Management Board

Meeting Venue:	**Conference Room 4B – Tŷ Hywel**
Meeting date:	**Monday, 8 December 2014**
Meeting time:	12.30 – 15.30

Minutes: MB (17–14)

Committee Members:	Claire Clancy, Chief Executive and Clerk (Chair) Nicola Callow, Head of Finance Adrian Crompton, Director of Assembly Business Anna Daniel, Head of Strategic Transformation Non Gwilym, Head of Communications Bedwyr Jones, Acting Head of ICT Elisabeth Jones, Director of Legal Services Mair Parry-Jones, Head of Translation and Reporting Service Kathryn Potter, Head of Research Mike Snook, Head of People and Places Craig Stephenson, Head of Commission and Members Support Service Dave Tosh, Director of ICT Christopher Warner, Head of Policy and Legislation Committee Service Siân Wilkins, Head of Chamber & Committee Service
Committee Staff:	Liz Jardine (Secretariat)
Others in attendance:	

Lowri Williams, Head of Human Resources
Lisa Bowkett, Management Accountant, Financial Services,
National Assembly for Wales

1 Introductions, apologies and declarations of interest

At the Investment Board meeting held in 16 June 2014, current and future workforce planning was discussed and a range of options were considered relating to a more robust approach to capacity planning. It was agreed that, annually, Management Board would be used as a Review and Planning Board. This would be used to consider service plans, staff performance management and development, and projections for future budgets and demands. This would enable the organisation to assess the current level of resource, its future needs and how to address the difference.

The purpose of the Review and Planning Board meeting was to achieve clarity and decisiveness around areas of greatest urgency, to review the proposals of the service areas that had identified a need for further current and future resources and to provide challenge to those predictions.

The Audit and Risk Assurance Committee would take an interest in the process of challenge undertaken by the Review and Planning Board. Individual cases for additional resources would continue to go to the Investment and Resources Board.

2 Communication note to staff

3 Capacity Planning – continued discussion to include:

Our financial future

Nicola Callow outlined the Assembly's financial position and the corporate investment fund available for investment in the 2015–16 and 2016–17 financial years. The figures had been compiled to release the maximum funding possible and used the latest staff forecast information available, taking into account the agreed funds for EFM projects and ICT's development fund, but setting aside a ring-fenced budget for election related expenditure. Nicola also outlined assumptions that had been made including the effect of external factors, such as the future Spending Review and Employer National Insurance changes. The two biggest risks concerned the lack of contingency in the figures and the assumption that the 2016–17 budget would be the same cash figure as 2015–16.

A calculation had been made on the total costs of the additional resources that had been requested by each service area. The potential costs were compared with the available investment fund year on year. In theory, and based solely on those calculations, it looked as if it would be possible to afford the proposals put forward. However, each proposal would need to be considered extremely carefully as spending on staffing would give far less flexibility for other investment spending opportunities in future.

The Investment and Resourcing Board were looking carefully at investment expenditure for 2014-15, in particular in ICT and Estates where there was considerable flexibility, to manage the financial position and ensure it comes in under budget at the end of March 2015. Nicola advised that a supplementary budget motion was being prepared to go to Plenary in February to adjust the Annually Managed Expenditure for the Members' Pension scheme.

Pressures on our ability to deliver

The Board discussed the pressures that were creating current pinch points on resources and those that would make a difference to the capacity to deliver in the longer term.

The current concerns related to the capacity of specific service areas: Strategic Transformation; Communications; Members' Business Service; and Finance; business analysts; Legislation; and HR. Factors that make a difference to our capacity to deliver were considered to include: project management skills; internal churn and availability of staff; recesses; failing to recruit when we try; and the prioritisation and duplication of work.

Human Resources had prepared a substantial document of management workforce data. The Board discussed the data and the pressures that influenced the different teams' working patterns. The requirement to manage business need and progress projects over the summer recess, ensuring that staff were working effectively and efficiently through the year, had to be balanced with their health and wellbeing.

Service area proposals

The Board considered the specific proposals for additional resources from service areas.

Commission and Member Support

The CAMS service area is currently adequately staffed to provide its services in the most part but is undertaking a review of Members' Business Services. This is likely lead to an increase in the staffing complement into the Fifth Assembly, due to the increasing responsibilities of the team. It was anticipated that additional resources would be needed incrementally over the following two years at TS, EO and/or HEO level. The Board agreed that MBS were a high priority area for increased resources.

Supporting legislative scrutiny

Chris Warner introduced the business case for supporting legislative scrutiny, which had recently been presented to the Investment and Resources Board. The volume of legislative scrutiny undertaken by the Assembly is increasing rapidly and is expected to remain at a significantly high level going into the Fifth Assembly. The increase includes more Bills, more complexity, more subordinate legislation and more Member engagement. This increase in legislation means a greater overlap in the passage of Bills through their various stages. The analysis of the combination of volume, complexity and overlap showed that, to maintain the current levels of professional support to manage the passage of legislation, additional resources would be required.

Additionally, the Business Directorate restructure has meant that staff had been released to resource the Strategic Transformation team.

Heads of Service areas connected with the legislative process provided further information relating to their specific areas. Siân Wilkins outlined the successful pilot in the Chamber office of an in-house bilingual service. This, together with taking on responsibility for cross-party groups had produced more work than anticipated. That said, costs had been saved by removing the need for external translation.

Elisabeth Jones explained the rationale for the additional requirement in the Legal team, for example, the significantly increased workload to support Bills at all stages and the anticipated increase in the number of LCMs. There was a need to start recruiting now for one post due to the extended recruitment timeframe needed for legal posts. Kathryn Potter outlined that demand on the Research team was increasing, particularly for more specialised and complex work. Additional expertise and capacity was needed within the Finance and Statistics team in direct response to the amount of

legislation being considered by the Finance Committee and further devolution of tax and fiscal powers.

Mair Parry-Jones explained that the work of the Translation team would also increase in order to meet the needs of the legislative programme. Within the review of the recording of proceedings, work was underway to identify each Members' needs and to consider ways of intelligently prioritising translations.

Non Gwilym outlined the pressures on the Communications team, which included supporting committee work, embedding the youth engagement strategy and managing the increase in demand from Members to engage in the constituencies. Proposals had been put forward for immediate consideration to address business outreach, media and senior management arrangements.

The proposal across the Directorates (PLCS and CCS; Research; Communications; Legal) was for 21-22 posts: 16-17 permanent posts, including filling five or six existing vacant posts, and five fixed-term posts.

The Board considered the risk that the legislative programme may change. The programme had increased, for example, the Health Bill had been divided into two bills, but this had been factored into the plan where possible. The quality of legislation coming from Welsh Government was also driving some of the workload, however our input at the early stages could impact on the amount of work required at later stages of the legislative process.

Claire outlined that the recent work of the Remuneration Board had focussed on increasing resources to meet the growing responsibilities of the Assembly. Similarly, in order to deliver outstanding parliamentary support, including world class committees, service areas must be able to deliver quality and efficiency.

In conclusion, the Board agreed to the thrust of the proposals for supporting work on the legislative programme as it was a high priority. Individual cases should be taken to Investment and Resources Board as soon as possible, taking a phased approach to match demand.

Strategic Transformation

The Strategic Transformation service has been in place since June 2013, during which the team has seen substantial churn of staff. Anna Daniel advised that the team

needed additional resource for the constitutional change and Remuneration Board work, which are taking precedence at present. The pressures of these critical areas of work, as well as developing the programme of transformation and prioritisation, have meant that time for strategic thinking has been squeezed. The service has been piloting a programme approach which is currently being reviewed, and further consideration of the expectations of the service are needed.

The Board felt that the Strategic Transformation service had produced a positive change in the organisation, in particular having a team able to respond actively to important work like constitutional change. It was agreed efforts should focus on the delivery aspects of constitutional change while further consideration is given to the programme side.

The Board agreed the proposal for a TS post to be made permanent in order to provide much needed admin support to the work of the team.

Research

The Board agreed to Kathryn Potter's request for a full time temporary post to undertake GIS/mapping work for Assembly Members (the work is currently being undertaken on an a two day a week secondment basis).

Communications

Non Gwilym provided an overview of the structure of the Communications team that was needed to deliver the priorities identified by the Commissioners and where the points of pressure were, in particular as a result of the large number of secondments from the team. There was strong support for the proposal and the Board agreed in principle that it was necessary to get the structure right, with the emphasis on prioritisation and managing the strong appetite in the organisation for the team's work. It was agreed a business case should be put to the Investment and Resourcing Board (IRB) as soon as possible, covering the ongoing management and review of priorities and delivery by staff.

ICT

Bedwyr Jones outlined the three posts that had already been agreed by IRB and that would be funded through the ICT investment fund. The Board then discussed the proposals for a new specialist desktop service engineer to provide support on Apple Mac. The proposal was agreed in principle with the proviso that the business case had sufficient evidence that the service could not be provided within current resources and that an effective skills exchange was put in place within the team.

The Board was also supportive of the up-skilling of the service desk support.

Governance and Audit

Virginia Hawkins advised the Board that, on the whole, the team was in a stable, resilient position, but there was a concern around the increasing workload of the business analysts and the difficulties around predicting forthcoming priorities. The Board recognised the benefit of their work in assisting all service areas to solve capacity and prioritisation pressures and agreed the proposal.

Finance

Nicola Callow outlined the changes that were to take place in Finance due to a retirement and the proposed changes to the team structure. These included a new Team Support (TS) role, to be trained with a view to a future move or progression when needed.

A new post of Head of Finance was proposed to free the Director of Finance from daily operational management matters.

Management Board agreed that the post of Head of Finance was critical to build resilience in the team and enable pace and flexibility to respond to issues at a senior level. The TS post was also agreed and Nicola was asked to ensure a case articulating the business needs would go to IRB as soon as possible.

Estates and Facilities Management / Security / FoH

Mike Snook advised the Board that, although there was no proposal for additional resources, there were some issues of capacity and some work was being undertaken with the Business Analysts and HR to explore the best use of staff resources in the

Security team. Also, as a result of an audit being undertaken on vetting, a business case for a post to be made permanent would be presented to IRB.

The Board discussed the opening hours in the Senedd, in particular during quiet times of the year, and whether these should be reviewed.

Human Resources

Lowri outlined the business pressures on HR and that almost half the team were currently either fixed term, temporary or acting up. Some changes had already been implemented in the team in order to build in more resilience. However, there was a need for a dedicated SEO role on the HR/Payroll project and redesign of reward, a 12 month graduate post to review all policies or backfill to fulfil that task and a three month post to support the Remuneration Board.

Following discussion of the essential support function that HR provided to the other service areas, the Board agreed the proposals and asked that ICT assist HR to look at their technological requirements.

Conclusions

As a result of the discussions it was agreed that Nicola Callow would draw together all the proposals to determine overall costs and consequences. In the meantime, those proposals that were considered of high importance should be taken forward to IRB, immediately.

It was suggested that the overtime and flexi package policies should be reviewed to ensure the principles support each other.

It was acknowledged that there were different levels of turnover in different service areas, and that service-specific approaches would be required.

Project management and change management capability

The Board agreed that a programme of change management development opportunities should be developed, open to staff at all levels across the organisation who need to manage change, to equip them with the skills and tools to deliver that change effectively.

Dave Tosh would also consider a sustainable plan for developing and growing staff in these specific areas (PM, SRO, and Change) to ensure we have the skilled staff we need. This also included reviewing how Business Analyst resources are allocated.

Recesses

The different working patterns of different service areas make it challenging to get people together at the same time to work as multi-disciplinary teams. It was agreed that Directors and Heads of Service should make sure that interdependencies across their teams were mapped out well in advance and that plans were put in place to ensure corporate priorities are delivered.