OPERATIONAL MANAGEMENT GROUP

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON FRIDAY 3 APRIL, 10.30AM, Q1.03

Present: Paul Grice (Chair)

Alan Balharrie Ken Hughes
Lee Bridges Lynn Garvie
Derek Croll Ian Macnicol
Henrietta Hales Patsy Richards
Catriona Hardman Elizabeth Watson
Jerry Headley
Michelle Hegarty

In Attendance: Lynda Towers (item 4)
David Fairhurst (item 5)
Jake Fenton (Item 6)
Alli Williams
Mary Ann Masson (Secretary)

1. Paul Grice, Clerk/Chief Executive welcomed colleagues to the first meeting of the Operational Management Group.

Item 1: Minutes of Operational Portfolio Group (9 February 2009)

2. The minutes were approved.

Item 2: Matters Arising

3. None.

Item 3: OMG Operating Principles

4. OMG considered a paper setting out operating principles for the group.

5. The behavioural principles outlined in the paper were approved by the group. It was agreed that they be incorporated into the principles with a reminder that senior managers were expected to display these behaviours at all times and not only at OMG.

6. OMG agreed the following:

• That OMG papers include a reference to the way in which the issue would be communicated to stakeholders. It would be important to take a co-ordinated approach, and particularly for cascade briefing, to get the timing and the message right.
• A section on environmental impact would be included on the OMG paper template.
• Papers would be circulated 3 working days prior to the meeting.
• There would be no Health and Safety standing item but OMG members would be invited to consider whether any of the issues contained in the monthly health and safety reports merited a substantive item on the following agenda.
• There would be a quarterly report on KPIs which would come to OMG after it had been considered by SLT.
• An ‘OMG Forward Look’ would be scheduled at every meeting.
• There would be no meeting review.
• The Clerk/Chief Executive would take responsibility for ensuring OMG members received corporate information.
• Sub-groups would be formed if OMG agreed this was necessary.
• OMG would have one or two planning meetings a year.
• OMG minutes would be brief, focussing on decisions taken and actions agreed.
• The secretariat would carry out a review of the operating principles in 6 months.

7. The secretariat would revise the operating principles in light of OMG’s comments.

    Action: Secretariat

8. Derek Croll and Lee Bridges were asked to consider the appropriate timing and frequency of OMG’s planning meetings and feedback their views to the secretariat to allow these to be added to diaries.

    Action: Derek Croll, Lee Bridges.

**Item 4: Delegations**

9. Group heads had recently received new delegations from the Clerk/Chief Executive following the structural changes which had come into place on 1 April 2009. Lynda Towers, Solicitor to the Scottish Parliament, attended the meeting to answer any questions there might be on these revised delegations. OMG noted that the delegations gave group heads the authority to act but no longer outlined their operational responsibilities. These were to be contained within job roles which would be agreed between the post holder and their line manager.

10. Paul asked group heads to speak to their line managers as soon as possible to finalise job roles and to agree how they were to be evaluated on the expected outcomes and outputs detailed therein. Paul would meet trilaterally with individual group heads and their line manager once a quarter to measure progress against KPIs.

    Action: Group heads
11. It would be for group heads to decide whether grade 6 staff should have the authority to hire and fire staff although group heads were not able to sub-delegate. Where a member of staff at grade 6 was to have this authority, the Clerk/Chief Executive would delegate this to them directly.

12. It was agreed that future delegations would refer to ‘taking account’ of advice from the Personnel Office, rather than ‘following advice’. OMG was invited to submit any further comments on the delegations to Lynda.

**Action: OMG**

**Item 5: Bike to Work Schemes**

13. David Fairhurst, Environmental Performance Manager presented a paper outlining a number of possible options to encourage employees to purchase bikes to use for cycling to work.

14. Following discussion, OMG agreed that the scope of the healthy living and well-being policy be extended to allow the purchase of bicycles by staff. Ian Macnicol agreed to look at the details of extending the policy.

**Action: Ian Macnicol**

**Item 6: Driving at Work**

15. Jake Fenton, Health and Safety Manager, presented a paper seeking comments on a draft procedure for driving in the course of work, which included a proposed questionnaire to be filled out by essential drivers. There was approximately 15-20 SPCB staff who drove in the course of work: six of these were outreach workers for whom driving was an essential part of their work.

16. OMG endorsed the procedures subject to the following points:

- Paragraph 16 of the covering paper stated that line managers should ensure drivers understood and followed the guidance. It was agreed that line managers should ensure that staff had access to the guidance and adequate time to read it but that it was not possible for line managers to ensure that it was followed.
- Paragraph 19 of the procedure would be rephrased so that it was clear that staff were not to drive in the course of work if any prescribed medication adversely affected their ability to drive safely.
- The procedures covered staff driving during the course of work and not travel to and from work. However, staff who drove from home to locations other than Parliament headquarters to carry out work (for instance BIT staff at members’ local offices) would be covered by the procedures.
- The questionnaire would be amended to reduce the level of personal and sensitive information requested. Questionnaire responses would be
viewed by line managers but stored centrally by the Health and Safety Manager in line with data protection requirements.

17. As outreach workers were essential drivers, Jake agreed to liaise with the Head of Education and Community Partnerships before finalising the procedures. OMG was asked to feed in any further comments off-line.

   Action: Jake Fenton, OMG

18. Once finalised, the procedures would be publicised on the intranet. It was agreed that MSPs might find the procedure useful as guidance to provide to their staff in their role as employers. Ian Macnicol was asked to consider the most appropriate way to draw Members’ attention to the procedure.

   Action: Ian Macnicol

Item 7: Business Partnering Agreement

19. Ian Macnicol had circulated a Directors’ Group paper on HR Partnering with the business together with a note of its discussion. Directors had strongly endorsed the proposed approach and agreed that group heads should be consulted individually on how processes would work locally. OMG was content with the approach to business partnering outlined in the paper.

Item 8: Complaints Policy Update

20. OMG noted an update on the complaints policy: further updates would be provided twice a year. Michelle Hegarty agreed to give thought to providing a contribution on the subject, and specifically on actions taken as a result of complaints received, for the annual report.

   Action: Michelle Hegarty

Item 9: OMG Forward Look

10th Anniversary

21. Michelle Hegarty updated OMG on the plans to mark the 10th anniversary of the Scottish Parliament on 1 July 2009. There had been a good response from staff in response to the call for volunteers for the event although further volunteers were required. It was noted that head ushers from the 2007 opening ceremony had not received a response to the feedback they provided following the event. Michelle agreed to look over the event report and to contact head ushers to address any points of concern. OMG agreed to encourage staff to volunteer to act as ushers at the event.

   Action: Michelle Hegarty, OMG

Web Project
22. The phase one report on the web project was now complete. There were 50,000 pages of content on the website and business areas would be contacted to decide which pages should be migrated to the new site. The intention was to reduce significantly the number of pages on the new site. OMG would receive a full update on the project during its discussion of the Information Management Strategy on 15 May 2009.

Human Resources

23. OMG noted that the Personnel Office was now known as Human Resources. Ian Macnicol also advised that, in early May, the office would launch a dedicated service for handling and tracking HR enquiries.

24. It was agreed that the minutes of TUS Partnership meetings be circulated to OMG.

   Action: Ian Macnicol

Financial Resources

25. Derek Croll, Head of Financial Resources, explained that PECOS, the new purchasing system, was now known as EASEbuy. Phase 1, the pilot, was going well with phase 2 scheduled to begin on 20 April.

26. Information on project management would appear on the intranet on 3 April. OMG was reminded that the Projects and Best Value Manager would shortly be seeking project returns in advance of the next operational portfolio discussion.

Office of the Solicitor to the Scottish Parliament

27. OMG noted that, following the structural review, the former Legal Directorate was now known as the Office to the Solicitor of the Scottish Parliament and would be referred to internally as ‘the Solicitor's Office’.

Item 10: Strategic Leadership Team Update

28. The Strategic Leadership Team (SLT) had met on 31 March 2009. Ed Murray, a member of the Advisory Audit Board would attend SLT for the next few months to assist the Clerk/Chief Executive in considering whether a non-executive director should be appointed to sit on the group on a permanent basis.

29. SLT had considered a suite of papers on the strategic plan, key performance indicators and risk which had since been circulated to OMG for comment and which would be presented to the Corporate Body on 29 April. It was agreed that OMG have a discussion on these papers at a future meeting.
30. SLT also discussed a paper which took a forward look at resourcing issues. It was agreed that this paper would be circulated to OMG and added to the agenda on 27 April.

**Item 11: AOB**

31. None.

**Item 12: Meeting Review**

32. Ken Hughes carried out the meeting review selecting items 3 and 6 in particular. While the discussion on operating principles was necessary, there were too many questions posed in the paper. Item 6 could have been circulated by correspondence.

33. OMG agreed that group heads had a responsibility to consider the appropriate method of consultation on papers. The OMG Forward Look item could be used by group heads to gauge colleagues’ views on whether a forthcoming paper should be tabled at a future meeting or circulated by correspondence.

OMG Secretariat
April 2009