STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP TEAM MEETING

NOTE OF MEETING HELD ON 31 MARCH 2009, 3.00PM, ROOM Q2.07

Present:  Paul Grice, Stewart Gilfillan, Ian Leitch, Bill Thomson, Lynda Towers

In Attendance:  Lee, Bridges & Tom Wheeler (item 3), Andy Munro (items 3 & 4), Ed Murray, Ian Macnicol, Derek Croll, Alli Williams, Carolyn Costley

Item 1. Introduction

1. Paul welcomed everyone to the first meeting of the Strategic Leadership Team and reiterated the importance of the role the team would play in leading the Scottish parliamentary service. He passed particular thanks to Ed Murray who, as a member of the Advisory Audit Board, had agreed to attend the first half a dozen or so meetings to help Paul in deciding whether to take forward recruitment of a permanent independent adviser.

Item 2. SLT Operating Principles

Operating Principles (SLT/001/09)

2. Draft operating principles for SLT were signed-off subject to a few minor changes. These would be published on the Parliament’s website and intranet.

3. It was agreed to review the principles in six months to see whether any changes needed to be made in the light of practice.

Action: Alli

Independent Adviser (SLT/002/09)

4. SLT noted a draft remit and person specification for a potential independent adviser and agreed to provide Alli with any detailed comments on the draft.

Action: SLT members

5. A number of issues had been highlighted for consideration and SLT provided the following steer:

- Given the terms of the Scotland Act it would be inappropriate for an independent adviser to share corporate responsibility for decisions taken by the Clerk/Chief Executive based on SLT’s advice;
- A decision on whether to set selection criteria for candidates would be taken at the time of finalising any advert. In doing so, criteria set for
parliamentary office holders should be borne in mind;
• The appointment panel should consist of the Clerk/Chief Executive and an SPCB member. Further consideration could be given to also having a member of the Advisory Audit Board on the panel.

6. Paul agreed to consider these points if he decided to go ahead with such an appointment. He would update SLT accordingly and discuss detailed arrangements with them. In the meantime, he agreed that the draft remit and person spec could be shared with the TUS.

Action: Ian M

Item 3. Strategic Planning (SLT/003/09)

7. SLT noted the latest drafts of the strategic plan, performance indicators (in the form of a performance report) and strategic risk register.

Strategic Plan

8. It was agreed that the latest draft was a significant improvement on the interim plan and the additional information included made the plan easier for internal and external audiences to follow. The plan was approved for submission to the Corporate Body subject to:

• Our Purpose: adding in reference to leadership role of SLT;
• Section 1:
  o clarifying the final bullet of 1.3;
  o adding in references to legal support as appropriate;
• Section 2:
  o ensuring this clarified the need to provide general advice to MSPs and their local offices;
• Section 3:
  o adding in reference to events;
• Section 4:
  o Deleting “best” from 2nd bullet of What we will deliver section;
  o deleting “and minimise waste” in 4.1;
  o deleting “fully” in 1st sentence of 4.2;
  o considering further how to measure outcomes in relation to compliance;
  o agreeing with Derek how to reflect accurately the role played by the Auditor General in compliance.

9. It was noted that Section 3 might need to be updated once a public engagement strategy had been finalised.

Action: Lee/Tom
Performance Report
10. A draft report was noted; the next step would be to finalise performance indicators with individual group heads. At the same time, group heads would be reminded of the need to use these indicators as the basis for their group plans. SLT agreed that responsible parties should be listed for indicators where a target was still to be defined.

Action: Lee/Tom

Strategic Risk Register
11. This document listed the main risks with the potential to disrupt implementation of the strategic plan. It would be reviewed by SLT and OMG quarterly to ensure that it remained current and that risks were being managed appropriately.

12. The draft register was approved subject to:

• Expanding the introduction in relation to reputational risks;
• Removing duplication through cross-referencing;
• Making risk levels for 1B and 1C compatible;
• Adding security programme into 1D;
• adding a risk in relation to IT failure on the parliamentary campus;
• considering prioritising risks to highlight those needing most attention.

13. It was agreed that whilst the scoring system used was appropriate for now, ideally the same system should be used for the strategic risk register and for project risks. Further consideration could usefully be given to this in due course. In the meantime, AC/CEs should monitor that the interface was working appropriately.

Action: AC/CEs

14. Group heads should be asked to prepare and operate their group plans in accordance with the strategic risk register, ensuring that mitigating actions were included in their plan as well as in individual job roles where appropriate. They should also consider whether it would be helpful to produce a group-level risk register for their area.

Action: Lee/Tom

15. It would be important to ensure that significant risks identified within individual projects or procurement exercises were added to the strategic risk register where relevant. It was noted that a risk framework document was being prepared to set out how risks were identified and managed at all levels of the organisation, and that this would be brought to SLT for agreement in due course.

Action: Tom
16. In submitting the suite of planning documents to the Corporate Body for sign-off, the covering paper should clarify that the strategic plan was owned by the SPCB; SLT would be responsible for delivering against it and for managing identified risks.

   Action: Lee/Tom

Item 4. Draft Internal Audit Plan: 2009/10 (SLT/004/09)

17. SLT noted the draft internal audit plan for the coming year and the issues considered in developing the plan. It welcomed the fact that this included considering the strategic risk register.

18. The plan was endorsed subject to one minor change.

Item 5. Strategic Review of SPCB Resourcing (SLT/005/09)

19. SLT considered a paper setting out a medium term outlook for providing the Parliament and its Members with the resources required for their purposes.

20. SLT agreed that the paper would form a useful basis for briefing the Corporate Body on longer term resourcing issues as part of the forthcoming budget round. Key issues to be addressed included the levels and range of services to be provided in a tight financial climate, efficient and effective service delivery, and how expectations in this regard might be managed, as well as the overall balance between staff costs and other major areas of expenditure. Any changes to office holders falling within the SPCB’s remit would also impact on resources.

21. Paul agreed to work with Ian M and Derek to develop a paper and to work with the secretariat to arrange when it might best be discussed with the Corporate Body.

   Action: Paul

Item 6. Meeting Review

22. All were agreed that the quality of the papers had been high, that the meeting had generated a number of useful outputs and had remained at an appropriately strategic level. Meetings should continue to be reviewed.

   Action: Alli

Item 7. Date of Next Meeting

23. The next meeting was scheduled to take place at 10.00am on Tuesday 6 May 2009.
Item 8. Any Other Business

24. None.

Alli Williams
6 April 2009