LEADERSHIP GROUP

Leadership Group – Strategy Meetings

1. The Leadership Group (LG) was established following the review of senior management structures. It replaced the existing Strategic Leadership Team and the Operational Management Group with a single tier management group with the goal of helping define and deliver the aims and values of the organisation and its strategic priorities.

2. The first meeting of the Leadership Group took place on 31 January 2011, and the purpose of this paper is to provide us with an opportunity to take stock of our work over the past year as well as looking ahead at the challenges to come. This will, I believe, help us to improve not only how we operate as a group, but also how we perform as leaders within the organisation.

Strategy Meetings

3. When LG was established it was noted that a single tier group would have a wide ranging remit and would be responsible for examining both strategic and operational issues. Given the key role which the group plays within the organisation, I felt that it was important to ensure that we were meeting this challenge. I therefore invited Kevin McGeever and Ishtar Swaffield to attend two LG meetings and provide an external perspective on how we were operating.

4. In their feedback, Kevin and Ishtar felt that the group worked well together and the fact that we did so, so quickly is a real achievement. However, one observation made was the need to ensure that as a group we have time set aside to have strategic discussions, perhaps in the form of strategy-focused meetings.

5. From discussions I have had with LG members, I know that there are mixed views about the value of such meetings. Of course, we should be looking at all issues strategically, but there are benefits to giving ourselves the time to focus purely on the strategic without getting bogged down in the operational.

6. It was proposed that we should perhaps have three ‘strategy’ meetings a year. This might be easiest to accommodate if we set aside two of our monthly meetings as well as an annual planning day for this. I would suggest that these meetings take place when we are discussing issues around resource allocation.

7. The agenda for these meetings should include topics proposed by group members and on which they would lead a discussion. I have avoided the temptation at this stage of making suggestions. Please tell me what you think. I suggest that the first of these meetings takes
place in February 2012 and I would ask all colleagues to consider carefully any issues they wish to raise and to pass these to the Secretariat. I expect to consider two or three issues at the meeting.

Development of Group

8. I believe that as a group we are working well together and the feedback I have had, both from LG members direct as well as from the Secretariat (and indeed the AAB members), backs this up. Whilst we should be rightly proud of what we have achieved over the course of a year, there is still more to do to ensure that we continue to work well as a team, and that we continue to improve as leaders of the organisation. This will allow us to be in the best possible position for to meet challenges and opportunities which lie ahead. I have a couple of specific ideas – focussed on organisational development – from my time at Cranfield which I will set out for your consideration. Subject to your views, I would welcome a couple of volunteers to work with me and the Secretariat in taking this forward.

Publication Scheme

9. This paper can be published in line with the Parliament’s publication schedule.

Next steps

10. Following discussion, the LG Secretariat will take forward planning for the proposed strategy meetings. The secretariat will also take forward plans in relation to Leadership Group development.

Decision

11. Leadership Group is asked to consider the issues set out in the paper and particularly:

- How it wishes to take forward the proposed planning days
- What further development should be undertaken as a group.

P E GRICE
Clerk/Chief Executive
November 2011