OPERATIONAL MANAGEMENT TEAM

LEADERSHIP MESSAGES

Background

1. In his recent message to staff on behalf of the Leadership Group (LG), the Clerk/Chief Executive (C/CE) encouraged staff to provide feedback on the leadership of senior staff. He further stated that group heads had been tasked with considering how best to facilitate such feedback. This paper sets out the process for defining leadership in the organisation and measuring its success within the context of the wider corporate change programme. The purpose of this is to enable OMG to hold a discussion on how to encourage dialogue between staff and managers on the effectiveness of leadership not only now, but throughout the process and beyond.

Mary Ann Masson, x85304

Discussion

2. The C/CE issued a message to staff on 15 May 2009 on behalf of the LG to provide an update on the Corporate Change Programme. The message focussed particularly on the commitment the group has made to improving leadership in the organisation. It went on to state that staff would be the judge of the group’s leadership. The C/CE tasked group heads with considering how to facilitate feedback from members of staff. Group heads agreed that they should discuss this at a meeting of OMG in order to agree the messages they will feed back to staff and to ensure these are consistent with the aims, objectives and timetable of phase 2 of the corporate change programme.

3. There are two factors to be taken into consideration before Group Heads agree these messages. First, part of phase 2 of the corporate change programme is a post implementation review of phase 1. The format and methodology for this have yet to be agreed but it is likely to include interviews with members of the LG conducted by an external interviewer to establish what tangible differences there have been following CCP. This will cover the new senior management structures and roles and therefore leadership. OMG is asked to consider whether members of the wider staff group should be invited to take part in this process as a way of gauging whether there had been a perceptible change in leadership over the preceding months.

4. Second, OMG has had sight of the Internal Communication Strategy which is due to go to SPCB on 24 June 2009. In agreeing messages to feedback to staff, group heads will wish to refer to the strategy and, in particular, strand 1 which deals with vertical communication. The
strategy defines communication as ‘the effective exchange of meaning and understanding’ with the key word being ‘exchange’. Therefore, any messages passed to staff down the management line should be ‘complemented by the appropriate feedback channels to allow a shared understanding to be confirmed’.

5. Group heads will need to consider what messages should be passed to staff and when.

6. The following is proposed, bearing in mind that later messages will depend to some extent upon the outcome of the leadership development programme.

Message 1 (June)

7. In the first instance group heads, if they have not already done so, should acknowledge the statements made in the C/CE message in May regarding the expectation that they are visible, listen to staff, receptive to new ideas and open to constructive challenge. An undertaking to share their objectives was also given. OMG may wish to consider the following issues that could build upon this;

- how new G7 objectives should influence the direction of objectives for other grades
- is there a leadership role for other grades, and if so, what is it?
- are the existing communication methods sufficient to promote shared understanding?

Message 2 (September)

8. If possible, staff should also be informed of any role they might play in the post implementation review of phase 1. At this stage it would also be appropriate to consider the overlap with CCP/members needs and include as necessary focus on behavioural change.

Message 3 (following phase 1 review)

9. Feedback to staff the results of the phase 1 review and lessons learned.

Resource Implications

10. There are no resource implications.

Timing
11. This is a matter for discussion but, as staff have already been encouraged to provide feedback, OMG will wish to ensure that this can be addressed at team briefings sooner rather than later.

12. The post implementation review of phase 1 is due to take place at the end of 2009. If OMG agree, the wider staff group will have the opportunity to contribute to this review.

Dependencies

13. As outlined above, the development of messages for relaying to staff is dependent on the timetable of the Leadership Development Programme and other aspects of the Corporate Change Programme.

14. It is important that staff who do not report to a group head receive the same messages from their team leaders/office heads.

Equalities Implications

15. There are no equalities implications.

Publication Scheme

16. This paper can be published.

Next Steps

17. The next steps are;

- Group heads and C/CE to share finalised job objectives with staff.
- Consider whether staff should be involved in the post evaluation review of phase 1.
- Communicate the agreed messages to staff, including those who do not report to a group head.

Decision

18. OMG is asked to decide upon the content of the messages which group heads will cascade to staff and to note the next steps detailed above.

Clerk/Chief Executive’s Office
June 2009