

SECRETARIAT MANAGEMENT GROUP STRATEGY FORMAT

**WEDNESDAY, 3 SEPTEMBER AT 9.30AM
ROOM 106, PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS**

APPROVED

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

**In Attendance: Cathy McGowan
Robin Ramsey
Tara Caul
Maria Bannon**

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 4 July 2014 had been approved and published on 5 August 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. Strategic Work Strands

(a) Assembly Future

- 3.1 Gareth McGrath informed SMG that the Assembly Future's steering group had held their first meeting on 21 August 2014 and agreed their forward work plan in line with their Terms of Reference. He highlighted that a qualitative template would be issuing to Heads of Business in line with Horizon Scanning to gather pertinent information for the group. SMG discussed matters relating to ethics and branding and agreed that these would require further consideration. It was agreed that a discussion paper would be brought forward to SMG prior to Christmas Recess.

ACTION: GARETH MCGRATH

(b) Resource Planning

- 3.2 John Stewart briefed SMG on the Resource Planning Group meeting on 31 July 2014 and plans for the next meeting on 25 September 2014. SMG noted that John Gibson/Richard Stewart would be bringing a revised draft 'Business Justifications and Cases Policy' paper to the next SMG meeting.

ACTION: RICHARD STEWART

(c) Organisational Development

- 3.3 Richard Stewart informed SMG that the Organisational Development steering group has been unable to meet during Summer Recess. He highlighted that following discussion, ERG had indicated their support in the approach. Following further consideration, it was agreed that an urgent review would be undertaken in relation to the availability of resources to support the development and implementation of an OD Strategy.

ACTION: RICHARD STEWART

4. Monitoring of Business Plans – Q/E 30 June 2014

- 4.1 Trevor Reaney introduced this paper which summarised the performance of Directorates to 30 June 2014 against their Business Plans. SMG acknowledged the progress to date and agreed to refer the paper to the Commission for information.
- 4.2 Trevor Reaney paid tribute to both Directors and staff in relation to the progress achieved to date. He also highlighted that the initial feedback

on the recent Members' Survey had indicated very positive results, which, following analysis, would be presented to SMG.

ACTION: GARETH MCGRATH

5. Budgets 2014/15 Update

- 5.1 Richard Stewart and Trevor Reaney provided SMG with an update relating to the June Monitoring Round and current budget pressures facing the wider public sector. The Clerk/Chief Executive highlighted that the Commission would be considering this matter and its response to the October Monitoring Round at its next meeting.

ACTION: TREVOR REANEY / RICHARD STEWART

6. Staff Survey

- 6.1 The Chair of the Internal Communications Group, Tara Caul, joined the meeting at 10.21am and spoke to this paper. SMG considered the format and methodology of the questionnaire and it was agreed that the Clerk/Chief Executive would review the questionnaire in light of the discussion held for further consideration at the next meeting of SMG in October 2014.

ACTION: TREVOR REANEY

7. Review of flying the Union Flag at Parliament Buildings

- 7.1 Maria Bannon joined the meeting at 11.07am. She informed SMG that as agreed by the Commission on 20 November 2013, and following completion of the procurement exercise, the contract had been awarded to Policy Arc Limited and commenced on 16 July 2014.
- 7.2 Following consideration, SMG agreed that a paper should be forwarded to the next Commission meeting outlining the proposed consultation process.

ACTION: TONY LOGUE

8. Engagement Strategy

- 8.1 John Stewart presented SMG with a revised Engagement Strategy following amendments requested at the last Project Board meeting (Section 75, Irish Language and the Youth Assembly proposal). SMG noted that this draft strategy would not be taken to the Assembly

Commission until discussions with DFP about 2014–15 June Monitoring had been concluded..

ACTION: JOHN STEWART

9. Future Provision of Police Services at Parliament Buildings

9.1 Stephen Welch presented SMG with a paper relating to the future provision of police services at Parliament Buildings. SMG discussed the available options and agreed a preferred option. It was further agreed that this would form the basis of a paper for the Commission at their next meeting.

ACTION: STEPHEN WELCH

10. Commission/SMG Business

10.1 Robin Ramsey joined the meeting at 11.40am. Cathy McGowan presented the agenda for the next Commission meeting for 17 September 2014. The proposed items are:-

- Clerk/CE's Update
- Public Health Agency – Breastfeeding Scheme
- Future Provision of Police Services at Parliament Buildings
- Flags Consultation Strategy
- IFRP Annual Report 2013-2014
- Budget Planning

10.2 SMG noted the Forward Work Plan to March 2015.

11. Directors' Updates

11.1 Richard Stewart informed SMG that pay discussions were continuing with TUS in relation to the pay award for 2014. He also highlighted that the mandatory training on the social media policy was currently being rolled out within the Secretariat.

11.2 John Stewart briefed SMG on discussions with the British Council NI and an Erasmus+ application for funding in relation to the Youth Assembly proposal. He said that he was pleased with progress in relation to the Laptop Replacement Project and Second Internet Connection. John said that work was progressing on Digital First/ Print Reduction. He also briefed SMG on meetings with CPA HQ

colleagues, European Parliament Office London, OFMdFM (External Relations Strategy) and Northern Irish Connections.

- 11.3 Hugh Widdis updated SMG on recent and forthcoming Independent Financial Review Panel consultation launches and further delay to the legislative programme.

12. Items cleared by Correspondence

- 12.1 SMG noted that the following item had been issued for clearance by correspondence since the last meeting:-

(a) HR Management Information

13. AOB

- 13.1 SMG noted their congratulations to the Speaker on his appointment to the House of Lords.

14. Next Meeting

- 14.1 The next meeting will be held on Friday 17 October 2014 at 9.30am in Room 106.

The meeting adjourned at 11.55am.