SECRETARIAT MANAGEMENT GROUP
9.30AM ON FRIDAY 18 SEPTEMBER 2009
IN ROOM 29, PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS

APPROVED

Present:	**Trevor Reaney** **Richard Stewart** **Stephen Welch (excl agenda items 10,13, 14,15,16,17)** ***Simon Burrowes (excl agenda items 10, 13, 14, 17)** **Gareth McGrath**
In attendance:	**Hugh Widdis (excl agenda items 10,13, 14,15,16,17)** **Tony Logue (agenda items 6, 7, 8)** **Martina Dalton (agenda item 8)** **Brian Moreland (agenda item 15)** **Georgie Campbell**
	***deputising for John Stewart**

1 APOLOGIES

1.1 Apologies were received from John Stewart. Simon Burrowes, Editor of Debates, deputised for him.

2 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

2.1 No interests were declared.

3 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING (7 SEPTEMBER 2009)

The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed subject to a number of amendments.

4 MATTERS ARISING

4.1 Matters arising were dealt with during discussion of the relevant substantive agenda item.

5 SMG ACTION POINTS

5.1 The Clerk/DG asked Directors to notify Georgie Campbell of any updates to the list of Action Points.

ACTION: DIRECTORS

6 FUTURE SMG/COMMISSION BUSINESS

6.1 Tony Logue said that as part of the induction programme for the two new Commission members, he will be arranging for them to meet with each of the Directors for a briefing on the roles and responsibilities of their Directorates.

6.2 It was noted that a report on the Commission Planning Day will be considered at the Commission meeting on 24 September in addition to the issues listed in the minutes of the previous meeting of SMG.

6.3 The Clerk/DG asked Directors to ensure that future contributions to the Clerk/DG's Monthly Report to the Commission are as concise as possible.

ACTION: DIRECTORS

7 CURRENT FOI REQUESTS/ASSEMBLY QUESTIONS

7.1 The FOI requests and Assembly Questions were noted.

8 INFORMATION MANAGEMENT

8.1 Information Management Strategic Plan
Martina Dalton spoke to her paper of 11 September 2009. During the course of the discussion which followed, it was agreed that:

- the development of an Information Management Strategy should proceed as described, and,
- an additional Clerical Supervisor should be provided for the duration of the project subject to discussion with the Director of Resources.

ACTION: MARTINA DALTON/RICHARD STEWART

8.2 Implementation of Information Management Assurance Policy
Following discussion of Martina Dalton's paper of 11 September 2009, it was agreed that:

- An Information Audit should be carried out initially as a pilot project;
- it is not appropriate for Doorkeeping, security staff or HR staff to monitor the clear desk and clear screen policy;
- action should be taken to implement the clear desk policy pending the outcome of the Information Audit. A reminder via Postmaster and/or a guidance note were suggested.

Support in principle was given to DIRO attendance at Information Assurance training subject to Value for Money considerations. Martina Dalton said that she would investigate the possibility of bespoke training for the Secretariat.

ACTION: MARTINA DALTON

9 UPDATES

9.1 Internal Communications Working Group (ICWG)
Simon Burrowes reported that:

- ICWG had arranged for a questionnaire to be inserted in the next edition of “Life on the Hill” to take readers views on the publication. A report will be completed by the end of October.

- A paper proposing the amalgamation of the Staff Survey and the Communications Audit will be submitted to the 2 October meeting of SMG.

- The survey on the effectiveness of Team Briefing will be undertaken as part of the Communications Audit.

9.1.1 The Clerk/DG thanked ICWG for all their very helpful work.

9.2 Genesis Project
It was agreed that issues relating to the Genesis Project would be discussed at meetings of the Genesis Programme Board.

9.3 Website Team
SMG members noted the contents of Gareth McGrath’s paper of 15 September 2009. Dr McGrath said the Business Case for the Website Project will be submitted to an early meeting of SMG.

ACTION: GEORGIE CAMPBELL TO NOTE

9.4 Health and Safety
SMG members noted the contents of Stephen Welch’s paper of 15 September 2009 and the accompanying Health and Safety Management Report (September 2009).

9.5 Procurement Compliance

9.5.1 SMG members noted the contents of John Gibson’s paper of 9 July 2009. They were encouraged by the improvement in procurement compliance and commended the Procurement Office and all involved.

9.5.2 It was agreed that:

- The Procurement Office introduces improvements to the database in respect of purchasing method used and communicates with Directors in advance of its introduction.

- The Procurement Office would discuss with the Eurest contract manager, options to reduce the number of invoices issued by Eurest.

ACTION: RICHARD STEWART/JOHN GIBSON

10 HR ISSUES

10.1 Update on HR Strategy
Richard Stewart reported that consultation had taken place on the HR Strategy and that this had been finalised. The Strategy is currently being implemented and progress is being monitored.

10.2 Learning and Development Strategy

10.2.1 SMG reaffirmed its commitment to the Learning and Development Framework.

10.2.2 It was suggested that Personal Development Plans should reflect the five Strategic Priorities.

10.2.3 The need for Directorate Training Plans was questioned.

10.2.4 The proposed Learning and Development Framework was approved subject to clarification in relation to the need for Directorate Training Plans.

10.3 Staff Complement
It was agreed to defer discussion of this issue to the next meeting.

ACTION: GEORGIE CAMPBELL TO NOTE

10.4 Draft policy on regrading of posts and management of post holders
The draft policy was agreed for submission to the Commission subject to some amendments, the inclusion of a flowchart and TUS agreement.

10.5 Filling Vacancies Policy
This was agreed for submission to the Commission subject to a minor amendment.

11 CORPORATE RISK REGISTER

11.1 Updates to the Corporate Risk Register were agreed.

ACTION: GEORGIE CAMPBELL TO UPDATE THE CORPORATE RISK REGISTER, SUBMIT TO THE COMMISSION AND PLACE ON ASSIST

12 MEMBERS SURVEY ACTION PLAN

12.1 It was agreed that the Action Plan should relate to dissatisfaction rates of 10% and above.

ACTION: GEORGIE CAMPBELL TO AMEND DRAFT ACTION PLAN

12.2 It was agreed that the amended Action Plan should be issued to Directors for completion and that progress would be monitored each quarter for submission to SMG.

ACTION: GEORGIE CAMPBELL TO ARRANGE

13 STAFF FEEDBACK

13.1 Georgie Campbell spoke to her paper on this subject dated 18 September 2009. The measures currently in place to encourage staff feedback were noted. It was agreed that:

- An email facility should be made available on AssISt to allow staff to raise issues with the Clerk/DG via the Corporate Policy Unit (CPU). CPU will guidance and a template for submitting comments/questions.

  ACTION: GEORGIE CAMPBELL

- A suggestions/comments box would be placed on each floor for a trial period of three months. This will be “managed” by CPU.

  ACTION: GEORGIE CAMPBELL

14 FEEDBACK FROM JUNE TEAM BRIEF

14.1 The contents of this Report were noted.

15 AUDIT ISSUES

15.1 Audit Update

Brian Moreland summarised his paper of 1 September and SMG members noted the contents. Brian reported that Deloittes had been appointed as the external supplier.

15.2 Log of outstanding Audit recommendations

Brian Moreland said that a revised version of this log is currently being prepared. This will be backdated to the Review of the Secretariat in 2007.

16 SEPTEMBER MONITORING ROUND

16.1 SMG members noted the outcome of the September Monitoring Round as submitted to the Department of Finance and Personnel.

16.2 It was agreed that a fundamental review of all expenditure in the Secretariat GAE category should be carried out in time for the December monitoring process.

ACTION: RICHARD STEWART

16.3 It was noted that an analysis of capital expenditure will be undertaken and that a list of projects will be submitted to SMG for consideration.

ACTION: RICHARD STEWART

17 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

17.1 Feedback system for the public and visitors

The proposals for a feedback system and the draft questionnaire submitted by Dr McGrath were agreed for implementation.

ACTION: GARETH MCGRATH

17.2 SMG Expenses

It was agreed that all expenses claimed by SMG members would be published on the Assembly website.

17.3 Re-titling of Properties Directorate

Members were reminded that Properties Directorate has been renamed “Facilities Directorate”.

17.4 Switchboard

Gareth McGrath said that he would bring proposals in relation to the switchboard to the next meeting.

ACTION: GARETH MCGRATH
GEORGIE CAMPBELL TO NOTE

17.5 Meetings with the Speaker

The Clerk/DG said that the Speaker planned to meet informally with each Director on a monthly basis to be briefed on ongoing work within each Directorate.

18 FUTURE MEETINGS

These will take place at 9.30am in Room 29 (unless otherwise stated)

Friday 2 October 2009
Friday 16 October 2009 in Annexe C
Friday 30 October (tbc – Halloween Recess)