

Executive Team minutes

Monday 19 May 2014

Members and other attendees present

Daniel Benjamin	Director of Corporate Services
Simon Entwisle	Director of Operations
Christopher Graham	Information Commissioner
David Smith	Deputy Commissioner and Director of Data Protection
Graham Smith	Deputy Commissioner and Director of Freedom of Information
Robert Parker	Head of Corporate Affairs (agenda items 7 and 8)
Peter Bloomfield	Senior Corporate Governance Manager (secretariat)

1. Introductions and apologies

- 1.1. There were no introductions or apologies.

2. Matters arising from the previous meeting

Minutes

- 1.2. The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed with minor amendment.

Action points

- 1.3. The action for Daniel Benjamin to discuss the internal audit plan was ongoing. The plan was to be discussed at this meeting under AOB.
- 1.4. The setting up of a steering group to consider IT expenditure was ongoing.
- 1.5. The action for Simon Entwisle to bring a paper on notification fee projections was superseded. The issue would be discussed under the finance agenda item later in the meeting.
- 1.6. Graham Smith had provided his update to Organisational Development.

3. Finances

Issue

- 1.7. The April finance report was presented for discussion. Daniel Benjamin advised that income and expenditure were broadly on track however it was much too early to draw any conclusions for the year.
- 1.8. In respect of the tracking of IT expenditure there were 15 projects to be tracked and a report would be brought to a June meeting. It was emphasised that the IT programme was ambitious and there was uncertainty over costs and when they would arise.
- 1.9. There was a need to review and agree budget changes. This would be done shortly when issues relating to income and expenditure had been firmed up.
- 1.10. The item on depreciation was questioned.
- 1.11. Executive Team was asked to indicate any information absent from the current report which they needed in order to monitor ICO finances.
- 1.12. The ongoing business rates appeal for Wycliffe House was noted.
- 1.13. There was a need to feedback to the Ministry of Justice (MOJ) on ICO views on grant in aid for 2015/16.
- 1.14. An update was given on the recruitment of a permanent Head of Finance and how their induction was to be managed.

Decisions

- 1.15. It was agreed that there should be more commentary on depreciation in the next finance report.
- 1.16. No specific extra information was identified for the report other than the need for exception reporting.
- 1.17. It was agreed to respond to the MOJ on grant in aid for 2015/16 as soon as possible.

Actions

- 1.18. Daniel Benjamin to bring proposed budget changes to Executive Team as soon as possible and certainly before reporting to the MOJ on expenditure in August.
- 1.19. Daniel Benjamin to report back to Executive Team on the induction of the new Head of Finance.

4. Risk management

Issue

- 4.1. Daniel Benjamin introduced a paper detailing proposed ICO risks following discussion at Leadership Group. The risks, mitigating actions and scores were discussed in detail. The need to ensure

that mitigating actions were effective in improving the risk status was important.

Decisions

4.2. The amendments discussed were agreed.

Actions

4.3. Daniel Benjamin to ensure the risk register is updated and comes to the Audit Committee in June.

5. Annual report

Issue

5.1. Peter Bloomfield presented a draft Annual report and Accounts for 2013/14. A draft had to come to Audit Committee on 6 June so any further amendments would be needed by 28 May at the very latest. The intention, if Executive Team was content, was to circulate to Leadership Group members for comments as soon as possible.

Decisions

5.2. It was agreed to circulate the draft once minor amendments had been made to the introduction.

Actions

5.3. Peter Bloomfield to circulate the draft Annual report and Accounts to Leadership Group members for comments as soon as possible, and to ensure an up to date version is tabled for Audit Committee on 6 June.

6. Our approach to additional regulatory functions

Issue

6.1. Final amendments to the draft document detailing how the ICO would approach additional regulatory functions were discussed.

Decisions

6.2. The document was agreed subject to the amendments discussed.

Actions

6.3. David Smith to finalise the document detailing our approach to additional regulatory functions.

7. Staff engagement survey

Issue

- 7.1. Robert Parker, Head of Corporate Affairs, attended for discussion on the staff engagement survey planned for later in the year. The ICO was making use of a Civil Service wide survey which allowed certain questions to be tailored for individual organisations and organisation specific questions to be added at a cost.

Decisions

- 7.2. The wording of questions relating to leadership and managing change was agreed.
- 7.3. It was confirmed that no additional questions would be required.

8. Euro spring conference costs

Issue

- 8.1. Robert Parker also provided Executive Team with an update on plans and possible costs for the European Spring Conference 2015.

Decisions

- 8.2. Proposals were agreed relating to the organisation of the conference.

9. Any other business

- 9.1. The recent European Court of Justice ruling on search results and its possible impact on the ICO was discussed. The need to have a consistent European wide approach from the various regulators affected was highlighted.
- 9.2. The internal audit plan for 2014/15 was discussed, in particular the need for five days support for integrated assurance and the lack of support in respect of financial planning. It was agreed to revise the plan to reflect the need for financial planning to be prioritised.
- 9.3. David Smith updated the Executive Team on another European Court of Justice decision on data retention and advised them of the government proposals to appoint small business appeals champions for each non-economic regulator. This would have an impact on the ICO.

Actions

- 9.4. Peter Bloomfield to revise the internal audit plan as discussed and to ensure it is tabled at Audit Committee on 6 June.