

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE JOINT MANAGEMENT BOARD

Meeting held in Dover House on 17 September 2009

Present: Alisdair McIntosh (Chair)
John Henderson
Jillian Kay
[REDACTED]
Kate Richards
Charles Mullin
John Ward
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED] (Secretary)

Item 1: Introduction & apologies

1. Alisdair McIntosh welcomed everyone to the meeting. In particular he welcomed [REDACTED] who was attending for the first time in his new capacity as Head of Corporate Services.
2. Apologies were received from Robert Marshall.

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

3. The minutes of the last meeting were approved as a correct record.
4. Charles Mullin however commented on the statement at para. 6 'there is a significant outflow from GLSS'. It was noted that the need to recruit more staff is due to additional workload as opposed to outflow.
5. Alisdair said he was aware that some of his action points from the last meeting had not yet been taken forward but this situation will be addressed shortly.
6. It was noted that all staff have now completed the e-learning Information Assurance module.

Item 3: Context / current priorities / forward look – verbal update from Alisdair McIntosh

7. Alisdair advised those present that a meeting had been held at the end of July between SO Ministers and senior managers to review the spring term and to plan for the autumn term. This meeting had provided a useful opportunity to clarify Ministerial commitments and to discuss outcomes from the Calman Commission.
8. This meeting was followed by a meeting of the SO management team which took place on 19 August. A number of key actions were identified:-

- Developing an integrated strategic planning document that relates key external activity to the 'bigger picture' of strategic priorities.
 - Reviewing the processes in private office.
 - Looking at the way we communicate across the office to make the transmission of key information quicker and more reliable.
9. A further meeting will be held during October to review progress.
10. It was noted that, although the main focus of these actions is on the future role of the Scotland Office, it is important to ensure that the position of OAG is considered at the same time.
11. Alisdair welcomed Kate as a member of JMB. He also advised that MoJ had suggested some possible external members. Alisdair will discuss these nominations further with MoJ before a final decision is made on the appointment(s).

Action: Alisdair

Item 4: Budget / Projected Outturn 2009/10 & Payment Performance – verbal update

Budget / Projected Outturn

12. It was reported to the Board that, in general terms, the figures make reasonably good reading against the allocated budget, however it was emphasised that they are only as accurate as the information received from budget centre managers.
13. OAG is showing a small overspend on pay, this figure is however inflated by staff seconded from other Government departments, where corresponding income will be recovered from the appropriate department. Overall OAG is showing a small underspend.
14. SO is showing a small underspend on pay which is attributable to unfilled vacancies which have now been filled so is unlikely to change. SO is also showing an underspend on non-pay costs. This is made up of underspends on repair & maintenance and legal costs.
15. Alasdair acknowledged that budget centre managers had been working hard to remain within budget. There is relatively little which can be done about pay costs but efforts must continue to be made to bear down hard on costs and to use the most economical options for travel and events.

Action: All

16. Alisdair agreed to investigate the best method of disseminating accumulated air miles.

Action: Alisdair

Payment Performance

17. It was reported that the Offices are regularly in second place in the UK Government statistics for payment performance after DEFRA. The problem is that we have relatively few invoices so one late payment can skew the % figures. He stressed the importance of ensuring that processes are in place to authorise invoices for payment during periods of annual leave.

Item 5: Corporate Issues – verbal update

18. It was reported to the Board that staffing levels are within budget and on complement in both Offices. It would be useful to manage staff turnover more actively and consideration would be given to using the OAG model within SO.
19. Kate stated that it is her aim to have a private office team who can pick up each others work to cover periods of absence and be fully flexible and adaptable. This approach is also beneficial from a staff development viewpoint. She agreed that SO private office staff could provide some cover if necessary to the AG's private office.

Item 6: Risk Registers – discussion of top risks including flu pandemic

20. There followed a discussion on the changes to the risk registers since the last meeting.
21. Charles highlighted Risk 8 on the OSAG risk register 'Breach of information and data security: Status change. Due to ongoing work in relation to Information Assurance, and in the light of recent Audit report findings, the status of this risk has been changed from managed to partially managed'. It was agreed that the SO and OAG should work together on data security.
22. John Henderson stressed the importance of reputation risk to the Offices and suggested that there should be further in-depth discussion around this topic. SO stakeholder engagement should also be a priority.
23. John Ward emphasised the security risk which OAG face regarding IT and in particular the need to protect client data. He will feed these comments on to Robert Marshall.

Action: John Ward

24. Charles also expressed concern over the security of hard copy records and records management practices in general. He felt it was useful for SO and OAG to have 'compare and contrast' conversations on this issue of common concern.
25. It was reported to the Board that more work is required on the SO risk register and that finance and the Scottish Office files held by the Scottish Government

should be added to the register. In the case of pandemic flu the Cabinet Office and DH planning assumption is that up to 12% of staff could be absent at one time.

26. It was agreed that further discussion on particular areas of concern should take place at the next meeting.

Item 7: Dates of forthcoming meetings

27. It was noted that the dates for forthcoming meetings are Thursday 19th November and Monday 18th January.

Item 8: AOB

28. Alisdair suggested that it would be worth considering a snapshot of the pattern of engagement between the Offices and the Scottish Government and stakeholders in order to identify any significant gaps.

**Strategy Branch
23 September 2009**