HEALTH AND SAFETY BOARD

Executive summary

1. This paper seeks Leadership Group’s endorsement to the scrapping of the Health and Safety Steering Group and the establishment of a Health and Safety Board in its place.

Issues and Options

2. A recent short review of the roles, responsibilities and membership of the Health and Safety Steering Group and the Fire, Health and Safety Committee identified overlap and duplication in a number of areas.

3. The Committee was established to meet legal requirements set out in the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and its role is published on the Parliament’s website here. As well as representatives from offices across the Parliament, its membership includes TUS, contractors and MSPs.

4. The Steering Group was established to provide overall strategic direction on health and safety matters, but in recent years, its focus has become more operational which has led to duplication of effort and lack of clarity on respective areas of responsibility. It is therefore proposed to discontinue the steering group and establish a strategic board in its place with a more explicit remit focused on strategic matters. The remit of the proposed new board is set out in the Annex.

5. It is proposed that the board membership consists of the appointed Assistant Chief Executive with responsibility for health and safety, the Group Head of Human Resources and Facilities Management and the Chair of the Fire, Health and Safety Committee. The Health and Safety Adviser and Fire Safety Adviser will attend as required. It is envisaged that the board will normally meet six-monthly to coincide with consideration and publication of the annual health and safety report and will meet as required to consider major incidents or similar unforeseen activity. The Fire, Health and Safety Committee will continue to meet quarterly.

Resource Implications

6. There are no resource implications. Both bodies will continue to be staffed by parliamentary staff undertaking duties in addition to their normal roles. Budget for health and safety initiatives is held by the Facilities Management office and is set in line with normal budgeting procedures.

Dependencies

7. The key dependencies in meeting the roles and responsibilities of the bodies are held by their memberships. The Health and Safety Adviser will attend the board in order to provide the required connection between strategy and operations.
Governance issues
8. The aim of this proposal is to improve governance in relation to health and safety issues.

Publication Scheme
9. This paper can be published.

Decision
10. Leadership Group is asked to endorse the approach to Health and Safety governance set out in this paper and to approve the establishment of a Health and Safety Board in place of the Health and Safety Steering Group.

David McGill
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ANNEX

Health and Safety Board remit

- Overall Health and Safety direction setting, including ensuring the health and safety management system is in place and operating effectively
- Consideration and establishment of significant policy changes
- Review significant Health and Safety legislative changes
- Review major Health and Safety incidents
- Assess Health and Safety performance for regulatory compliance
- Report annually to Leadership Group on Health and Safety performance and the suitability, adequacy and effectiveness of the HSMS