

Management Board
Action plan from the Survey of Services

Paper by the Project Chair

Purpose

- 1.1 The plan addresses points raised in the Survey of Services by Members and their staff, and includes owners and timescales.

Conclusion and Decisions

- 1.2 The Management Board is asked to agree that sections 3 and 4 below and the action plan are submitted to the Administration Committee.

Background

- 1.3 The Survey of Services was conducted in March 2007, involving every Member and those Members' staff who were on the payroll; a response rate of 52% was achieved. The survey was quantitative (box-ticking) in nature, and sought views on the key services provided to Members and their staff by the House Service. The results were presented to the then Board of Management in May 2007.
- 1.4 In October 2007 and November 2007, follow-up qualitative (one-to-one interviewing) surveying was conducted on a small sub-set of Members and their staff who had been identified by the survey company and had previously indicated their willingness to participate in this work. The survey focussed on some of those areas identified in the March survey as requiring further consideration. The results were presented to the participating departments (Department of Resources and PICT) and the Project Board (on the matters of management communications and submitting complaints) in November.

Action plan

- 1.5 The high response rate to the March survey and the detailed follow-up interviewing have provided a foundation for a plan of work to address concerns of Members and their staff (see Annex). While the results of the surveys were positive overall, a large proportion of responses fell into the "fairly satisfied" category, and this plan aims to increase satisfaction levels to extremely or very satisfied levels.
- 1.6 The majority of the actions listed address distinct issues which are within a particular department's remit, although there are some common themes across departments:
 - more proactive communication with Members and their staff about how the House Service can help and other basic service

- issues, such as opening hours; this will be targeted to prevent “information overload”;
- continuing emphasis on ensuring high levels of staff courtesy at all times.
- 1.7 The review, by Sir Kevin Tebbit, of the management and services of the House of Commons also drew on the findings of the survey. The single most important action to improve service delivery to Members and their staff was the reorganisation of the Commons Service structure to create a unified House Service that better delivers seamless services to Members and their staff, as well as the public. The new departments, organised on functional lines, were created on 1 January 2008.
- 1.8 A review, led by the NAO, of the resources available to the Committee Office also drew on the findings of the survey.
- 1.9 The Annex lists the key actions being taken immediately as a result of the survey. The actions can be achieved from within existing resources without additional expenditure.
- 1.10 For each of the actions listed in the Annex, there is a timescale and an owner. The Office of the Chief Executive will be responsible for ensuring that actions are implemented fully and on time.

Helen Irwin
Clerk of Committees and Project Chair
January 2008

ANNEX
Action plan

1. General Management

1.a Issue: A clear and easy method of submitting a comment, complaint or compliment.

Action: A comments page is being established on the intranet and hard copy forms will also be made available across the Estate, with appropriate processes to ensure that comments are appropriately handled.

Timescale: Work to commence in the new year on a new comments system by the Office of the Chief Executive.

Owner: Head of the Office of the Chief Executive.

1.b Issue: Members and staff unaware of the role, membership and relationship of the Commission and the Board.

Action: A new organogram has been created and displayed around the Estate, on the intranet, and also sent to all Members. A simplified guide to the management of the House's services will be produced by the Office of the Chief Executive.

Timescale: A new organogram was made available in January 2008, and will be kept up-to-date. The simplified guide will be ready by the end of February.

Owner: Head of the Office of the Chief Executive.

1.c Issue: Improved communications about services to Members.

Action: A reorganisation of the House's communication functions will take place in the new year. This will enable better, more consistent and more co-ordinated communications to Members and their staff.

Timescale: Done.

Owner: Head of the Office of the Chief Executive.

2. Working in the chamber and committees

- 2.a Issue: Provision of support to select committee members.
- Action: Following a review of resources, management of Committee support services will be organised to enable the Committee Office to continue to provide high quality support to select committees identified in the survey.
- Timescale: Findings of the review to be implemented in 2008.
- Owner: Director General for Chamber and Committee Services.
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- 2.b Issue: Some dissatisfaction with means of checking speeches before publication.
- Action: Hansard will extend accessibility by offering Members the option of having their speeches e-mailed to them for checking before publication.
- Timescale: Done. Commenced at start of 2007-08 session, with associated publicity to Members.
- Owner: Director General for Chamber and Committee Services.
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- 2.c Issue: Better awareness of and access to Library services needed, especially by constituency-based staff.
- Action:
- More events for constituency-based and other MPs' staff along the lines of the constituency staff open days held in 2006 and November 2007;
 - Continuing to improve the visibility and accessibility of the wide range of Library material already on the Intranet;
 - Addition of new material to the Intranet, including a pilot project to podcast specialist talks and other topical briefings (runs to October 2008) and making supporting documentation more readily available.
- Timescale: Throughout 2008 and subsequently.
- Owner: Director General for Information Services.
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3. In the office

3.a Issue: Lack of awareness by Members and their staff of the services provided to them by the Department of Resources.

Action: The Department of Resources will:

- review all guidance leaflets and booklets, and make use of all opportunities, including staff starter packs and the intranet, to publicise available services;
- invite Members' staff representatives to participate in the selection of the new provider of training;
- new training prospectus to be developed and widely publicised;
- initiate new, Member-led governance structure for Members' staff pension arrangements;
- amend the Green Book to outline a simple process for seeking a review of a decision;
- increase the frequency of Members' newsletters.

Timescale: Summer 2008.

Owner: Director General for Resources.

3.b Issue: Advisory services to Members and their staff too general.

Action: The Department of Resources will provide a more tailored approach; for example, it will:

- develop a consolidated programme of advice surgeries at locations convenient to Members at Westminster;
- use available information sources to better target advice to Members and their staff most likely to need it;
- increase Department of Resources input into Members' staff training courses as organised by training provider; and, where necessary, offer Westminster and constituency-based bespoke training which could be coordinated with the delivery of other House services, such as IT installation—PICT and the Department of Resources are currently discussing the training tender for Members and their staff;
- review the provision for specialist services not provided by the House and likely to be of value to MPs, e.g. legal services for personnel matters, Data Protection Act/Freedom of Information, etc.

Timescale: Throughout 2008.

Owner: Director General for Resources.

3.c Issue: Awareness of remote ICT services, especially SSL/VPN and PDA services.

Action: PICT will:

- develop and promote a service catalogue;
- produce regular newsletters to promote and describe services;
- review of the status of the Citrix service, and PICT will develop next generation remote access solution(s);
- continue to promote PDAs;
- implement the agreed Administration Committee recommendations, including the creation of a Members' ICT Customer Forum (including Members' staff representatives).

Timescale:

- Consultation on the service catalogue will take place prior to its publication. It is planned that it will be issued by the end of the first quarter 2008. A draft catalogue of current services has been prepared;
- A revamped newsletter was launched in June 2007, and the latest one was issued before the House rose for the Christmas recess;
- PDA promotions are ongoing;
- PICT will develop and implement a Members' ICT 'Roadmap' as part of its response to the Administration Committee's report.

Owner: Director of PICT.

3.d Issue: Speed of response and quality of advice, particularly when relating to Members when using the Service Desk. In addition, time taken to attend to problem, and then time taken to achieve repair by the engineers (both PICT staff and third party).

Action:

- Continue performance improvement initiatives that have seen significant improvements in response times (80% of calls being answered in 20 seconds was achieved consistently in 2007);
- Continue to induct and train the large number of new starters on Service Desk to improve quality and consistency of advice – now achieving around 70% of all calls being dealt with at first point of contact by the Service Desk. Plan professional development of staff through personal development and forward job plans;

- Introduced 'PICT Local' service which offers a more personal service and when required responsive service to Members and their staff — positive feedback received to date;
- Implement agreed Administration Committee recommendations, particularly suggestion regarding improved regional support.

Timescale:

- Performance improvements ongoing;
- Personal development plans completed as part of staff annual reviews;
- PICT Local offices opened on 2 July 2007;
- Costed options for Administration Committee recommendations relating to regional support will be prepared.

Owner: Director of PICT.

4. On the Parliamentary Estate

4.a Issue: Perceived lack of facilities / services for Members' staff in recess.

Action: Improved advertising of services that are open and services on the intranet during the summer recess took place in 2007 and will continue in all subsequent recesses.

Timescale: Done.

Owners: Director General of Facilities, Director General of Information Services and Head of the Office of the Chief Executive.

4.b Issue: Only 47% of Members and 66% of Members' staff extremely or very happy with quality of catering services.

Actions: In response to the Survey, a follow-up in-depth survey looking specifically at catering was undertaken:

- the need for British cuisine with requests for traditional food cooked simply with seasonal ingredients was highlighted, and has been actioned;
- longer menu cycles have been introduced in all self service restaurants, and new menus are being introduced from January 2008;
- selling prices were considered fair and in some cases too low. A selling price strategy will be put forward to the Administration Committee during the budgeting exercise in spring 2008;
- frustration with queues in popular venues such as the 'debate' self service restaurant and 'the despatch box': the department actively seeks to encourage custom to move to Bellamy's during peak times to alleviate this problem. Additionally access to Press areas has been widened and could take some volumes away from the Terrace Cafeteria. The Members' priority service should alleviate some of the queuing frustration along with the additional Members' hot beverage and pastry service offered in the 'adjournment' brasserie on Tuesdays to Thursdays from 9.15 until 12 noon and then again from 3-6pm;
- the new Brasserie concept on the Principal Floor has been well received. Members were generally positive after initial concerns.

Timescale: British cuisine and traditional foods already available. Work ongoing to alleviate queues. Price strategy to be submitted to the Administration Committee in spring 2008.

Owner: Director General of Facilities.

4.c Issue: Customer service levels—staff slow to respond to Members' needs and service slow in the Members' Tea Room.

Action: Service improvements in the Members' Tea Room have been assisted by the refurbishment of the Tea Room in the summer. A larger refrigerated unit, better-lit display areas and a modified second till to be used at busy times have all been provided. The delivery of meals is now faster in the Tea Room and, an extended menu will be offered from January 2008; a chef will be located in the Tea Room kitchen, cooking meals to order and with some self-service hot items also provided.

Timescale: Improvements already made, with further steps planned.

Owner: Director General of Facilities.

4.d Issue: Lack of seating and request for review of access regulations particularly in the Terrace Cafeteria with the partition separating Members' and Strangers' areas.

Action: The introduction of Members' priority services in all venues and the additional Members' priority service offered in the 'adjournment' restaurant on a trial basis from Tuesday to Thursdays has clarified access regulations. Access to the Press facilities has now been widened.

Timescale: Done.

Owner: Director General of Facilities.

4.e Issue: Education of staff in special diets e.g. coeliac disease.

Action: A programme of training particularly focussing on allergens will be rolled out to all staff in spring 2008 and is part of the food safety policy.

Timescale: Completed by May 2008.

Owner: Director General of Facilities.

4.f Issue: Courtesy of security staff.

Actions: Customer service and security training programme, and joint

training with Visitor Assistants emphasising security and courtesy together.

Timescale: Done. All staff trained within past 12 months, with a number of workshops. Programme will be re-run in 2008 to ensure standards are maintained.

Owners: Director General for Chamber and Committee Services and Director General for Information Services.

4.g Issue: Awareness of Visitor Assistants.

Actions: Increase awareness among Members of Parliament to coincide with the opening of the Visitor Reception Building (VRB).

Timescale: Arrangements are ready to be rolled out when the VRB opens.

Owner: Director General for Information Services.

4.h Issue: Cleaning—mainly around public areas such as toilets but also some other particular areas were identified.

Actions:

- Improved monitoring with joint contract measurement;
- More robust specification being drawn up for new contract commencing 2008;
- Complaints being analysed to highlight areas where changes in ways of working might be introduced (some changes have already been introduced as a result of this e.g. times of cleaning in certain areas to link in with busy usage);
- Internal follow-up survey has already shown that the changes introduced so far have made a difference for many people.

Timescale: Work in progress and some actions e.g. improved monitoring of contract already done.

Owner: Director General of Facilities.

4.i Issue: Works helpdesk—concerns around timing of minor repairs in particular. Continuous improvement also sought.

Actions:

- Analysis of works helpdesk calls against performance targets including in the Service Level Agreement (SLA) to identify any

- problem areas for corrective measures;
Upon completion all requestors to the helpdesk to receive a customer survey questionnaire via e mail. The response feedback is monitored. All negative responses are investigated and the overall performance reported to the SAA Senior Management Team. Positive response currently in excess of 96%;
- A review of performance measures, indicators and targets included in the SLA is being carried out to ensure that they meet the current needs of the House.

Timescale: The first two actions have been implemented and are subject to continuous feedback mechanisms. The completion of the review referred to in the third action is expected to be completed by October 2008.

Owner: Director General of Facilities.