

**Minutes of the Management Board meeting
held on Tuesday 25 March 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)
John Borley CB (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)
[s.40] (Risk Management Facilitator, for item 2)
Sue Harrison (Director of Catering and Retail
Services, for item 5)

1. Matters arising from previous meetings

1.1. Further to item 8 **John Borley** said that he planned to present an initial 25 year plan of work to the Board's April meeting. It was noted that a 25 year outline and a detailed five year plan would need to be presented to the Commission before the summer recess.

1.2. Further to item 9 the **Board Secretary** said that comments on the internal audit charter had been received and it would be considered by the Audit Committee at its April meeting.

2. Risk and performance

2.1. The Board first considered the performance information monthly report. It was noted that the Office of the Chief Executive would be tabling a paper to the May Board on the future of performance information, including the use of a balanced scorecard approach. The **Board Secretary** said that there would be bilateral discussions with Board members in order to ensure that their views were taken into account.

2.2. The **Chairman** then welcomed [s.40], Risk Management Facilitator, to present her paper relating to corporate risk management.

2.3. [s.40] said that the paper both provided a quarterly update for the Board and made suggestions as to the way forward for the risk management

process in the light of recent organisational changes, the latest audit of risk management from the House's audit partner PricewaterhouseCoopers and comments from the Audit Committee. The key gap identified by the most recent audit of risk management was an inability to escalate risks up the organisation. To deal with this [s.40] proposed that she should hold risk workshops with identified key risk owners at departmental and project level with a view to escalating the top two or three risks for consideration by the Management Board.

2.4. The paper included a risk management policy for the House of Commons which the Board was asked to approve, as well as a Principles and Concepts Manual designed to be an aid to managers. [s.40] also proposed that she would produce a Risk Guidance Manual aimed at all staff. Finally [s.40] suggested that the Board should consider engaging a risk specialist to perform a "risk healthcheck" to give the Board assurance that the House's risk processes were fit for purpose and that risk management was being embedded across the organisation.

2.5. The Board agreed to the draft policy documents, subject to any detailed drafting changes which would be forwarded to the Board Secretary. Rather than a full healthcheck being carried out at this stage it was agreed that a risk expert should be engaged to advise [s.40] on a personal basis.

2.6. *Action: Board members to forward drafting comments to the Board Secretary.*

3. Oral updates from Director Generals

3.1. Douglas Millar said that:

3.1.1. [s.24 and s.36(2)(b) and s.36(2)(c)]

3.1.2. The Serjeant at Arms would lead a review of passes and pass categories with a group from both Houses. The review would be presented to the Administration Committee and JCOS as well as to the House of Lords.

3.1.3. He had circulated to Board members the report of the Department of Chamber and Committee Services Change Team and the department's plans for open staff meetings to discuss it.

3.2. Andrew Walker said that:

3.2.1. The House would be appealing the recent Information Tribunal decision relating to the disclosure of information regarding 14 Members' allowances.

3.2.2. The end of the financial year would be reached at the end of the

week. The Director of Financial Management was liaising with Departmental Finance Officers regarding payments which needed to be made before year end.

3.2.3. The annual reporting year was coming to a close and staff should be beginning to complete self-assessments or bullet points and considering Forward Job Plans and Personal Development Plans for the coming year.

3.3. John Borley said that the successful reunification of Works and Estates and production of the 25 year strategy would be his highest priorities in the coming months.

3.4. Joan Miller said that PICT would formally become a joint department on 1 April. TUPE letters were being sent to all staff and a launch would be held on 2 April.

3.5. John Pullinger said that:

3.5.1. Plans for the Service Delivery Centre were underway, with a group led by Paul Silk undertaking the work for delivery. He proposed to circulate a note to Board members of progress so far and plans for the space, on which he would be grateful for any comments.

3.5.2. He had recently held two open meetings for Department of Information Services' staff. One was attended by Douglas Millar and the other by John Borley, which was both noted and appreciated by staff. The issue of Officer status had been raised at the meetings.

3.5.3. It was becoming clear that at certain times on certain days of the week there were so many invited visitors arriving at St Stephens entrance that it was not possible for the visitor assistants and security staff to cope. He would convene a meeting with the Serjeant at Arms and the Director of Catering and Retail with a view to improving the service that could be given to Members' guests and others through staggering arrival times.

4. Business Continuity

4.1. Douglas Millar introduced his first paper, relating to contingency planning and business continuity. The paper proposed that the two existing groups relating to these matters should be merged into one Business Risk and Resilience Group, chaired by the Serjeant at Arms and with a smaller, more focussed membership. The proposals contained within the paper had already been considered and approved by the House of Lords. The second paper contained the annual update for the Commission on progress made in business continuity planning.

4.2. The Board agreed to the proposal that the Contingency Planning Group

and the Business Continuity Planning Steering Group should be replaced by a Business Risk and Resilience Group. Subject to minor drafting amendments the Board agreed the annual update to the Commission on business continuity.

4.3. The **Chairman** then asked the Board to consider two further papers, regarding standby power supplies and progress in surveying the business criticality of Parliamentary buildings. The Board noted that it was helpful that these issues were now being considered on a building by building basis, but that further work needed to be done to gain an understanding of whether each building had sufficient power under normal and emergency circumstances, and for costed options to be presented to the Board on action to be taken if it did not, and to develop protocols as to the order of priority for the maintenance of services when sufficient power for an entire building was not available. Attention would need to be paid to potential growth in demand for services or increases in numbers of people based in a particular building.

4.4. The Board noted that these issues should be a priority for the Department of Facilities, working cooperatively with departments to ensure that informed decisions were taken as to the order of priority of services.

4.5. *Action: Further paper to be presented to the Board in May 2008.*

5. 14 Tothill Street

5.1. The **Chairman** welcomed Sue Harrison, Director of Catering and Retail.

5.2. **Sue Harrison** said that the paper related both to catering services and facilities management services in Tothill Street. Work had been undertaken to test whether there was interest in the market to undertake either catering or facilities management services or both. There had been marked interest from the marketplace in providing catering services, but little interest in facilities management. Sue's recommendation was not to outsource the two together as a facilities management contractor would probably sub-contract catering services, giving the House Service less control of the catering offering. The paper contained three possible options for a catering service, and costs for it to be provided either in-house or outsourced. Once the Board had made decisions then fit-out could begin in advance of the occupation of the building by Commons staff in Easter or summer 2009. The earliest that the House of Lords would occupy the building was likely to be Christmas 2008, but a final decision on their occupation had yet to be made.

5.3. The Board agreed that the Catering and Retail Directorate should take

forward the outsourcing of catering services in Tothill Street based on the second option outlined in the paper, that some facilities management services, including security and cleaning, would be provided by extending existing contracts, but that responsibility would be delegated to the Director General, Facilities to decide whether other staffing requirements, such as reception and servicing of meeting rooms could be provided by the catering companies who tendered for the catering contract.

6. Environmental targets

6.1. John Borley said that some positive work had taken place on meeting current energy and environmental targets, although this work needed to be more joined up within Facilities and with colleagues across the House Service. It was agreed that Director Generals would provide John with contacts for key staff in their areas who dealt with environmental matters.

6.2. The Board noted the update, and the leadership that would be provided by the Director General, Facilities, as well as the contribution that could and was being made by everyone on the Parliamentary Estate. It was agreed that further work should be undertaken, jointly with the House of Lords, to make recommendations on appropriate new sustainability targets.

7. Staff pay

7.1. The Board discussed the proposed pay remit for staff in Bands A-E and the catering group, and agreed a remit for the Commission's consideration.

7.2. [s.36(2)(b) and s.36(2)(c)]

7.3. [s.36(2)(b) and s.36(2)(c)]

8. Any other business

8.1. Andrew Walker said that he wished to take the Board's view regarding procurement of newspapers, where the House of Lords had asked the House of Commons if it wished to undertake a joint procurement exercise. The Lords proposal was for a framework contract with up to three providers. The Board agreed that the House of Commons should join the House of Lords in this procurement exercise, with representatives from the Department of Information Services and Department of Facilities being members of the group that would consider this.

8.2. The **Board Secretary** reminded the Board that it had undertaken to ensure that membership of House-wide second and third tier groups was

aligned to the new departmental structure. This did not always mean that departments would have only one representative on a group, but Director Generals should satisfy themselves that representation was adequate and up-to-date in their own departments.

[adjourned at 6.39pm

**Philippa Helme
Secretary**

**Malcolm Jack
Chairman**

17 April 2008