feasibility study should take account of other options.

8. Staff numbers

8.1. The **Chairman** said that there were a number of methodologies which could be used to calculate and quantify staff numbers. He proposed that the Office of the Chief Executive should work with staff in the Department of Resources and with Director Generals to establish effective and agreed methods of monitoring staff numbers, which might involve a range of measures.

8.2. **Andrew Walker** said that the current reporting system used was that

used by the Civil Service. He suggested, and the Board agreed, that a paper illustrating the various methodologies for calculating staff numbers should be presented to the February Board meeting.

8.3. Action: *Director General, Resources to table paper on methods of calculation of staff numbers to February Board.*

9. Any other business

9.1. Philippa Helme said that she proposed that the Board's away day should take place on Thursday 28 February and she asked Board members to send suggestions for topics for discussion to her.

[adjourned at 7.11pm]

Philippa Helme
Secretary

Malcolm Jack
Chairman

30 January 2008