

MINUTES OF THE SUPERVISORY BOARD MEETING

Thursday 24th February 2005, 11am, QAC 001

Attendees:

Juliet Wheldon (Chair)	Hilary Jackson	David Noble
Robert Aitken	Rosemary Jeffreys	Stephen Parker
Len Berkowitz	Philip Kent	David Pearson
Valerie Cain	Isabel Letwin	Alison Schofield
Vivienne Collett	Marilynne Morgan	Hugh Grover (Secretary)
Simon Harker	Frances Nash	Chris Stone (minutes Secretary)
Tony Hindley		

Apologies:

Jonathan Jones
Doug Walters

Staff observers:

Sandra Steele (DfES)
Paul Scullion (ECCG)

Juliet Wheldon (JW) welcomed Sandra and Paul as the first staff observers to attend an SB meeting. Staff observers will attend all future SB meetings and a rolling programme of attendance has been arranged from each part of TSol. Observers to the next meeting will come from COCAD and Litigation Group A.

1. 2004 SCS 360° Feedback Exercise – Alison Schofield

David Wilson (DW), of the Development Partnership, presented the main trends from the SCS 360° feedback exercise. He highlighted:

- a number of strengths in common with other Government Departments, for example high levels of professionalism and of strategic thinking;
- Many of the areas for improvement were also found in other departments, for example effective performance management and getting the best from teams. Issues remained for some around achieving the right balance between leadership / managing the business and direct legal work.

In discussion SB agreed the series of actions identified in the paper. Particular importance was placed on:

- Ensuring, when agreeing forward job plans and personal objectives, that there was a clear understanding of the balance between various aspects of SCS roles;
- Using the end year appraisal discussion to explore development activity arising from the 360° exercise;
- Using the emerging framework for Professional Skills for Government to articulate more clearly expectations at SCS level (and, in due course, at other levels);

- Supporting the development of our SCS management and leadership capabilities by developing a 'master class' programme focusing upon specific skills, and identifying opportunities for SCS colleagues to be involved in corporate projects and activities;
- Exploring the possibility of linking into another Department's leadership programmes and providing information on the range of development opportunities, including leadership programmes, currently available.

2. PRACAMS – David Pearson (DP)

David Pearson (DP) updated the meeting on PRACAMS issues, Discussions continue.

3. Corporate Plan – Hilary Jackson (HJ)

JW reported that she was setting up new arrangements to ensure that major projects and important areas of work in TSol were managed, delivered and monitored effectively. There would be three programme boards covering the main areas of the business – client care, business systems and HR - reporting to the Executive Board.

SB agreed that the new arrangements were clear and logical, More work would be done to clarify the relationship between the programme boards and operational management, and to reconsider the role of the Supervisory Board. HJ took the Board through the latest draft of the Corporate Plan asking for views and amendments.

Issues raised during the discussion were:

- LB supported the approach to managing change and business delivery outlined in the plan but noted that we needed to ensure we were clear how performance and strategic risks would be managed.
- LB and Stephen Parker (SP) highlighted the need to strengthen the efficiency section to ensure it reflected clearly client financial constraints and desire for value for money.
- New central targets were to be introduced for reducing sickness absence, and we would await these before addressing in the plan. In the meantime we will maintain our own internal targets and monitoring.

Action: All SB members to provide drafting points on the corporate plan to Hugh Grover (HG).

Action: HG to issue timetable for the Corporate Plan and Annual Plan publication.

4. Feedback from staff and teams – All

Members reported:

- The feedback on the consultation exercise on the move to OKS was very encouraging. Teams and staff across the business welcomed the opportunity to contribute and were pleased that their concerns about PCs had been met by the decision to buy flat screen PCs, which was widely welcomed.

Some individuals were being too stretched by the demands of casework, management and corporate contribution and we needed to achieve the right balance. Introducing programme boards and more focus on the priorities in the corporate plan was one means of addressing the issue.

5. Any Other Business

5.1 Update from the Values Group – Philip Kent

PK reported that the small working group looking at whether it would be useful to have some TSol 'values' would be organising a workshop on 15 April so that TSol staff would have an opportunity to explore this further.

JW thanked Sandra and Paul for attending and invited them to comment on their impressions and the items discussed at SB. Both had found the experience interesting and would encourage others to take up the opportunity.

BSC&P

25th February 2005