

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE JOINT MANAGEMENT BOARD

Meeting in Dover House, London on 21 January 2009

Present: David Middleton (Chair)
John Henderson
Robert Marshall
Charles Mullin
Mark Taylor
[Redacted]

Item 1: Introduction & apologies

1. David advised the Board that the process of identifying his successor was underway but that no further information was available at present. John Henderson will act as Director should there be any delay in appointing David's successor. David will remain in post until the first week of February and Jim Gallagher is prepared to play a greater role if necessary.
2. David Middleton welcomed everyone to the meeting and noted apologies from John Ward.

Item 2: Minutes of the last meeting & matters arising (other than those dealt with as separate items)

Minutes

3. The minutes of the last meeting were approved as a correct record.

Matters Arising

4. **Para 12 – JMB Specific Health & Safety event** – it was noted that 12 February is the date for the event and that those present had signed up to attend.
5. **Para 26 – Compliance with IT Codes of Conduct & Whistleblowing** – it was noted that guidance will be issued to staff next week.

Action: [Redacted]

Item 3: Staffing

6. Members discussed the staffing report previously circulated and noted the current staffing position. David commented that the staffing situation, which had been somewhat unsettled since the arrival of a full-time Secretary of State, now appeared to be settling down, subject to current recruitment processes being completed.

7. Charles Mullin advised members that OSAG are currently undergoing restructuring which will result in two divisions with clearer definition of their specific areas of work.
8. David expressed his appreciation of the work undertaken by [REDACTED] during this particularly busy period.

Item 4: Finance

Projected Outturn 2008/09

9. [REDACTED] referred to the paper previously circulated and invited members to note the current projected outturn, against the 2008-09 allocated budget.
10. The Periodical Review of Scottish Parliament Boundaries currently being undertaken by the Boundary Commission is expected to cost more than the provision agreed at the Comprehensive Spending Review therefore the additional amount will require to be met from our EYF reserve.
11. The Scotland Office has purchased new security equipment from within the capital budget.
12. HM Treasury and the Ministry of Justice Estimates Team have been notified of our intention to draw down some of our EYF provision at the Spring Supplementary Estimate.
13. [REDACTED] advised the Board that he attended a meeting with Treasury officials two weeks ago primarily to discuss the funding of two recent by-elections. It was agreed at that meeting that Treasury would cover the cost of these by-elections.
14. [REDACTED] expressed concern that he is not always advised of expenditure when it is committed and that he could be inadvertently reporting inaccurate outturn figures as a result.
15. The Board discussed the budgeting exercise for 2009-10 and agreed that, rather than adopt the bid process which was used in 2008-09, [REDACTED] should produce estimates on the basis of rolling forward. Charles Mullin advised that OAG had already looked at their proposed forward budget. It was noted that there is very little discretionary spend as pay, building maintenance and travel costs make up the bulk of the Offices' expenditure.
16. It was agreed that [REDACTED] should liaise with Treasury and that David Middleton should write to Treasury regarding the financial position of the Offices.

Action: [REDACTED] & David Middleton

Payment Performance

17. Members noted that the Offices have paid 98.8% of invoices within the agreed timescale to the end of December 2008. The Prime Minister announced in October 2008 that Government departments were revising their payment performance targets from 30 days to 10 days. The Offices paid 93.2% of invoices within the new 10 day payment target during the transitional period between November and December which was better than most other departments.
18. The Board thanked [REDACTED] and his team for their hard work in ensuring that the new 10 day target was met.

Item 5: JMB (IT)

19. Robert Marshall reported that the new internet site was due to go live on 5 December but there had been a delay in the lead up to Christmas. No definite date is available as yet. Robert thanked [REDACTED] and other members of the Internet and Intranet Working Group (IIWG) for their hard work. The site looks good and is a definite step forward.
20. Robert referred to the previously circulated paper which outlined the three options for redevelopment of the intranet site. The first option, for ISIS to update the existing intranet site, is no-longer considered viable as, contrary to earlier advice, we would be charged for the redevelopment. ISIS would not provide any ongoing technical support and, in addition, we would have to purchase Dreamweaver software licenses for each person with responsibility for updating / maintaining the site.
21. The second option, to update the existing site in-house, is not a possibility as we have no in-house technical expertise and, as with the second option, we would have to purchase Dreamweaver software licenses for each person with responsibility for updating / maintaining the site.
22. The third and preferred option is SharePoint which provides a central storage and collaboration space for documents, information and ideas. ISIS will carry out the design work and can electronically migrate data on the existing site to the new one. It is available to everyone with SCOTS access and the design can reflect the SO web-site.
23. The annual cost of the Platinum version of the product, which provides 1GB of storage, was discussed as were the initial design set up cost and the daily charge for a web designers time. ISIS are of the opinion that SharePoint represents the best value for money. All agreed that the costs seemed moderate.
24. David thanked Robert and his team for all the work carried out on the project and members agreed to proceed with option three.
25. On MOU, Robert indicated that matters were still not settled and that a draft would be circulated for approval before signing off and putting to Ministers.

Action: Robert Marshall

26. It was suggested that the possibility of setting up an independent IT system as a contingency could be discussed with the incoming Director.

Action: Robert Marshall

Item 6: Current Priorities

27. David Middleton reported that the Secretary of State is still working hard to raise and maintain his public profile and has been doing well in the media so far. He continues to look for opportunities to promote his own position and the role of the UK Government in Scotland. His main priorities over the coming months are likely to be the economy and energy.

28. The Calman Commission published its first report on 2 December 2008. This was followed by a consultation document on 19 December. The UK Government will aim to provide further evidence by end February.

Item 7 : Dates for Future Meetings

29. Future dates of 20 March (video-conference) and 19 May in Melville Crescent were noted.

Item 8: Any Other Business

30. Mark Taylor announced his intention to stand down following the next meeting and added that he had very much enjoyed working with members of JMB.

31. John Henderson wished David well in his new role and thanked him for his Chairmanship of JMB. Charles Mullin also thanked David for his support of OAG.


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