

**Minutes of the Management Board meeting
held on Thursday 19 April 2012**

Those present: Robert Rogers (Clerk and Chief Executive) (Chairman)
David Natzler (Clerk Assistant and Director General of Chamber and Committee Services)
John Borley CB (Director General of Facilities)
John Pullinger (Director General of Information Services)
Andrew Walker (Director General of HR and Change)
Myfanwy Barrett (Director of Finance)
Joan Miller (Director of PICT)
Alex Jablonowski (external member)

In attendance: Matthew Hamlyn (Board Secretary)
Gosia McBride (Assistant Secretary)
Peter Mason (Parliamentary Security Director, for item 4)
Elizabeth Honer (Director of Savings, for item 5)
Judith Toland (Income Generation Initiation Project Manager, for item 5)
Edward Wood (Convenor of the Access to Facilities Group, for item 6)
Bob Twigger (Chair of the 2012 Survey of Services Project Board, for item 7)
Paul Dillon-Robinson (Director of Internal Audit, for item 8)

1. Matters arising from previous meetings

1.1. Matthew Hamlyn reported that action 1 (Director of HR services to provide HR information on a quarterly basis) was on hold. Actions 2, 6, 7, 9 and 14 were complete. Actions 4, 5 and 13 were the subject of Board papers. Action 8 (DHRC to consult on a House-wide alcohol policy for House staff for the Board to consider) was ongoing. A draft would be considered by RMG that afternoon and would then come to the Board. Further to action 10 (Myfanwy Barrett to update on the implementation of the counterfraud policy), a paper would go to the Board the following month. The Speaker had been briefed informally on the railings projects and would receive a formal briefing the following week (action 11). Action 12 (OCE to draft communications for staff on the Corporate Business Plan) would be taken forward once the Commission had agreed the Plan. A paper would go to the June Board on bicameral health and safety arrangements (action 16).

2. Performance and Risk

- 2.1. The Board considered the Performance and Risk Report. The **Chairman** suggested that the highlighted risk to the savings programme should be considered under agenda item five.
- 2.2. The **Chairman** emphasised the need for consistency across departments in the scoring of risk. **John Pullinger** noted that PICTAB had recently discussed the issue of consistent scoring between programmes. The Board **agreed** that the Corporate Risk Management Team and Portfolio Manager should be asked to consider the consistency of risk scoring.
- 2.3. *Action: Corporate Risk Management Team and Portfolio Manager to report back to the Board on consistency of risk scoring between programmes and departments.*
- 2.4. The **Chairman** raised the highlighted risk of particularly significant demands being placed on the Department of Facilities, especially Catering and Retail Services. **John Borley** said that matters were improving in CRS. They now had a Business Improvement Manager who was doing good work. Interviews would take place the following week for the Interim Director of Catering. Estates was still struggling to recruit project managers, but was now getting focused support from Alix Langley from DHRC. **Alex Jablonowski** reported that he had recently met with the external member of the Parliamentary Estates Board, who had provided assurance that, although the gaps were a serious problem, the most important programmes and projects had been prioritised, and were proceeding. The Board noted that Estates would face a greater challenge in the longer term, when demand would be much higher, and **agreed** to discuss the issue further at its informal meeting the following Friday.
- 2.5. **Andrew Walker** urged the Board to give feedback to the Portfolio Manager on the quarterly Portfolio Dashboard Report. **Matthew Hamlyn** noted that the Report was also being sent to project and programme managers, who were finding it very useful.
- 2.6. The Board considered the 2011/12 Budget Forecast Outturn Report and reiterated the importance of considering the reasons for underspends as part of the 10% challenge. The **Chairman** asked whether HAIS would make it easier to rebaseline earlier in the year, and more frequently if necessary, and **Myfanwy Barrett** confirmed that it would. Budget holders were being asked to budget for a middle level of activity, with access to a central contingency if necessary. One factor in the resource underspend was the reduction in Chamber business leading up to the end of the session. **David Natzler** said that that should have been anticipated – departments had taken too cautious a view. He asked about the impact of the recent postage increases on budgets. **Myfanwy Barrett** said she would look into that and report back.
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- 2.7. *Action: Myfanwy Barrett to investigate the impact of the recent postage increases on budgets and include an update in the next Budget Forecast Outturn Report.*
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3. Oral updates

3.1. **Andrew Walker** reported that PCS would be holding a strike on 10 May, although formal notification had not yet been received. It was possible that GMB would also call a strike but the other unions were unlikely to do so as they were balloting their staff to accept the Government's pension proposals.

3.2. **Andrew Walker** reported that the Information Commissioner was considering a case about the House's use of section 37 in responding to an FoI request asking for correspondence relating to the Speaker's Coat of Arms.

3.3. **Joan Miller** reported that certain IT services had been down overnight. This had had various effects, including slowing email traffic and pagination of the vote bundle. All services had been restored by 6am except H AISL and Sharepoint, which had been fixed by 11.30am. Engineers had stayed overnight, far beyond their contracted hours, to resolve the problems. PICT was now planning for 24/7 server support. The **Chairman** said that he was very grateful to the engineers and the Board **agreed** that they should be invited to a staff recognition party.

3.4. **Joan Miller** reported that from 18 May mobile devices would be updated with access to the intranet, annunciators, and other services, including the ability to download some documents directly into Goodreader.

3.5. **Matthew Hamlyn** updated the Board on progress in recruiting its second non-executive member. The **Chairman** thanked those involved in the process.

3.6. **Matthew Hamlyn** reminded the Board that it needed to take a view on what to do with the recent Investors in People report. The Board **agreed** that the report should be sent to Business Managers first and then published on the intranet, with a statement setting the report in the context of the Board's current plans, including the development of a People Strategy. **Matthew Hamlyn** suggested that this could be linked with communications to staff on the Corporate Business Plan if the timing worked.

3.7. *Action: Andrew Walker, with support from the Central Communications team, to draft a statement for publication of the*

Investors in People report for agreement by the Board by correspondence.

4. Security issues

4.1. Introducing the ICT Security – cloud computing and data paper, **Joan Miller** explained that the paper was only an update; the Board would not be asked to take a decision on Cloud until January. PICT had identified three main risks with Cloud: ownership of data; security of data; and ability to find and retrieve data, and would be investigating those risks over the next nine months with one or two pilots and a model office in 7 Millbank. A key element of that work would be to look at classification of data and PICT would be inviting the Strategy User Group to be involved in testing. PICT was wholly engaged with the SIROs and the Parliamentary Security Director and was also working closely with the Cabinet Office and Home Office in relation to their procurement of G-Cloud services. The Government had adopted tough criteria for accreditation which PICT might use in its model office.

4.2. **Peter Mason** said that he had contributed to the paper. The links with the Cabinet Office were very helpful and if a decision was taken to join with G-Cloud that would help dilute risks. The Government was currently reviewing its levels of classification in anticipation of Cloud with the aim of reducing them to three levels.

4.3. The Board considered the principles and processes proposed for the next phase of the ICT Strategy Programme. In discussion the following points were made:

- Assessing the risks was very important. The service needed to be resilient and the House needed to retain ownership of its intellectual property. It was in the unusual situation of having a lot of publicly available data whose integrity was vital, for example legislative documents.
- PICT was taking that into account. The plan was to publish the data and keep authentic control copies.
- It was sensible to keep in step with the Government and learn lessons from their plans.
- There would be a lot of work in ensuring the House classified its data appropriately and it was not yet clear whether it would be possible to do so in a way that matched the Government. Major savings were hanging on the programme and there was a genuine risk they would not be achieved if a decision was taken that the risks were too great.
- The Board needed to give PICT a clear direction on the amount of risk it was prepared to take.

- The technology was likely to be secure. People's behaviours would be the bigger issue.

4.4. The Board **confirmed** that it was content with the approach proposed in the paper and **agreed** that it should receive another update in six months' time, either at the joint Board meeting with the Lords at the end of October or at a separate meeting.

4.5. The Board considered the specific risk arising from staff using, deploying or commissioning cloud-based applications outside pilot activity. The Board noted that policies already existed which should prevent such activity by House staff and **agreed** that they should be enforced.

4.6. **Peter Mason** updated the Board on general security matters.

5. Savings Programme

5.1. The Board discussed their joint informal meeting with the Commission about the implications of the Clock Tower debate and **agreed** that it had been very useful. The **Chairman** noted that the Commission understood that the Corporate Business Plan had to be agreed on 30 April. A savings programme document could be put before the House at a later date, once the Commission had decided how savings plans could best be validated by the House. The Finance and Services Committee would be asked to advise on the mechanics of a possible debate. **Matthew Hamlyn** noted that a paper was being put together for the Commission meeting summarising next steps.

5.2. **John Pullinger** introduced Judith Toland, the Income Generation Initiation Project Manager, and summarised his Income Generation paper. He explained that the attached draft paper to the Finance and Services Committee and Commission was being revised following comments from Board members and the Commission Secretary. Its main focus would be on the arguments for a charity and the process of engagement. A separate paper would follow at a later date focusing on practical issues.

5.3. The Board considered some of those issues. In discussion the following points were made:

- Setting up a charity would require considerable management time. Additional commercial skills might also be required. There would also be set-up costs.
- Those requirements would be set out in detail in the business plan.
- Careful consideration would have to be given to the governance relationship between the charity and the House administration.

- Some Members were opposed to the creation of a charity as a matter of principle.
- Clearly defining the fundamental purposes of the charity was crucial.
- Stewardship of a national asset would be an important element of that.
- There were many misunderstandings and assumptions about the possible objects of the charity – for example, it couldn't fund planned maintenance as PED could not operate on uncertain income from a third party.
- It might not make sense to set up a charity before any decision on a possible future decant to carry out works.
- It would not be irrelevant for a charity tasked with stewardship to be set up before such a decant. In any case the likely timetable for the work would be quite long.
- The House could receive grants for capital improvement projects e.g. renovation of the Crypt Chapel or building of an Education Centre.
- The charity should not be involved in flagship capital investment alone, as one of the Board's aims in setting it up was to provide savings to the resource estimate.
- The House would also benefit from charging the charity for use of services and facilities.

5.4. The Board **agreed** that John Pullinger should copy the final version of the paper to the Finance and Services Committee to all Board members.

6. Access to facilities

6.1. Edward Wood introduced the Access to Facilities paper. His Group had consulted nearly 650 staff. Only 20% of staff believed there wasn't a problem. The consultation had established that staff were more concerned about a two tier system than access to facilities. In every department the majority of respondents agreed that there should no longer be a separate category of staff pass. A majority of B and A staff agreed, and there was almost a majority in SCS. Bands B and C had the strongest views and felt most excluded. The Group had not received a clear steer on what to do about access to facilities so it had tried to draw up a balanced package of proposals. There were risks, including that some staff might be disappointed, that Members might express concern or that some facilities might end up underused. There were also legal risks in both directions. It was possible that Officer status was a contractual arrangement, so there would need to be negotiations with the unions, but it was also possible that the House was currently indirectly discriminating against non-Officers. There was a lack of consensus about whether the term Officer should be abolished or extended to cover all staff, so a number of options were being put to the Board.

- 6.2. The **Chairman** thanked Edward Wood and the Access to Facilities Group for a superb piece of work.
- 6.3. The Board discussed the paper. It **agreed** that there should no longer be a separate, across-the-board category of staff pass to regulate access, and that that change should be implemented as and when passes became due for renewal to minimise cost.
- 6.4. The Board considered the issue of nomenclature. In discussion the following points were made:
- Describing all staff as officers was common practice in local government.
 - Staff would be proud to be called officers.
 - It would be far better to abolish the term as that was what the Board had initially intended. Not doing so would cause continuing confusion.
 - No consensus had emerged in the consultation so it was difficult to say how strongly people would feel either way.
- The Board **agreed** to abolish the term officer, with no replacement term.
- 6.5. The Board considered the proposal that from October 2012 Doorkeepers should control access near the Chamber on the basis of business need. **David Natzler** noted that discussions on this had not yet taken place with the Serjeant. The Board **agreed** the recommendation, subject to consultation with the Serjeant.
- 6.6. *Action: Edward Wood, Chair of the Access to Facilities Group, to ensure Serjeant is consulted on the proposal that from October 2012 Doorkeepers should control access near the Chamber on the basis of business need.*
- 6.7. The Board discussed the recommendations relating to access to facilities. The **Chairman** said that he did not have a difficulty with any of the proposals. **David Natzler** said that most of them were fine, but he had an alternative recommendation relating to access to the Terrace and some other propositions to equalise access rules. The Board **agreed** that Edward Wood and David Natzler should discuss his proposal and propositions further, with the OCE's support, and that the Board should sign-off the recommendations on access either at the next meeting or at a separate meeting before the next Board.
- 6.8. *Action: OCE to broker further discussion between Edward Wood and David Natzler on his alternative proposal relating to access to the Terrace and other propositions. OCE either to arrange another*

meeting for the Board to finalise the recommendations on access or add that item to the May agenda.

7. Members' Survey of Services

- 7.1. **Bob Twigger** introduced the 2012 Survey of Services paper, noting that paragraph 9 should have stated that the benchmark figure for ICT services was 4.65 rather than 4.9.
- 7.2. The Board discussed the draft report of the 2012 Survey of Services and actions proposed. Board members suggested that additional actions should be added, including for cleaning of toilets, catering, and booking of tours and school visits, and **agreed** that Bob Twigger should circulate a revised draft of the paper to the Administration Committee with a longer list of commitments for the Board to agree by correspondence.
- 7.3. *Action: Bob Twigger to circulate a revised draft of the paper to the Administration Committee with a longer list of actions for the Board to agree by correspondence.*
- 7.4. The Board **agreed** that a new project board should be established led by John Benger, Director of Service Delivery in DIS, to review options for gathering Members' views in future.

8. Draft Internal Audit plan/quarterly update

- 8.1. The Board considered the Draft Internal Audit Programme for 2012/13 and Quarterly Report from Internal Audit papers. **Myfanwy Barrett** said that she was happy with the overall approach in the draft programme, but asked whether there was enough coverage of DCCS and DIS to provide assurance. **Andrew Walker** noted that there was significant spend in those departments. **Paul Dillon-Robinson** said that departmental reviews would help. Risk registers covered those areas but independent assurance was also important. The **Chairman** said that there were suitable items for audit in those departments, for example, capture of division information had previously been audited. **John Pullinger** noted that DIS had had a number of audits in the previous year. **Paul Dillon-Robinson** added that Internal Audit had 80 days contingency for matters that might come up in-year.
- 8.2. **Alex Jablonowski** suggested that the operation of the respect policy might be audited. **Paul Dillon-Robinson** said that the audit could cover whether staff knew there was a policy and whether grievances were being properly captured. The Board noted that more cases would need to be brought before an audit was

worthwhile, but **agreed** that the policy should be the subject of a future audit. The Board **agreed** the Draft Internal Audit Programme.

- 8.3.** The Board confirmed that they liked the style and approach in the quarterly report and **agreed** that it should be published on the Sharepoint site and circulated to the Audit Committee. The Board **agreed** that it would consider wider dissemination after the next report.
- 8.4.** *Action: Director of Internal Audit to publish the Quarterly Report from Internal Audit on the Sharepoint site. Secretary to the Audit Committees to circulate the quarterly report to the Committee. Board to consider whether to disseminate the report more widely after the next update.*

9. Any other business

- 9.1.** Further to the take note paper on the proactive publication policy (MB2012.P.41), the Board noted that good progress had been made already. Publishing more information would be resource intensive, but the Board **agreed** that it should keep up with best practice in Government, including publishing organisation charts with numbers and costs of staff. **David Natzler** asked about progress in publishing payments over £25,000. **Myfanwy Barrett** explained that the data were almost ready. Publication had initially been held up because the same staff were working on HAIS renewal, but it was now in final stages. Checks were just being made with the Lords to make sure Commons plans were in sync with their proposals. She would send an update round the Board.
- 9.2.** *Action: Myfanwy Barrett to send an update round the Board on publication of payments over £25,000.*
- 9.3.** The Board **agreed** the revised terms of reference of the Parliamentary Estates Board.
- 9.4.** Further to the take note paper on Sickness absence (MB20120.P.42), **Alex Jablonowski** asked how the levels of long term sickness in Facilities compared to benchmarks. **Andrew Walker** said that they were acceptable, given the number of manual workers, but that there had been some lessons to learn about earlier referrals to Occupational Health. The levels of long term sickness caused by mental health issues in the House were low, although they would continue to be monitored.

[adjourned at 18.00

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**Matthew Hamlyn
Secretary**

**Robert Rogers
Chairman**

April 2012