

Y Bwrdd Rheoli Management Board

Cynulliad
Cenedlaethol
Cymru
National
Assembly for
Wales



Minutes of meeting on 29 September 2011 09:00-11:00, Conference Room 4B

Present:

Claire Clancy (Chief Executive and Clerk) (Chair)
Dianne Bevan (Chief Operating Officer)
Keith Bush (Director of Legal Services)
Adrian Crompton (Director of Assembly Business)
Connie Cockburn (Head of Estates and ICT)
Non Gwilym (Head of Communications)
Sulafa Thomas (Head of Assembly Committees)
Steven O'Donoghue (Head of Assembly Resources)
Mair Parry-Jones (Head of Translation and Reporting Service)
Kathryn Potter (Head of Research Service)
Craig Stephenson (Head of Commission and Member Support Service)
Sian Wilkins (Head of Legislation and Chamber Services)
Helen Finlayson (Secretariat)
Ross Davies (Equalities Manager) – item 7
Lynne Flux (Head of Internal Audit) – item 7

1.0 Introductions and apologies

1.1 No apologies were received. There were no declarations of interest.

2.0 Communications to staff

2.1 Non Gwilym to draft a note of the Management Board discussions for the newspage.

3.0 Minutes of the meeting held on 13 September 2011

3.1 The minutes were agreed as a correct record.

Matters arising

3.2 Work was ongoing to identify and project work that could be brought forward into 2011-12. Some possible options had been identified. HR were developing proposals relating to the professionalisation of staff, as discussed by the Board on 13 September.

3.3 The Board noted its thanks to the Finance team for their work on the Commission's draft budget for 2012-13, which had been positively received by the Commission. The draft budget would be scrutinised by the Finance Committee on 6 October.

4.0 Financial management report

4.1 The Board noted that an underspend of approximately £1 million was estimated by year-end, and that a decision on whether a supplementary budget might be needed to return any funds to the Welsh Block would need to be taken by December.

4.2 Possible areas for new project work in 2011-12, or project work that could be brought forward into the current financial year, were discussed, including the provision of interpretation and sound in the Pierhead, and options for improving the facilities on the Assembly bus.

4.3 It was agreed that Steven O'Donoghue would prepare a paper, for consideration by the Commission at its November meeting, which would cover the return to the Welsh Block of unspent funds from the election budget, and proposals for effectively managing the risk of an underspend on the Assembly Services budget ambit.

Action:

Steven O'Donoghue to prepare a paper for the Commission's November meeting on the return to the Welsh Fund of unspent funds from the election budget, and proposals for effectively managing the risk of an underspend on the Assembly Services budget ambit.

5.0 Options for ICT services after 2014

- 5.1 The Commission would be giving initial consideration to the options for ICT services after 2014 at its November meeting. The Board discussed its approach, and the information and evidence which would be required to assist the Commission in making its decision.**

Action:

Connie Cockburn to prepare a draft Commission paper on options for ICT services after 2014, taking account of the discussions and feedback.

6.0 Annual environmental report

- 6.1 The Board discussed the high level of achievement against the targets, which had resulted in significant CO₂ reductions. This was partly due to reductions in business travel, the levels of which had been affected by dissolution and budgetary constraints. Investment in more efficient building management systems and operating practices had contributed significantly to the reductions, and Connie Cockburn noted that further projects requiring investment were being investigated. These projects took account of the likelihood of reductions becoming more difficult to find year on year.**

- 6.2 The Board thanked and congratulated the team for the work on the report, and formally noted and endorsed the following:**

- certification retained at Level 5 for the whole estate in 2010;**
- the annual environmental report on the recommendation of the Clear Skies group;**
- the findings of the Clear Skies group that the Green Dragon system continues to contribute to environmental performance improvement; and**
- achievement against objectives and targets.**

Draft Commission papers

7.0 Bilingual services

- 7.1 The Board noted that the consultation on bilingual services was still ongoing, and that explorations were continuing into options for machine translation. This meant that specific recommendations to the Commission had not yet been identified.**
- 7.2 The Board discussed the initial feedback from the consultation events, and noted that a range of stakeholders had provided responses. The presentation of the options open to the Commission was discussed, and it was agreed that robust risk and benefit analysis should be included. It was agreed that a brief reference should be made in the paper to the status of the recommendations of the Independent Review Panel on Bilingual Services.**
- 8.0 UNO benefits and savings six monthly review**
- 8.1 The Board discussed the paper, which had been requested by the Commission to provide an update on the benefits realised from the UNO project, and the extent to which the original project objectives were being achieved. The paper also provided an update to Commissioners on the issues which continued to be experienced by some Members and their staff. Feedback was provided on areas in which the paper could be strengthened, and Heads of Service agreed to provide examples of benefits to working practices had been achieved as a result of UNO.**
- 8.2 It was agreed that a method should be found by which Members could be made aware of any known issues, and when resolutions to such issues had been found.**
- 8.3 The Board noted the importance of identifying benefits realisation metrics at an early stage of project planning, to enable benchmarking throughout the process.**

Action:

Heads of Service to provide examples of benefits to working practices had been achieved as a result of UNO.

Connie Cockburn to identify methods by which Members could be made aware of any known issues, and when resolutions to such issues had been found.

9.0 Improving access support for Assembly Members

9.1 The Board noted that feedback had been received from some Assembly Members that the provisions in place for translation, reasonable adjustments to constituency and regional offices, and communication support for cross-party groups were not sufficient to enable them to fulfil their roles as Members.

9.2 Members were able to claim translation costs from their office cost allowances, or, if the translation was between Welsh and English, to use centrally provided funds. Cross-party groups, with one anomalous exception, were not currently provided with any financial or administrative support. Reasonable adjustments to Members' constituency or regional offices were provided for by a £1,000 allowance, which had been determined by the Remuneration Board. Adjustments costing in excess of this amount could, with prior approval, be centrally funded.

9.3 It was agreed that the options for the provision of central funds, which were within the remit of the Assembly Commission, should be included in the paper. The Commission's decisions would then be communicated to the Remuneration Board, which would determine whether any amendment to the Determination was required.

Winding up the meeting

10.0 Any other business

10.1 There was no other business

11.0 Agenda for next meeting

11.1 Claire and the directors to agree the agenda for the next meeting.

Secretariat

September 2011