SECRETARIAT MANAGEMENT GROUP

TUESDAY, 05 JULY 2011 at 02.05pm
ROOM 106, PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS

APPROVED

Present:	**Trevor Reaney** **Simon Burrowes** **Gareth McGrath** **Richard Stewart** **Stephen Welch** **Hugh Widdis**
In attendance:	**Jim Beatty** **Sinead McDonnell (Agenda items 8 and 9)** **Ashley McIlwrath (Agenda item 8)** **Aine Kerr (Agenda item 8)** **Peter McCallion (Agenda item 11)**

1 Apologies

1.1 An apology was received from John Stewart. Simon Burrowes deputised on behalf of Mr Stewart.

2 Declaration of Interests

2.1 No interests were declared.

3 Minutes of Previous Meetings

3.1 The Minutes of the meeting of 16 June 2011 were approved subject to a minor amendment.

4 Matters Arising

4.1 Para 9.4, 16 June 2011 - the Commission has agreed to take part in the pilot programme of using technology to replace meeting papers.

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

5 SMG Action Points

5.1 The Action Points were reviewed and updated. Members were asked to advise Jim Beatty of further amendments.

ACTION: JIM BEATTY

6 Future Commission/SMG Business

6.1 The Commission met on Monday 4 July 2011 to discuss the valuation of constituency offices. The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday 27 September 2011. The list of future items was noted.

6.2 The IFRP has been appointed and met for the first time on Monday, 4 July 2011. MLAs were informed and a press release issued.

6.3 SMG noted the current forward work plan. It was agreed that over the summer recess members would review the work plan and consider future items for SMG to take forward.

ACTION: SMG

7 Assembly Questions

7.1 SMG noted the current Assembly Questions.

8 Revised Performance Management System

8.1 Sinead McDonnell, Aine Kerr and Ashley McIlwrath joined the meeting at 2.22pm and spoke to a PowerPoint presentation on this issue.

8.2 SMG had considered this issue in December 2010 and had identified some key principles to be taken forward by HR. Further research since then with a number of public sector employers had shown that no two systems were the same although all had objectives at their core. The House of Commons was unique in that there were no set reviews.

8.3 HR presented a number of potential underpinning objectives for a PMS, eg, driving behaviours, promoting a development culture and before moving to the next stage of setting up a cross-directorate working group, HR asked SMG to decide on a strategic direction.

Richard Stewart joined the meeting at 2.44pm.

8.4 SMG discussed the issues arising from the presentation including whether a system should be used to reward, to motivate or to support good behaviours. The key roles of values, competences and self-analysis were also considered.

8.5 Following on from this initial discussion it was agreed that SMG would give further individual consideration to the issues and write to HR with their views within 10 days.

ACTION: SMG

9 Flexible Working Procedures

9.1 Sinead McDonnell explained that under current legislation, staff can request flexible working hours and partial retirement. The draft procedures before SMG had been cleared by Legal Services Office and were subject to an annual review.

9.2 In view of the short time that some had to consider the paper, it was agreed that members should forward any further comments to HR within 24 hours. If none were received within that time, HR should consider the paper as agreed.

ACTION: SMG

10 Business Efficiency Review Update

10.1 Peter McCallion joined the meeting at 4.03pm and provided an update on the issue.

10.2 SMG was told that the workshops were continuing – another was to be held on Thursday, 7 July 2011. Plans were being made to speak to the HoBs of the next round of reviews in August. Selection had been made on the basis of a scoring methodology based upon set criteria and this approach had been agreed by the project board. It is planned that all areas will be subject to review, with the highest priority areas being covered by the project team and the remainder to be covered as per arrangements to be agreed following on from the project team’s terms of reference.

10.3 It was recognised that Contract Creation and Management had to be reviewed and there was a discussion about how this might best be taken forward.

10.4 Richard Stewart asked that HR should be considered for an early review. Simon Burrowes suggested that Reporting should be taken in place of HR. Peter McCallion agreed to bring this issue back to the project board.

11 Corporate Risk Register

11.1 SMG reviewed the current Risk Register and some amendments were identified.

ACTION: HUGH WIDDIS

12 Business Case - Advertising

12.1 Gareth McGrath spoke to this paper and explained the background to the need for a renewed contract. Since restoration in 2007 the majority of the Assembly's advertising requirements have been secured through a NICS contract with an external provider. This contract is to be renewed and it would be proper for the NIA to appoint an advertising company through an open competition.

12.2 SMG considered a number of options on the way forward and decided that the option to appoint a company to place limited classified advertisements and to produce limited campaign advertising best met the needs of the NIA.

12.3 SMG agreed the business case and agreed to the commencement of the tendering exercise.

ACTION: GARETH MCGRATH

13 Replacement Bill Template Procurement Update

13.1 SMG considered an update on the above project from Damien Martin.

13.2 Following SMG approval of the business case in June 2010, the Procurement Board had met on several occasions to progress the tender process. The substantial legislative programme within the Assembly up to March 2011 had led to some delays in the process although it is anticipated that the contract will be awarded before the end of March 2012.

13.3 SMG will be advised of progress when draft contracts have been prepared.

14 SMG Self Evaluation

14.1 Trevor Reaney told SMG of the importance of regular evaluation to ensure the ongoing effectiveness of SMG. A range of methods had been agreed during last year's exercise and it was proposed that these should be used again for this year's review.

14.2 After a discussion on the methodology, it was agreed that all SMG members would complete an evaluation questionnaire (Annex B of the paper before SMG) and return it to Trevor Reaney who would collate the responses.

ACTION: SMG

14.3 SMG discussed the use of the components of board performance identified within the 2004 Lynton Barker report and it was agreed that Trevor Reaney would submit a paper on this to the next SMG.

ACTION: TREVOR REANEY

15 Updates

(a) Directors

Stephen Welch said that Autism NI and the National Autism Society had indicated that they wished to work with the NIA in developing a Charter Mark. It is hoped to open the post office in mid-August 2011. It is planned to have the work on the car parks completed before the end of the summer recess.

(b) Core Brief Feedback

SMG reviewed the feedback from the June 2011 team briefings sessions and confirmed the guidance issued on 8 June in relation to the provision of refreshments at training events.

16 Staff Bonus Nominations

16.1 Funding for the Staff Bonus Scheme had been withdrawn as part of the recent Pay and Grading settlement but there were still some outstanding nominations. Implementation issues are to be resolved with TUS.

ACTION: RICHARD STEWART

16.2 It was agreed that all outstanding nominations relating to performances prior to 31 March 2011 would be discussed at the next SMG meeting.

ACTION: SMG

17 AOB

17.1 Stephen Welch spoke to his paper on amending the Security Policy to include a requirement for all relevant persons to present their Assembly ID passes to the electronic readers on every occasion upon entering and leaving Parliament Buildings. Any refusal will be treated as a breach of the Security Policy.

17.2 SMG was told that a small number of staff were refusing to present passes to the readers and that line management was speaking to each individually.

17.3 SMG expressed disappointment that a situation such as this had arisen and that the actions of a small number of staff necessitated today's paper being considered.

17.4 It was agreed to allow time for line management to conclude discussions with the relevant staff and a postmaster would then be issued to inform all staff of the change to the Security Policy.

17.5 Stephen Welch told SMG that it was intended to progress with next stage of the project on repairing the roof – this entailed the appointment of the design team. He will immediately circulate a paper on the subject to SMG members. Because of time limits, any responses must be provided by Monday, 11 July 2011.

ACTION: SMG

18 Date of Next Meeting

Friday, 26 August 2011 at 9.30am in Room 106.

Subject to exigencies, the meeting after this will be on Friday 16 September 2011 at 9.30am in Room 106.

The meeting adjourned at 5.20pm.