

## **Executive Team minutes**

19 January 2015

### **Members and other attendees present**

Simon Entwisle	Deputy Chief Executive Officer
Christopher Graham	Information Commissioner (Chair)
David Smith	Deputy Commissioner and Director of Data Protection
Graham Smith	Deputy Commissioner and Director of Freedom of Information
Neil Bostock	Corporate Governance Officer (Secretariat)
Peter Bloomfield	Senior Corporate Governance Manager (agenda item 6)
Robert Parker	Head of Corporate Affairs (agenda item 5)

### **1. Introductions and apologies**

- 1.1. There were no introductions or apologies.

### **2. Matters arising from the previous meeting**

#### Minutes

- 2.1. The minutes of the previous meeting were approved during December by correspondence and were reviewed for information.

#### Action points

- 2.2. The position of other government departments regarding travel insurance when working abroad has been determined. If individual employees feel it appropriate they can take out extra insurance cover themselves but there is nothing offered by government or non-departmental public bodies above the basic provision.
- 2.3. Graham Smith will gather evidence on the problems encountered by staff when booking suitable hotel accommodation in London. This will form the basis of a proposal to alter, and

potentially increase, the amount the ICO can offer for travel and subsistence.

### **3. Finance report for November and December 2014.**

#### Issue

- 3.1. The November and December income and expenditure reports were considered. Matters discussed included:
  - 3.1.1. Data Protection fee income continues to increase.
  - 3.1.2. Less overtime has been required than in previous years and any increase in overtime needs towards the end of the financial year is not expected.
  - 3.1.3. Accommodation improvement projects are progressing well – a communication will be issued next week to all staff regarding recent and upcoming improvements.
  - 3.1.4. The Ministry of Justice require the ICO to take a £50,000 in-year reduction of freedom of information grant-in-aid.
  - 3.1.5. Expenditure on IT projects remains the most complex area to forecast however there is confidence that the overall budget will fall within the tolerance level.

### **4. European Spring Conference**

#### Issue

- 4.1. ET received an update on the preparations for the European Spring Conference in May 2015 and will receive further updates on a bi-monthly basis.
- 4.2. The planning is on schedule and nothing of concern was presented.
- 4.3. Claude Moraes MEP and Commissioner Vera Jourova have been asked to present a video for the first evening session.

#### Decisions

- 4.4. No decisions were required by ET at this stage.

### **5. Digital Strategy Review**

#### Issue

- 5.1. Robert Parker joined the meeting to present a digital strategy which is currently being reviewed and updated.
- 5.2. The IT Steering Group is leading on this strategy. The strategy will always consider 'digital' first for customer facing services, where possible and when cost effective.

### Decisions

5.4 It was decided that ET would not require sight of the document until it had been amended and formally adopted by the IT Steering Group.

## **6. Pre discussion of upcoming Ministry of Justice (MOJ) Liaison and Management Board meetings.**

### Issue

6.1 Issues coming to the forthcoming MOJ Liaison meeting and Management Board were discussed. In respect of the MOJ meeting matters to be discussed will include the ICO's triennial review, accommodation, planning and the appointment process for the next Commissioner.

6.2 It was noted that the Management Board on 26 Jan 2015 will be Nicola Wood's first meeting as an ICO non-executive.

### Decisions

6.3 No decisions were required by ET at this stage.

## **7. Welsh Language Standards**

### Issue

7.1 The ICO has had a Welsh Language Scheme in place and approved by the Welsh Language Commissioner since 2007. The current Scheme has been in place since 2010.

7.2 ET were asked to consider whether the scheme we currently work with is seen as satisfactory bearing in mind the latest guidelines issued by Welsh Language Standards.

### Decisions

7.3 ET were in agreement that the current approach is proportionate to the ICO's business needs.

## **8. Any other business**

8.1 A proposal was brought to seek approval for maintaining and increasing the resource within the legal team currently handling freedom of information appeals.

8.2 Due to an overall increase in work it was suggested that the team return to the compliment of six full time lawyers, and further additional resources are also required. This would include recruiting a

further temporary solicitor (along with filling another previous solicitor post) and a paralegal support post.

### Decisions

8.3 ET decided that all the proposals should be accepted and implemented.

## **9. Key messages**

The Executive Team met on 19 January:

- The team received an update on planning for the 2015 European Spring Conference. The microsite is complete and the speakers have been organised. Invitation emails have already been sent to participants.
- The financial position at the end of December was reviewed and data protection fee income continues to increase month on month. We are on track to be on budget by March.
- The team discussed our current policy on Welsh language standards. It was agreed that much of ICO's work conforms to current guidelines and ET wanted to thank those involved for the efforts made on this project.