

Executive Team minutes

Monday 17 December

Members and other attendees present

Christopher Graham	Information Commissioner (chair)
Daniel Benjamin	Director of Corporate Services
David Smith	Deputy Commissioner and Director of Data Protection
Graham Smith	Deputy Commissioner and Director of Freedom of Information
Simon Entwisle	Director of Operations
Andy Cryer	Head of Finance
Peter Bloomfield	Senior Corporate Governance Manager
Robert Parker	Head of Corporate Affairs
Hannah Cutler	Corporate Governance Officer (secretariat)

1. Introductions and apologies

- 1.1. Chris Graham welcomed the group to the last formal ET meeting in 2012.

2. Draft minutes of the previous meeting and matters arising

Action point 1: Secretariat to make amendments to the minutes of the 19 November and to publish the minutes on the internet.

3. Pulse Survey

Issues: ET was presented with office-wide figures and an in-depth review of the results will now be completed. Analysis will be completed in January.

Decision: ET will inform the Leadership Group that the average figures have been received and that more detailed information will be shared later.

Action point 2: Secretariat to add pulse survey Action Planning to the 28 January ET agenda.

4. Annual Report

Issues: Options were presented for changes to the format and launch of the Annual Report for 2012/13. In 2013 the report needs to be laid on June 20, earlier than usual. The possibility of publishing an earlier document was discussed.

In 2012 the ICO has launched the Report via webinar. This has been successful but has removed an opportunity for stakeholders to hear directly from the Commissioner or put questions to us. To meet this need it was proposed to trial open sessions.

Decision: Four decisions were made:

- The 2012/13 annual report would be prepared to a similar timetable as the 2011/12 report;
- A launch event in London will be held for 2012/13 Annual Report;
- A webinar of the launch event will be organised;
- Corporate Affairs will research the idea of holding "open Sessions" and come back to ET with recommendations.

Action point 3: Rob Parker to research holding open sessions.

5. ICO Plan and Budget

Issues: The plan was reviewed and final amendments made. It was proposed that the Plan now be sent to the Ministry of Justice and trade unions (with the draft budget) for comments, and then a brief public consultation.

The provision for the new procurement team was confirmed as a working estimate. The projected notification fee income was also agreed. Budgeting arrangements for David Smith

and the Technology function were agreed as separate to the Strategic Liaison budget.

Decision: The budget was approved to go to the Ministry of Justice.

Action point 4: Peter Bloomfield to make final amendments to the ICO Plan, and to initiate consultation with the Ministry of Justice, the recognised Trade Unions and other stakeholders.

6. Key Metrics

Issues: Suggested key indicators (as discussed at Management Board) for ET to monitor and report back on to MB were discussed.

Decision: Individual ET members will report back on specific areas. These will be collated by Daniel Benjamin and Peter Bloomfield and shared at ET then MB.

Action point 5: Secretariat to add the key performance indicators to the Management Board work plan. The paper will be reviewed at the April 2013 MB.

7. Finance Report

Decision: Action 1 on the report is approved.

8. Project to Replace Accounting Software

Issues: Following a previous action point this paper was brought to ET. The ICO's accounting software has been in place for nearly 20 years. It is important that the ICO has a system which is fit for purpose, ensures separation of duties and can cope with future requirements.

Decision: ET agreed to proceed with the project to update the ICO's accounting systems.

Action point 6: Daniel Benjamin to explore the Ministry of Justice's approach to providing shared services and report back to ET.

9. IT Strategy

Issues: The ICO's evolving IT strategy increases the role for strategic 'in house' services. The changes proposed do not add to the budget.

Decision: Subject to further budget information ET agreed the proposal.

Action point 7: David Wells to provide ET with briefing on the expected savings from IT Re-procurement.

10. Vending machine contract

Issues: The contract for the hot drink vending machine is due for renewal. ET considered a number of options and factors.

Decision: ET approved the continuation of drinks vending provision with a six month extension to the existing contract followed by the procurement of a new contract. Future provision of free drinks will be reviewed at the end of the new contract. A message to staff that free vending will continue for a limited period of time before being reviewed will be issued in due course.

11. Any other urgent business

There was no other business.

12. Review of decisions on publication of papers

ET agreed to proactively publish the finance report. The ICO plan and budget are to be published in the near future as per normal business practice.

13. Key messages

1. ET has signed off the 2013/14 Corporate Plan and Budget for consultation.
2. ET agreed to replace the current 20 year old accounting software, providing us with a system ready for the future.
3. The hot drinks vending machine contract is due for renewal and ET has agreed to keep the machines in place and free of charge for the time being. Over the next six months there will be re-procurement for a new supplier.