



Summary Minutes of the Board Meeting, 28 April 2017

Present:

Permanent Secretary (Chair)
Gawain Evans
Owen Evans
Andrew Goodall
Peter Kennedy
Natalie Pearson
David Richards
Elan Closs Stephens
James Turner
Ann Keane
James Price
Sioned Evans
Sarah Rhodes
Jeff Godfrey
Adrian Webb

In attendance:

Des Clifford (Item 2)
Piers Bisson (Item 2)
Jo Salway (Item 3)
Toby Mason (Item 3)
Gary Haggaty (Item 4)
Rebecca Isted (Item 4)
Caren Fullerton (Item 5)
Janine Pepworth (Item 5)

Apologies:

Gillian Baranski

Secretariat:

Emma Alexander
Sarita Marshall

Welsh Government Performance**1. Finance Report [Board(17)015]**

1.1 Gawain Evans, Director of Finance, presented a paper outlining the Welsh Government's opening financial position for 2017-18, including an early indication of identified pressures and available reserves. It was agreed that the Board should discuss the management of the position, including existing commitments and communications, at its June meeting.

2. EU Transition [Oral]

2.1 An update on EU Transition was provided by Des Clifford, Director of the Office of the First Minister, and Piers Bisson, Deputy Director – EU Transition. It was reported that the Welsh Government's White Paper had been read widely by European colleagues.

2.2 As the detail of the Great Repeal Bill would not be known until after the General Election announcement, officials were preparing by mapping

out the key decisions that would need to be made before recess, as well as in the longer term. The importance of bilateral contacts with UK Government officials was noted.

3. Monitoring Delivery Progress – Update on Cross-cutting Strategies [Oral]

- 3.1 The Permanent Secretary expressed her gratitude for the work undertaken by the Deputy Permanent Secretaries/Director General and their teams across the organisation to develop the Strategies. She underlined the Board's role in supporting the organisation to deliver on the Strategies going forward, by monitoring progress and challenging the work undertaken.
- 3.2 Jo Salway, Head of Cabinet Office, updated the Board on progress made. The Strategies would be published as a single, purposeful and direct document, although publication would not take place during the pre-election period. The Board would monitor progress on a regular basis in order to drive performance.
- 3.3 The Board congratulated Jo and her team on the work undertaken, emphasising the need to ensure the themes were truly cross-cutting in order to support delivery of the Government's priorities.
- 3.4 It was noted that the Strategies must be embedded into the work of the organisation, from the planning process through to individual objectives. The work of Internal Audit should also be re-aligned to support the cross-cutting approach.

Corporate

4. Draft Health & Wellbeing Strategy [Board(17)016]

- 4.1 Gary Haggaty, Health & Wellbeing Champion, and Rebecca Isted, Senior HR Business Partner, presented the draft Health & Wellbeing Strategy, noting the potential to broaden the work further to consider leadership and culture and the need to consider whether sufficient resource was available in relevant areas to complete all of the activity required. The Board heard that there had been engagement with staff across the organisation and that this had been done in conjunction with the Trade Union Side.
- 4.2 The Board heard that there was support across the organisation for the Strategy. Operations Committee had welcomed it and their suggested amendments had been incorporated into the Strategy.
- 4.3 The Strategy sought to promote a trusting and effective relationship between staff and managers, and it was agreed that this would need to be addressed through the future capability work. It was noted that the issue of personal resilience could be also be addressed in this work.
- 4.4 The Board thanked Gary and Rebecca for taking on the work. They agreed that the focus on wellbeing was welcome and that it was a

timely and necessary piece of work. It was also agreed that there would need to be a prioritisation of the activities noted in the Action Plan.

- 4.5 The Board approved the Strategy and association action plan and agreed that:
- the Operations Committee should be tasked with monitoring and evaluating the Strategy
 - a strategic engagement and communications plan on Health & Wellbeing should be developed

5. ICT Update [Board(17)017; Board(17)018]

- 5.1 Caren Fullerton, Chief Digital Officer (CDO), provided an ICT update, covering ICT resilience and the draft Welsh Government Digital Action Plan 2017-20.
- 5.2 The Board heard that the refreshed Digital Action Plan would be coordinated and led by a small central team within a federated delivery model. The importance of ensuring a mechanism for collaboration in order to avoid fragmentation, empowering the CDO to ensure delivery, and options for funding and delivering efficiencies were discussed.
- 5.3 The Board approved the Digital Action Plan and agreed that:
- The themes and priorities in the Plan should feed into local implementation plans
 - the risks highlighted in the accompanying paper should be highlighted to Ministers before publication of the plan
 - a further Board discussion on current and future investment and capability should be scheduled.
- 5.4 The Board thanked the Chief Digital Officer and her team for the work undertaken in these areas.

Regular Items

6 Draft Minutes of 31 March and Matters Arising [Board(17)019]

- 6.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 31 March were agreed as an accurate record.

7 Permanent Secretary's Items and Exception reports [Oral]

Permanent Secretary's Items

- 7.1 A revised Terms of Reference for the Board were agreed. The Permanent Secretary told the Board that she would be considering the remit of the Board's Sub-Committees as a next step.
- 7.2 Wider circulation of the Corporate Risk Register was also discussed, and it was agreed that the status quo should remain.

Exception Reports

- 7.3 The Board received an update on the Voluntary Exit Scheme. An impact assessment would be undertaken and further detail on

applications from the four Groups would be provided to Group leads. Ministerial sign-off to the final decision would also be required.

8 Sub-Committee Updates

- 8.1 The Operations Committee Chair reported that the last meeting had been held in the Carmarthen office, where EU Programme files, oversight of arm's-length bodies, Flexible Posting, Flexible Working, and the draft Health & Wellbeing Strategy were discussed. The Committee had also undertaken a visit to the National Botanic Garden of Wales to hear about how Welsh Government funding was being spent. The next meeting would be held in the Merthyr office.
- 8.2 The Board heard that, following her appointment as Chief Executive of the Welsh European Funding Office (WEFO), Sioned Evans would be stepping down as Operations Committee Chair and therefore as Board member.
- 8.3 The Board congratulated Sioned on her appointment and placed on record their gratitude to the outgoing Chief Executive, Damien O'Brien, for his outstanding work.
- 8.4 An update from the Senior Civil Service (SCS) Remuneration Committee was provided, including the fact that the Deputy Permanent Secretary for Education & Public Services, Owen Evans, had succeeded the Deputy Permanent Secretary for Environment, Skills & Natural Resources, James Price, on the Committee. At its last meeting, the Committee had welcomed the Director of the Welsh Revenue Authority and had discussed resourcing around EU Transition, temporary duties allowances, and arrangements for advertising SCS posts.

9 Any other business

- 9.1 The Permanent Secretary drew Board members' attention to the papers to note, which included the Workforce Dashboard. The Board agreed that communications were required around the reduction in staffing levels.

Board Secretariat, 4 May 2017