

# **SECRETARIAT MANAGEMENT GROUP STRATEGY FORMAT**

**FRIDAY, 16 MAY 2014 AT 9.35AM  
ROOM 106, PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS**

**APPROVED**

**Present: Trevor Reaney  
Gareth McGrath  
John Stewart  
Richard Stewart  
Stephen Welch  
Hugh Widdis**

**In Attendance: Jim Beatty  
Sinead McDonnell  
Tony Logue  
Robin Ramsey**

## **1 Opening/Review**

### **(a) Apologies**

There were no apologies.

### **(b) Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

### **(c) Minutes of Previous Meeting**

The Minutes of the meeting of 11 April 2014 had been approved and were published on 6 May 2014.

### **(d) Matters Arising**

There were no matters arising.

## **2 Action Points**

- 2.1 The Action Points list was reviewed. Members were asked to advise Jim Beatty of any further updates/amendments.

### **3 Review of actions arising from Strategic Session on 15 April 2014**

- 3.1 Trevor Reaney led the discussion on the action points from 15 April 2014. These summarised the outcomes of the discussions from the offsite workshop attended by SMG.
- 3.2 It was agreed that John Stewart would draft a short note for the Clerk/CE to issue to staff on the key outcomes of today's SMG meeting.

**ACTION: JOHN STEWART**

### **4 Review of Strategic Work Strands**

- 4.1 As part of the review (see above item), Trevor Reaney tabled a paper on the roles of the three revised Strategic Work Strands – Assembly Future (Gareth McGrath), Organisational Development (Richard Stewart) and Resource Planning (John Stewart). The subsequent discussions identified a number of updates/changes. It was agreed that Directors would give further consideration to the paper and forward any comments to Trevor Reaney.
- 4.2 Some development work on the Strategic Work Strands is ongoing and groups are currently being brought together. Reports from each group will be considered at the next appropriate SMG meeting.

### **5 End of Year Review 2013/14**

#### **5.1 (a) Business Plans**

Richard Stewart spoke to this paper which summarised the performance of Directorates against annual Business Plans. SMG acknowledged the significant achievements of Directorates and agreed to refer the paper to the Commission for information.

#### **5.2 (b) Management Accounts**

Richard Stewart presented the figures for 2013/14 which showed a 1.82% underspend. This met the objective of less than 2% underspend.

#### **5.3 (c) Measures of Success**

Trevor Reaney introduced this paper which showed performance in 2013/14 against the measures of success within the Corporate Strategy 2012/16. After discussion, some changes were agreed.

Trevor Reaney said that this paper and the high level of achievement of Business Plan targets represented a good year's work by everyone.

## **6 Discussion on Future Issues and Challenges**

- 6.1 Trevor Reaney led a wide-ranging discussion on issues and challenges. Each Director was invited to identify and discuss those future issues which may have an impact on their areas of responsibility.

## **7 Engagement Strategy**

- 7.1 John Stewart spoke to this paper. He had recently received further comments from other Directors and proposed deferral of discussion until the next SMG meeting when he would bring a revised paper back. This was agreed.

**ACTION: JOHN STEWART**

## **8 Staff Hours Policy**

- 8.1 Sinead McDonnell joined the meeting at 11.55am and spoke to this paper. This policy has been some years in development and this paper reflected the latest proposals. HR Office had just recently received further proposals from TUS.
- 8.2 SMG discussed the proposals which included changes to the hours bandwidth. In view of the potential impact of some of the proposals, it was agreed that further consideration and discussion was required. The paper will be brought back to the next SMG meeting to include information on the financial impact of various bandwidth proposals.

**ACTION: SINEAD MCDONNELL**

## **9. SMG Self-Evaluation**

- 9.1 Trevor Reaney presented the summary of the results of the recent SMG self-evaluation exercise and suggested that the Clerk/CE/Director's meeting on 27 June 2014 would provide an opportunity for fuller discussion. This was agreed.

## **10. Commission/SMG Business**

10.1 Tony Logue and Robin Ramsey joined the meeting at 12.25pm. Tony Logue presented the agenda for the Commission meeting for 18 June 2014. The proposed items are:-

- Clerk/CE's Update
- Commission Governance Arrangements
- Draft PSNI Search MoU
- External Lighting of Parliament Buildings
- Draft Engagement Strategy
- Committee for Standards and Privileges – Consultation
- Annual Equality Progress Report
- SARC Annual Report 2013/14
- Closed Session with SARC Chairperson

10.2 SMG noted the Forward Work Plan to July 2014.

## **11. Directors' Updates**

11.1 Hugh Widdis said that DLGS is in discussion with the Registrar of the Supreme Court about the rules governing the role of the Assembly in the reference of Bills. The Audit Plan for 2014/15 has been agreed by SARC.

## **12. Re-Evaluation of Post**

12.1 SMG discussed and agreed the request to re-evaluate a post.

12.2 SMG also discussed the policy which covers the re-evaluation of posts (HRC 11/09) and agreed that it would be appropriate to review the policy.

**ACTION: RICHARD STEWART**

## **13. Items cleared by correspondence**

13.1 SMG noted that the following items had been issued for clearance by correspondence:-

- (a) HR Management Information
- (b) Corporate Risk Register
- (c) Replacement of Library Management system – Business Case
- (d) Public Tours – Change of Times

## **14 AOB**

- 14.1 Stephen Welch referred to his paper to the Commission on the external lighting of Parliament Buildings and sought the views of SMG on the issue. SMG was content with the proposals.
- 14.2 Trevor Reaney said that at a recent SARC meeting, the issue of promulgation within the Secretariat of PAC and other external recommendations had been raised. Hugh Widdis advised that Internal Audit is already developing an economic mechanism to annually disseminate trends in their findings and would consider incorporating SARC's proposal in the mechanism.

## **15 Next Meeting**

- 15.1 The next meeting will be held on Friday, 6 June 2014 at 9.30am in Room 106.

*The meeting adjourned at 12.50pm.*