

Leadership Group minutes

Tuesday 29 April 2014

Members and other attendees present

Andy Laing	Head of Performance Improvements
Anne Jones	Assistant Commissioner (Wales)
Christopher Graham	Information Commissioner
Daniel Benjamin	Director of Corporate Services
Dave Wells	Head of IT
David Smith	Deputy Commissioner and Director of Data Protection
Graham Smith	Deputy Commissioner and Director of Freedom of Information
Jonathan Bamford	Head of Strategic Liaison
Ken Macdonald	Assistant commissioner (Scotland/NI)
Louise Byers	Head of Good Practice
Mike Collins	Head of Organisational Development
Paul Arnold	Head of Customer Contact
Robert Parker	Head of Corporate Affairs
Simon Entwisle	Director of Operations
Steve Eckersley	Head of Enforcement
Louise Mottershead	(secretariat)

1. Introductions and apologies

Apologies were received from Steve Wood. Louise Mottershead was introduced as providing secretariat cover during Peter Bloomfield's absence on annual leave.

2. Minutes of the previous meeting and matters arising

Issues: The draft minutes were presented for adoption and action points for clearance.

Decisions: The minutes were adopted. The action for Peter Bloomfield to update and finalise the assessment document was

ongoing. Simon Entwisle updated the meeting on the "Employee Voice" initiative: workshops would begin within the next month.

Actions: Louise Byers drew attention to the 16 April email from Nicki Hargreaves regarding the MOU central log and reminded colleagues of the end May deadline for responses.

3. Risk management

Issues: ET had requested Leadership Group's views on the draft Risk Register.

Christopher Graham said that at the previous day's Management Board meeting it had become apparent that the register had to be signed off at the next Audit Committee meeting scheduled for 6 June so that the Governance Statement could be completed.

Management Board had recommended taking the opportunity to consider opportunities as well as risks. Before sign off, the document required amendment to include additional detail and to be more specific about mitigating actions.

Decisions: It was agreed that:

- The three main risk areas would be renamed as Money, People, and Reputation.
- Succession planning would come become Recruitment and Retention under the People section.
- The forthcoming negotiations over pay architecture should be considered as an opportunity as well as a risk under the People section.
- Leadership Group would review the finalised Risk Register quarterly on an ongoing basis.

Actions:

- Steve Eckersley and Andy Laing would liaise with Daniel Benjamin and Peter Bloomfield to produce an amended document which would be emailed to Leadership Group members for comments prior to consideration by ET at the meeting on 19 May.
- Peter Bloomfield to include Risk Register finalisation on the agenda for the ET meeting on 19 May.
- Peter Bloomfield to include quarterly Risk Register review on appropriate Leadership Group meeting agendas.

4. Information governance strategy

Issues: Lesley Bett provided a summary of the Information Governance Strategy document, highlighting the split of

Information Governance away from Information Access. The document was intended for both internal and external audiences. A new steering group would meet quarterly. Feedback was welcomed.

Decisions: It was agreed that:

- The Executive Summary should make clear to an external audience that governance was separate from information request handling and a link to Policy Delivery should be included.
- A policy on personal use of social media should be considered.
- Reputational risk was a mitigating factor due to anticipated external scrutiny of the document. The ICO had to be able to live up to what it said. It was felt the reference to being a model of "best practice" under section 3.0 should be refined to a more realistic "good practice".
- The addition of the Enterprise Act under section 4.0 - Other related legislation - should be considered.
- References to "ICO" within the document should be amended to "the ICO" in line with communications guidelines.

Actions:

- Lesley Bett would amend the Executive Summary and wording of section 3.0.
- Louise Byers and Lesley Bett would consider implementation of a policy on personal use of social media and the addition of the Enterprise Act under section 4.0.
- Lesley Bett would amend references to "ICO" within the document to "the ICO" in line with communications guidelines.

5. Clear communications

Issues: Paul Arnold provided an overview of the Clear Communications document and requested Leadership Group members sign off the revised foreword.

Decisions: It was agreed that:

- The foreword was a good idea.
- Communication skills should not be considered as a generic skill but should be particularly relevant to specific jobs.
- Further checks were needed to provide examples of instances when initial capitals were required eg council/Council; government/Government (page 21).
- It was important to get the balance right so that the document wasn't perceived as being intimidating.

- A corporate-wide push would be made to launch the document (a Plain English Week?) instead of simply via a Managers' Brief.

Actions: Paul Arnold to remove references to Equality and Diversity from the document and amend the document before circulating it to Leadership Group prior to launch.

6. Distribution of additional sets of homeworker equipment

Issues: Dave Wells provided an update on the equipment upgrade that had taken place to support remote working. An additional 70 sets of homeworking equipment were now available and advice was sought on how best to allocate these.

Decisions: No waiting list existed of staff who had been unsuccessful in previous bids for homeworking equipment. It was felt that there were sufficient sets of equipment for all those who would be likely request them. If a few more sets were needed these could probably be afforded.

Actions: Leadership Group members to provide the names of staff who wished to receive homeworker equipment to Dave Wells by close of business on Friday 23 May.

7. Any other urgent business

Issues: Christopher Graham advised Leadership Group members of the forthcoming visit on 9 May of senior Ministry of Justice officials.

Decisions: A programme would be put together to provide the visitors with an overview of the ICO which would include a session on the helpline.

Actions: Christopher Graham to put together a visit programme.

8. Review of decisions on publication of papers

Issues: Papers were all work in progress and proactive publication would not be appropriate.

Decisions: There were no decisions.

Actions: There were no actions.

9. Key messages

- Leadership Group heard updates on our revised Information Governance Strategy and the Clear Communications project
- The corporate Risk Register is being reviewed to capture all relevant risks and mitigating actions under the headings of Money, People, and Reputation. We also need to identify risks, as well as opportunities, arising from the corporate plan for 2014/15. These need to be considered by ET on 19 May.
- There are opportunities to set up more staff with home working kits as appropriate. Managers are being asked to nominate relevant staff by the deadline of 23 May.