OPERATIONAL MANAGEMENT GROUP

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON FRIDAY 15 MAY, 09:00AM, Q1.03

Present: Paul Grice (Chair)

Alan Balharrie  Ken Hughes
Derek Croll     Patsy Richards
Henrietta Hales Elizabeth Watson
Jerry Headley
Michelle Hegarty

In Attendance: Willie Heigh (item 4)
Lee Bridges (item 4)
Mary Nicol (item 7)
Alli Williams
Lynne Whittaker
Mary Ann Masson (Secretary)

1. Apologies were received from Ian Macnicol.

2. This was Patsy Richards’ final meeting of OMG before leaving the organisation. Paul Grice thanked Patsy on behalf of the group for her contribution as a member of OMG and, previously, of the Senior Management Team.

Item 1: Minutes of Previous Meeting: 3 April 2009

3. The minutes were approved.

Item 2: Matters Arising

Item 2.1: Timing of OMG Planning Days

4. OMG noted a memo from Derek Croll and Lee Bridges outlining a proposed timeline for OMG planning days. The purpose of setting out such a timeline was to ensure that discussions on the budget by the various bodies took place in a structured way to ensure that each group head added value to the process at the correct time. It was noted that there would be two OMG planning sessions, the first of which would take place on 19 June. At this session OMG would consider operational plans for 2010-11. The timing of the second session was likely to fall after the approval of the SPCB’s budget at the finance committee in November. OMG would be invited to review the timing and desirability of a second planning session on 19 June.
5. It was confirmed that staff bidding would form part of the budget bidding process.

**Item 2.2: Meeting Deadlines**

6. Group heads agreed to remind staff in their areas of the importance of meeting deadlines set by the Chief Executive’s Office and the Presiding Officers’ Office. Where this was not possible, any likely delay should be communicated in good time and a new deadline agreed.

*Action: All*

**Item 3: Strategic Leadership Team Update**

7. Paul provided OMG with an overview of what had been discussed at the Strategic Leadership Team (SLT) on 6 May.

**Item 4: Operational Portfolio (OMG/005/2009)**

8. Willie Heigh, Projects and Best Value Manager presented the operational portfolio report for consideration by OMG. He drew OMG’s attention to the review instigated by SLT to review the budget provision for projects and contingency for the remainder of the 2009/2010 financial year. OMG also noted that a key part of the planning process for 2010/2011 was the work required by group heads to ensure that the new project governance processes were followed.

9. Of a total of 14 projects on the portfolio, 6 had a status of amber or red. The predominant cause of this was slippage in timescales due to staff resourcing difficulties. OMG had ownership of each of the projects on the portfolio and was clear on the importance of ensuring that management of projects had to become more efficient with onus on the middle part of the process and on delivery.

10. OMG agreed that if staff resourcing was a problem, then projects would have to be re-prioritised. It was noted that the operational portfolio for 2010/2011 would form part of the overall planning and budgeting processes for the organisation. Therefore, the OMG planning session on 19 June would include consideration of the operational portfolio and plans should be updated for this meeting.

*Action: All*

11. Wille outlined a number of issues with the portfolio. Most of those projects currently in the delivery section were due to be finished by the next meeting to discuss the portfolio. By then there would be only 1 project in delivery while the majority would be in the planning stages. Projects for which there was not yet a PID were marked as green despite there being no deadline set for its submission. This meant that it was currently not possible to record when the planning stage was due to finish and therefore
whether it was on track. Group heads agreed to let Willie know when the planning process for their projects was due to conclude.

**Action: All**

12. Estimated staff costs had not been included in this report but it was noted that the project approval process was now capturing full financial information and that it would be available for all new projects.

13. OMG discussed the e-petitioning project and whether it should form part of the web project. Ken Hughes and Alan Balharrie would discuss this issue off-line.

**Action: Ken, Alan**

14. OMG approved the proposed removal of the Information Security project from the portfolio. Alan Balharrie would take this project forward with the relevant officials.

15. Paul provided a brief summary of each item under the strategic portfolio which formed Annex B of the portfolio report. It was agreed that OMG would discuss the draft Public Affairs Strategy at a future meeting.

**Action: Secretariat, Michelle Hegarty**


16. OMG noted a paper from Derek Croll proposing a change to the content and format of the regular financial information to be reported to the Operational Management Group. SLT had already agreed to the principle of receiving high level strategic analysis while OMG received more operational information. The proposed format for OMG would focus primarily on the parliamentary service, would use graphs and charts to provide more visual information and would have fewer schedules. The narrative content of the report would also be reduced. It was intended to produce a detailed group report pack on a quarterly basis for group heads to discuss at their meetings with their Assistant Clerk/Chief Executive and the Chief Executive.

17. OMG endorsed the new approach to financial reporting.

**Item 6: Corporate Change Programme Update**

18. Ken Hughes provided OMG with an update on the corporate change programme. Phase 1 was now complete. The aims and objectives of phase 2 were to consolidate and review phase 1 and to continue to promote and improve organisational agility in relations to systems, processes, culture and behaviour.
19. Ian Leitch would now be taking the programme forward as Ken would be taking on the operational aspects of the clerking review with Elizabeth Watson, alongside his role as Head of the Chamber Office.

20. Paul Grice would issue an update on the programme to staff on 15 May on behalf of the leadership group. He thanked OMG members for their assistance in drafting this.

**Item 7: Unacceptable Performance (OMG/007/2009)**

21. OMG noted a paper from Mary Nicol, Head of HR Strategy and Policy, outlining the outputs arising from the reference group which had met several times to consider the SPCB’s Poor Performance policy, procedures and guidance. The group had agreed that the name of the policy and procedures should be changed to ‘unacceptable performance’ to signify the seriousness of not performing to an acceptable level and to ensure that it was clear that this was a distinct procedure from the performance management system. It was noted that this re-branding might mean the policy became confused with the unacceptable behaviour policy which covered how members of staff should deal with any incidents of unacceptable behaviour they might experience from members of the public. Mary was asked to consider whether this was likely to be a problem.

   **Action: Mary Nicol**

22. OMG noted that an informal stage had been included in the guidance but that this was for illustrative purposes only to confirm that the ACAS guidance was being followed. The use of the word ‘informal’ should not detract from the seriousness of invoking this stage.

23. OMG agreed the new procedure and the proposed next steps. It thanked Mary and the reference group for their work on revising the procedures and guidance.

24. It was agreed that any drafting changes be submitted to Mary outwith the meeting and by the 19 May. Mary agreed to circulate a flow chart which accompanied the guidance documents.

   **Action: Mary Nicol, All**

**Item 8: Information Management Systems (IMS) and Web Project (OMG/008/2009)**

25. Patsy updated OMG on the IMS programme, including the web project.

26. It was acknowledged that the previous vision statement and principles of IMS had been complex. The key aim of IMS had now been simplified and was to add information once, and share it. The intention was for IMS to become business as usual.
27. The governance arrangements had also been streamlined, with fewer members on the new IMS panel (Bill Thomson as SRO, Alan Balharrie and Henrietta Hales). Project managers of any IMS projects would now report to the panel as well as to the project SRO so that the panel could take a strategic overview. The panel would act as an additional source of advice to OMG in project prioritisation. The current IMS projects were the OR project and the web project. Anyone wishing to discuss any potential IMS implications of a forthcoming project should approach the IMS panel for advice or contact colleagues in SPiCe or BIT. Patsy agreed to circulate a link to the IMS pages on SPEIR, which included named contacts in those offices.

**Action: Patsy**

28. It was noted that consideration of IMS issues was mandatory at the PID stage of any project forming part of the operational portfolio. OMG agreed that IMS issues should be flagged up at the proposal stage of a project. Patsy agreed to ask Willie Heigh to amend the project proposal form template accordingly.

29. Phase 1 of the web project was now complete. If phase 2 was approved in May 2009, the project would require OMG support in terms of staff resources. Staff on the web project would be approaching business areas for their assistance with wireframing, which was the process of producing pages with outline content to help build the structure of the new website. It would provide an opportunity to weed unused pages, to review content and to consider the retention periods for various documents and information currently on the web. Patsy agreed to circulate the draft web retention and archive policy, which provided suggested retention periods for different categories of content. That was for the website only, not for general record keeping, on which the records manager in SPiCe could advise. OMG agreed to provide comments and feedback on the document to Alan Balharrie and Henrietta Hales.

**Action: Patsy, All**

30. The review work was scheduled for summer 2009, although it was noted that that would not suit every business area. Group heads were asked to consider when their areas would be able to review web content. It was agreed that as significant resources issues were associated with this stage of the project, it would be considered as part of OMG’s planning session on 19 June. There would be a later period of migrating content into the new site, once it was built.

**Action: Derek, All**

**Item 9: OMG Forward Look**

*Web Board*
31. Patsy informed OMG that the Internet/Intranet Editorial Board (IIEB) had now been replaced by the web board, which was also the web project board. Membership was Henrietta Hales, Alan Balharrie and Michelle Hegarty.

Partner Library Network Review

32. OMG noted the project proposal on the operational portfolio to review services and future options for partner libraries. Henrietta informed OMG that the likely outcome of the review was that partner library arrangements would cease: the network was no longer fulfilling the function that was originally envisaged, and most libraries now had internet access. Tailored services would be offered to all public libraries. OMG was content for the review to proceed on that basis.

Item 10: AOB

33. OMG agreed that there would be one meeting of the group during the summer recess. This was likely to take place at the end of August and the secretariat would take members’ availability into account before scheduling this.

34. Patsy thanked members of the group for their support and friendship during her time at the Scottish Parliament.

OMG Secretariat
May 2009