SECRETARIAT MANAGEMENT GROUP

THURSDAY, 13 JUNE 2013 AT 2.00PM
ROOM 106, PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS

APPROVED

Present:	**Trevor Reaney**
	Gareth McGrath
	Sebastien Mingout
	John Stewart
	Richard Stewart
	Hugh Widdis
In Attendance	**Cathy McGowan**
	Edmund Kelly
	David Johnston
	Susie Brown
	Brian Devlin
	Shauna Mageean
	Nuala Dunwoody
	Robin Ramsey
	Ken Eccles

1   Apologies

1.1   Apologies were received from Stephen Welch. Sebastien Mingout deputised on Mr Welch's behalf.

2   Declaration of Interests

2.1   No interests were declared.

3   Minutes of Previous Meeting/Matters Arising

3.1   The Minutes of the meeting of 15 May 2013 had been approved and published on 29 May 2013. John Stewart highlighted that the visit from staff from the Kosovo Parliament had been postponed until September 2013.

4   SMG Action Points

4.1   The Action Points list was reviewed. Members were asked to advise Jim Beatty of further updates and amendments.

CORPORATE STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION FRAMEWORK

5   Business Plans

5.1   Richard Stewart informed SMG that Quarterly Monitoring for 2013/14 will be carried out in July 2013.

6   Strategic Work Strands

6.1   Business Efficiency Programme

Eddie Kelly, BEP Team leader, joined the meeting at 2.07pm and updated SMG on the BEP progress. He highlighted that final reports had been agreed for

- Commission and Corporate Support Unit;
- Information Systems;
- Speaker's Office; and
- Support Services and Office Resources

and had been forwarded to the Clerk/Director General for consideration. He also drew SMG's attention to the final scoping documents which were currently at review stage, namely:

- Finance Office
- Procurement Office
- Office of the Examiner of Statutory Rules
- Internal Audit Unit and the Governance Officer
- Personal Secretary roles not yet reviewed

SMG noted that the project will conclude in the near future. SMG further noted that Sean Gallagher would be leaving the Project Team in July 2013.

6.2   Institutional Review

Gareth McGrath informed SMG that the Assembly and Executive Review Committee would meet on 18 June 2013 to consider their Review of D'Hondt, Community Designation and Provisions for Opposition. He also provided an update on the work of the Committee Review Group. The report of the Group will be drafted during summer recess.

6.3 Organisational Development

Richard Stewart informed SMG that CCSU were in the process of drafting a scoping document in relation to taking the matter forward.

Trevor Reaney also informed SMG that he had tasked several officials with developing a preliminary scoping document to take forward an Assembly Gender Action Plan and would provide an update to the next meeting.

6.4 Organisational Redesign

Trevor Reaney informed SMG that the new Project Board would hold its first meeting on 26 June 2013 and he would provide an update to the next meeting.

7 Implementation Updates

7.1 Co-ordination, Consultation, Communication and Engagement

There were no developments to note.

7.2 Vacancy Management Group (VMG)

Richard Stewart informed SMG that the VMG had held a meeting on 1 June 2013. SMG agreed that further consideration was required in relation to the role and remit of VMG within the context of the delivery of BEP recommendations.

Action: RICHARD STEWART

7.3 Financial Management Group (FMG)

There were no developments to note.

7.4 IT Prioritisation Group

There were no developments to note.

LEGAL AND GOVERNANCE

8 Corporate Risk Register

8.1 David Johnston joined the meeting at 2.50pm and briefed SMG on proposed changes to the register. SMG agreed to the proposed changes.

8.2 It was agreed that Trevor Reaney and Hugh Widdis would progress the transition to a 5 x 5 matrix in line with the Risk Management Audit recommendations during the course of the Summer Recess.

8.3 Trevor Reaney also proposed that SMG participate in a 'stocktake' exercise over the course of the Summer Recess to examine the current status of strategies and approaches within the Secretariat.

Action: TREVOR REANEY / HUGH WIDDIS

9 Bribery Risk Assessment

9.1 Hugh Widdis sought SMG's consideration of a draft Bribery Risk Assessment prior to consideration by SARC following Summer Recess.

INFORMATION AND OUTREACH

10 Print Reduction Strategy

10.1 Susie Brown joined the meeting at 3.05pm. John Stewart provided SMG with an update in relation to the implementation of the e-Committee packs scheduled for the final week in June. He also made a presentation to SMG on 'Digital First', a fully managed print platform approach within the Assembly. Following consideration, it was agreed that Susie Brown would proceed with the development of a Terms of Reference for consideration at a future SMG meeting.

10.2 John Stewart agreed that he would forward a copy of the presentation and encouraged Directors to share the information within their staff teams.

Action: JOHN STEWART/SUSIE BROWN

11 Review of Engagement Strategy

11.1 John Stewart spoke to this paper. He outlined the next steps on the development of a new Engagement Strategy. Following consideration

of the proposals, SMG agreed that both a project board and supporting team be convened to realise the project. SMG further agreed that an external consultant should be commissioned to undertake the consultation and development of the Strategy.

Action: JOHN STEWART

12 Use of IT Resources (Non-Secretariat Staff)

12.1 Brian Devlin joined the meeting at 3.46pm. He provided SMG with information relating to the draft policy for the Use of ICT Resources as would apply to MLAs and non-Secretariat staff. SMG discussed the policy and responsibilities (including sanctions) and agreed that the draft policy should now be forwarded to the Commission for approval.

12.2 Brian also informed SMG that HR was working on the development of guidance relating to the use of Social Media and that he would update the draft policy accordingly.

Action: JOHN STEWART / BRIAN DEVLIN

13 Microsoft Enterprise Agreement

13.1 Brian Devlin spoke to this paper. He provided SMG with the background information for the business case for the renewal of the software licensing agreement with Microsoft Ltd, known as an Enterprise Agreement. He highlighted that the agreement covered licensing of selected server and desktop operating systems along with selected server and desktop application suites. Following consideration, SMG approved the business case.

Action: JOHN STEWART/ BRIAN DEVLIN

FACILITIES

14 Function/Events – Terms and Conditions

14.1 Sebastien Mingout spoke to this paper. He provided information relating to the upgrade and formal implementation of the terms & conditions policy for the booking of functions & events and associated risks. SMG considered the cost related difficulties and approved the revised policies terms, conditions and related approach to risk management. It was further agreed that the information would be forwarded to the next meeting of the Assembly Commission for information.

Action: STEPHEN WELCH / SEBASTIEN MINGOUT

CLERKING AND REPORTING

15   EU Strategy

15.1   Shauna Mageean and Nuala Dunwoody joined the meeting at 4.35pm. Nuala provided SMG with background in relation to the project and highlighted the value added by having a dedicated European Project Manager within the Secretariat to deal with Members queries.

15.2   Shauna spoke to the paper. She provided SMG with a summary of her work covering the last 15 months in post and sought SMG's agreement with the recommendation to appoint a permanent Assembly European Manager. SMG considered the resources and location proposals associated with the appointment and agreed that the paper should now be forwarded to the next Commission meeting for consideration.

Action: NUALA DUNWOODY / SHAUNA MAGEEAN

CORPORATE SERVICES

16   HR Management Information

16.1   Richard Stewart spoke to this paper. He highlighted that at 31 May 2013, a total of 98.5 training days had occurred which equated to an average of 0.3 day per staff member. He further reported that the cumulative average working days lost per employee for the period May 2012 – April 2013 was 10.7 days, which represents an increase of 0.1 compared with the April 2012 – March 2013 figure of 10.6. Trevor Reaney emphasised the need to urgently progress work to reduce these figures.

17   Managing Attendance Policy

17.1   Richard Stewart spoke to this paper. He provided background to the development of the revised Managing Attendance Policy. Following consideration, SMG approved the revised policy and agreed that it issue immediately to staff and be updated within the Staff Handbook.

18   Wellbeing Action Plan 2012/13 – Review

18.1   Richard Stewart spoke to this paper relating to the review of the Health and Wellbeing Action Plan 2011 – 2013. SMG noted the contents of the paper and approved the development of a new Health and

Wellbeing Action Plan for 2013 – 2015. SMG noted the importance of developing this plan in supporting secretariat staff.

19   New Procurement Regulations

19.1   SMG noted the proposed actions required for the Assembly to comply with new procurement regulations aimed at modernising public procurement in the European Union.

20   Future Commission/SMG Business

20.1   Robin Ramsey joined the meeting at 10pm. SMG noted the future work plans and considered the agenda for the next Commission meeting, namely:-

- Clerk/DG Update Report
- SARC Annual Report 2012/2013
- Assembly EU Strategy
- Development of a new Engagement Strategy
- Use of IT Resources Policy
- Functions and Events Terms and Conditions

20.2   The Commission will meet on Wednesday, 26 June 2013 at 1.00pm.

20.3   Trevor Reaney emphasised the need to meet the deadlines for drafting responses to Assembly Commission Questions for Oral answer as set out in the relevant guidelines. He agreed that CCSU would review the deadlines to ensure the maximum time available for drafting.

Action: T LOGUE

ADDITIONAL BUSINESS

21   SMG Evaluation

21.1   Hugh Widdis agreed to explore alternative options for evaluating the performance of SMG and would report back to the next meeting.

Action: H WIDDIS

22   Directors' Updates

22.1   **Security Update**
Ken Eccles joined the meeting at 5.20pm and advised SMG of the security update in relation to arrangements within Parliament Buildings

and the Stormont Estate during the G8 Summit meeting in Fermanagh. It was agreed that a Postmaster would issue to Secretariat staff highlighting the security arrangements during the period until Wednesday 19 June 2013.
Action: KEN ECCLES

22.2   Gareth McGrath informed SMG that a meeting had been held to discuss All Party Groups in the context of the lobbying scandal in Westminster and confirmed that systems within the Assembly are robust to address any potential difficulties. He highlighted that the matter would be kept under review.

22.3   Hugh Widdis provided an update in relation to the current audit programme within the Secretariat and informed SMG that he intended to release the first copy of a Corporate Governance circular aimed at all AG2, AG3 and Heads of Business within the Secretariat.

22.4   On behalf of Stephen Welch, Sebastien Mingout informed SMG of the issues affecting the introduction of a cashless system within the eateries within Parliament Buildings. He also informed SMG that the Stationery and IT Consumables contract competition was currently underway with a view to holding the evaluation on 26 June 2013. Sebastien also drew SMG's attention to the sickness levels within the security office and highlighted that figures had increased from the previous year. In conclusion, Sebastien also drew SMG's attention to the Cycle to Work campaign which operated during June 2013, in which 12 staff members took part.

23   Items Cleared by Correspondence

23.1   No Items were cleared by correspondence.

24   AOB

24.1   Review of the Print Contract
SMG noted the Terms of Reference for the review of the Print Contract.

Sebastian Mingout left the meeting at 5.34pm

25   Re-evaluation of Post

25.1   John Stewart asked SMG to agree to the consideration of the evaluation of the post proposed in the Organisational Redesign Report covering Communications, Outreach and Education Services.

25.2   SMG discussed the request and an initial evaluation of the post was agreed.

25.3   Trevor Reaney advised that he would be seeking the views of the Organisational Redesign Project Board on the proposal.

26   NEXT MEETING

26.1   The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, 3 July 2013 at 2.00pm in Room 106.

The meeting adjourned at 5.40pm.