DRAFT INTERNAL COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

Background

1. The existing Internal Communications Strategy has been in place since 2003. It was agreed that the strategy should be reviewed and updated as one of the workstreams of the Corporate Change Programme (CCP) phase 1.

2. Following initial exploratory discussions with SMT and other stakeholders, it was agreed that, rather than attempt to rework the 2003 version, a new strategy should be designed to complement the new structures and working practices agreed through other CCP workstreams. The new strategy document is attached in draft at Annex A.

3. Contact: Tom Wheeler, ext 86134

Timing

4. Routine. It would however be helpful to get early SLT endorsement of the strategy in principle in order that the strategy can be finalised and launched before the summer recess.

Discussion

5. The new strategy has been developed following extensive stakeholder consultation with SMT, the Parliamentary Staff Forum, other SPS staff and Members’ staff. Findings from the consultation phase were discussed with SMT in February 2009 and a broad framework agreed for the new strategy.

6. SMT agreed that the new strategy should be a more concise and less prescriptive document, based around a set of communication “first principles” and divided into three strands:

   i. Vertical communication in the SPS;
   ii. Horizontal communication in the SPS; and
   iii. Communication between the SPS and MSPs, Members’ staff and other stakeholders.

7. The attached draft strategy is based on the structure agreed by SMT. The third strand of the document will be completed when the remits of CCP Phase 2 and the Members' Needs Survey follow up have been finalised. This is discussed further in the “Dependencies” section below.

8. SLT will own the strategy and will have a key role in overseeing its effective implementation. It is therefore proposed that the Strategy and Development (S&D) Manager should produce a six-monthly update paper
to SLT, drawing on stakeholder feedback and including proposals for changes when appropriate. To help inform these updates, we propose that the S&D Manager meets the Parliamentary Staff Forum on a quarterly basis to discuss feedback and suggestions received from SPS staff. We further propose that the S&D Manager coordinate a small group from the main offices responsible for corporate communication (SDO, CE Office, MRO and the SPICe e-Services Team) to meet every six months, in advance of the regular SLT discussion, and identify any issues requiring SLT’s attention.

9. The S&D Manager will also liaise regularly with Group Heads to discuss communication issues, but we do not currently see a need to formalise these arrangements.

**Resource Implications**

10. The main resource implication during the consultation phase has been around staff time. This remains the only significant resource implication for the implementation phase. The majority of the work arising from the action plan falls to the Strategy and Development Manager, and this has been factored into SDO’s work planning for the coming year.

**Dependencies**

11. The implementation of the ICS is currently scheduled to form part of phase 2 of CCP. As noted at paragraph 7 above, there is a significant dependency with the programme of work to follow up the 2008 Members’ Needs Survey. Once the scopes of the respective programmes have been finalised by SLT, we will work closely with the Members’ Needs SRO to ensure a coordinated approach.

12. There are also internal dependencies between the ICS and other workstreams of CCP, including programme and project governance. The CCP Programme Manager will perform a coordinating role to ensure that these streams are taken forward in a structured and complementary way.

13. It should also be noted that the draft remit of CCP phase 2 includes a post implementation review of phase 1. The ICS may be subject to some further changes, to be agreed with SLT, depending on the findings of this review.

**Equalities Implications**

14. The ICS has been developed in close consultation with the Equalities Manager, and the principles of equality and accessibility are integral to the draft document. We will continue to liaise closely with the Equalities Manager as we move into the implementation phase.
Publication Scheme

15. Once finalised, the ICS will be made available on the Scottish Parliament website. This cover paper can also be published in line with the SPCB Publication Scheme.

Next Steps

16. If SLT is content with the draft strategy in principle, the next step will be to liaise with the Members’ Needs SRO over the content of Strand 3 of the strategy. We will then reformat the strategy document to be consistent with other key strategic documents arising from CCP, such as the Strategic Plan and Strategic Risk Register.

17. During the initial consultation phase we made a commitment to consult stakeholders on the draft strategy once it had been developed. We therefore propose to issue the document to Group Heads to discuss with their staff and feed back to SDO. We also propose to circulate the document to the TUS and PSF at that stage. We will incorporate any agreed amendments and recirculate to SLT to agree by correspondence.

18. Finally, we will invite SPCB to sign off the strategy with a view to launching the new ICS in advance of the summer recess.

Decision

19. SLT is invited to:

- Endorse in principle the new draft Internal Communication Strategy;
- Provide any comments on the draft strategy; and
- Agree the next steps as noted at paragraphs 16-18.

Strategy & Development Office
April 2009