



Summary Minutes of the Board Meeting, 2 May 2014

Present:

Permanent Secretary (Chair)
James Turner
David Richards
Gareth Jones
Michael Hearty
June Milligan
Jeff Godfrey
James Price
Owen Evans
Elan Closs Stephens
Adrian Webb
John Howells

In attendance:

Natalie Pearson
Lynne Hamilton (item 3)
Ian Gibson (item 4)
Peter Kennedy (item 5)
Mark Pruce (item 5)
Paul Hopkins (item 5)

Secretariat:

Emma Alexander
Catherine Evans

1. Permanent Secretary's Items [Oral]

1.1 The Permanent Secretary referred to the forthcoming visit of Sir Bob Kerslake, Head of the Civil Service, and the pre-election period due to the elections to the European Parliament on 22nd May. He also referred to the recent trawl for the next Honours round and asked DGs to give further consideration to nominations from their areas.

1.2 *Director General (DG) Exception Reports*

The Permanent Secretary invited DGs to share key issues from within their areas with Board colleagues. Issues raised included Supreme Court hearings, an update on the Legislative Programme, including the sealing of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Bill and reference to the Housing, Planning and Future Generations Bills, the Rural Development Plan, a call for evidence regarding hazardous radioactive waste, the WAO report on EU structural funds, an internal review of ICT, Jobs Growth Wales, Schools Challenge Cymru, PISA, Inward Investment, the forthcoming NATO summit, the closure of the Permanent Secretary's Reviews Programme, the appointment of a new Head of Internal Audit, the Firefighters' strike and the challenge of getting sufficient volunteers to man the Emergency Co-ordination Centre Wales (ECCW). It was agreed that a proposal for moving from

reliance on volunteers to something more structured should be presented to the Board for consideration.

- 1.3 *Senior Civil Service (SCS) Remuneration Committee*
James Turner, Non-Executive Director and Chair of the Remuneration Committee gave a brief update on the meeting held on 28th March. Items discussed had included the split between generalist and specialist posts in the SCS, consideration of managed moves within business critical roles and a discussion about work to take forward recommendations of the Williams Commission. James also reported that the Civil Service Commissioner, Kathryn Bishop, had requested further involvement in planning meetings prior to the advertisement of Director posts.
- 1.4 *Operations Group*
John Howells, Chair of the Operations Group, gave a brief update on the meeting held on 9th April. Items discussed included an update on the Equality Action Plan, Equality and Diversity benchmarking, E-payslips and a request for compulsory training on The Rights of Children and Young Persons (Wales) Measure 2011, which placed a duty on all Welsh Government Ministers to have due regard to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). The Group had not agreed to the mandatory training request, but instead recommended that a communications plan be developed highlighting the training available and the main issues.
- 1.5 June Milligan said she had written to all DGs to signpost the training available on this Measure, in terms of giving due regard to the UNCRC, and encouraged them to ensure that relevant staff undertook the training.

For decision

2. Minutes of 28th March and Matters Arising [Board(14)017]

- 2.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 28th March were agreed as an accurate record.

For discussion

3 Update on Financial Position [Oral]

- 3.1 Lynne Hamilton, Director of Finance and Commercial, provided a brief update on the latest financial position as at Month 12 and said that adjustments were still being made but overall the position looked positive. In terms of process, the first draft of the Welsh Government's accounts was due to be submitted to the Wales Audit Office on 20th May.
- 3.2 The Board briefly discussed the position for 2014-15 and noted that they would need further discussions.
- 3.3 The Permanent Secretary thanked Lynne for the update.

4. Review of Corporate Risks [Board(14)018]

- 4.1 Ian Gibson, Head of Corporate Governance Unit, introduced the quarterly update report on Corporate Risks, which asked the Board to review the risks and decide if the proposed new risks should be added to the Register. The Corporate Governance Committee would discuss the Risk Register and the risk management framework at its meeting on 20th May, following which a discussion on risk management would be scheduled at Board.
- 4.2 Following discussion, the Permanent Secretary thanked Ian Gibson for the paper.

5. New Civil Service Pension Scheme [Board(14)019]

- 5.1 Peter Kennedy, HR Director and Mark Pruce, Head of Pay and Reward, introduced the paper which provided information on the new Principal Civil Service Pension Scheme (PCSPS) due to be introduced on 1 April 2015. They highlighted the following points:

- the new scheme would be based on career average earnings with links to the state pension age;
- revised contribution rates would be introduced and would affect all PCSPS members, including those who did not transfer into the new scheme;
- staff who were 10 years or less from normal pension age on 1 April 2012 would not transfer to the new scheme;
- staff who were between 10 and 13 and a half years to normal pension age on 1 April 2012 would be eligible for tapered protection and could transfer to the new scheme at a later date;
- all other PCSPS members would be transferred to the new scheme immediately in April 2015.

- 5.2 The following points were raised in discussion:

- staff in the Pay and Reward team were not authorised to give financial advice but would recommend that staff sought independent financial advice;
- the Trade Unions were planning their own sessions for staff to explain the forthcoming changes;
- a communications plan was being drawn up to outline the changes to staff.

- 5.3 The Board agreed that the organisation should discharge its responsibility as a good employer and keep staff informed. It was also agreed that consideration should be given to using a range of communication methods to suit all audiences.

- 5.4 The Permanent Secretary thanked Peter and Mark for the paper.

6. Any other Business

- 6.1 Under any other business, the Permanent Secretary extended an invitation to the Non-Executive Directors to join the DG discussion and/or staff discussion with Sir Bob Kerslake on 9th May if their diaries permitted.

Board Secretariat, 6 May 2014