SECRETARIAT MANAGEMENT GROUP

THURSDAY 17 NOVEMBER 2011 AT 2.05PM
ROOM 115, PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS

APPROVED

Present:	**Trevor Reaney** **Gareth McGrath** **Damien Martin** **John Stewart** **Richard Stewart** **Hugh Widdis**
In attendance:	**Jim Beatty** **Tony Logue (Agenda items 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10)** **Robin Ramsey (Agenda item 6)** **David Johnson (Agenda item 11)** **Sinead McDonnell (Agenda items 13, 14 and 15(b))** **Brian Moreland (Agenda item 15(a))** **Paula McClintock (Agenda items 15(c) and 16)**

1 Apologies

1.1 None

2 Declaration of Interests

2.1 No interests were declared.

3 Minutes of Previous Meetings

3.1 The minutes of the meeting of 4 November 2011 were approved subject to some amendments.

4 Matters Arising

4.1 John Stewart and Richard Stewart met on 16 November 2011 and discussed setting up the project team to take forward the tender for procuring the review of the creation and management of contracts.

They also agreed to seek advice from the Commercial Director, House of Commons, on the way forward.

4.2 Damien Martin told SMG that introducing the revised contracts with Blackberry phones may impact on personal contributions and while the key principle on paying remains, it was agreed to proceed with the new phones and to review after the first quarter.

4.3 All other issues under Matters Arising will be dealt with through the Action Points or discussed within the substantive agenda items.

5 SMG Action Points

5.1 Members were asked to advise Jim Beatty of further updates and amendments.

ACTION: DIRECTORS

6 Future Commission/SMG Business

6.1 Tony Logue and Robin Ramsey joined the meeting at 2.15pm.

6.2 Trevor Reaney drew attention to the guidance on working with the Speaker that had been produced in March 2011 and emphasised the importance of following this guidance. He also drew attention to his memo of 14 November 2011 regarding working with the Speaker and Related Matters, including the handling of Commission agendas/papers and Assembly Questions. To assist in supporting the Speaker in his role of Chair of the Commission, Robin Ramsey will attend future SMG meetings for this item of business.

6.3 The next Commission meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, 29 November 2011 and SMG considered the draft agenda:-

- Clerk/DG Update Report
- Corporate Strategy
- Update On Assembly Effectiveness Project
- Childcare Scheme
- Internal Good Relation Audit – final draft report
- Good Relations Action Plan Monitoring
- Revised Equality Scheme/Disability Action Plan
- Members Consumables
- Industrial Relations

6.4 SMG noted the Forward Work Plan for the Commission and SMG.

7 Assembly Questions

7.1 SMG noted the latest questions received.

8 Revised Equality Scheme

8.1 Tony Logue spoke to the paper on this issue.

8.2 At its meeting on 28 June 2011 the Commission agreed a consultation exercise on a revised Equality Scheme. Ten responses had been received and the revised Equality Scheme and Action Plan have been updated.

8.3 After discussion it was agreed to refer the consultation document and resultant changes to the Commission. It was also agreed that some dates within the Action Plan should be clarified before referral to the Commission for approval.

8.4 It was agreed that directors would provide Tony Logue with more details of the actions taken so that these could be provided with the consultation responses.

ACTION: ALL DIRECTORS
TONY LOGUE

9 Revised Disability Action Plan

9.1 Tony Logue spoke to the paper on this issue.

9.2 The Assembly Commission's current Disability Action Plan is due for revision and a 13 week consultation exercise was begun on 25 July 2011. Four responses were received.

9.3 After discussion, it was agreed that the revised Action Plan should be referred to the Commission for approval.

10 Good Relations Action Plan Monitoring

10.1 Tony Logue spoke to the paper on this issue.

10.2 SMG noted the progress to date and agreed to refer the paper to the Commission for approval.

10.3 It was also agreed to extend the period of the Action Plan to 31 March 2012.

11 Corporate Risk Register

11.1 David Johnston joined the meeting at 3.00pm and updated SMG on the current Risk Register.

11.2 SMG agreed further updates. David Johnston will amend the register accordingly.

12 Visitor Management System

12.1 Damien Martin spoke to the paper on this issue.

12.2 A new Permanent ID Pass system was introduced in June 2011 and a revised Visitors Management System is currently being trialled. It has been recognised that there is a range of classes of visitors and different arrangements are being put into place to address each class.

12.3 After discussion SMG agreed to brief the Commission on progress and plans for visitors.

12.4 The need for a post-implementation review of this and other IT enabled projects was also agreed.

13 Support for Staff Social Groups

13.1 Sinead McDonnell joined the meeting at 3.32pm and spoke to the paper on this issue.

13.2 This draft policy was constructed as a result of the Internal Communications Strategy, approved by SMG in April 2011. The draft collates current policy and introduces some revisions.

13.3 After discussion, it was agreed that HR would review the rationale for the policy.

14 Guaranteed Interview Scheme

14.1 Sinead McDonnell spoke to the paper on this issue.

14.2 This paper proposes to assist job applicants with a disability or health impairment likely to last at least 12 months, subject to certain conditions, in obtaining an interview provided essential criteria is met. This is recognised best practice and has been in operation within the Scottish Parliament for some time.

14.3 SMG approved the paper, subject to full compliance with and no further than the Equality Commission's guidance on the subject.

15 Updates

(a) Audit Issues

Brian Moreland joined the meeting at 3.50pm and spoke to his paper on this issue. Seven audit reports have been issued since April 2011 and it is planned to issue some more before April 2012. SARC will next meet on 9 December 2011 and will be told that the overall level of assurance has returned to satisfactory. Good progress has been made on clearing outstanding recommendations.

(b) HR Management Information

The current figures were noted. HR will work with Directorates on individual cases.

Hugh Widdis left the meeting at 4.00pm.

(c) Financial Update

Paula McClintock joined the meeting at 4.00pm and spoke to her paper on this issue and emphasised the need for all to carefully consider needs in light of the forthcoming monitoring round, in particular, capital spending. SMG noted the paper.

16 Fraud Prevention Policy

16.1 Paula McClintock spoke to her paper on this issue. (Brian Moreland remained for this discussion.)

16.2 Following the enactment of the Bribery Act 2010 SMG asked for a review of all existing anti-fraud policies and these have now been incorporated into three documents – a separate policy relating to bribery is being drafted.

16.3 SMG approved the documents subject to some changes. The documents will be published as soon as possible.

17 Any Other Business

17.1 Planning for the forthcoming industrial action is continuing.

17.2 The projects originally identified as appropriate to the Corporate Management Group will now be taken forward by the respective Directorates.

ACTION: ALL DIRECTORS

17.3 It was agreed that Gareth McGrath and John Stewart would meet to discuss taking forward the Members Support Programme.

ACTION: GARETH MCGRATH
JOHN STEWART

18 Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting will take place at 10.00am on Friday, 2 December 2011 in Room 106.

The meeting adjourned at 4.22pm.