



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Minutes of the Board Meeting, 30 April 2018

Present:

Permanent Secretary (Chair)
Andrew Goodall
Desmond Clifford
Tracey Burke
David Richards
Gawain Evans
Peter Kennedy
Jeff Godfrey
Gillian Baranski
Elan Closs Stephens
Ann Keane
James Turner
Ellen Donovan
Jeff Farrar
Sarah Rhodes
Catherine Ashford

In attendance:

Paul Sullivan (Item 1)
Joanne Glenn (Item 2)
Helen Morris (Item 3)
Jo Salway (Item 4)
Katie Antippas (TUS)

Secretariat:

Rob Jones

Observer:

Birgitte Magnussen

Apologies:

Natalie Pearson
Andrew Slade

Introduction

The Permanent Secretary welcomed Katie Antippas, Trade Union Side (TUS), to the meeting and noted it would be the last meeting Katie would attend in her role as TUS Chair. Katie was thanked for her contribution in ensuring Welsh Government (WG) has a modern and effective partnership working model with TUS. She also welcomed Birgitte Magnussen, an observer as part of a STEP placement within the Permanent Secretary's office.

1. Location Strategy

- 1.1 Paul Sullivan, Head of Facilities, gave an update on the Location Strategy 2015 – 2020, and on the proposals for the 2020 - 2025 strategy. Paul reported the draft guiding principles and objectives of the strategy had been reviewed and revised by the Administrative Property Strategy Group (APSG) in response to comments made at Board in December 2017, to ensure they remain suitable as a flexible framework for shaping future estate plans in line with business needs and organisational objectives.

- 1.2 Des Clifford suggested the guiding principles be closely aligned and integrated with WG primary business needs and to policy delivery. The Board concurred and the Permanent Secretary asked for the Location Strategy to reflect political ambition.
- 1.3 James Turner felt the distribution of staff, particularly at SCS band, was still seen to be too Cardiff centric, and queried whether the constraints of geographic locations could be addressed by digital solutions. Elan Closs Stephens echoed these sentiments and noted satisfaction levels of dispersed (non Cardiff) staff are consistently lower scored in the People Survey. The Permanent Secretary shared these concerns, and felt any perceived leadership gap should be addressed by increasing visibility of the senior team. She also felt the high scores evident in the People Survey on leadership and managing change in Merthyr Tydfil should be aspired to, and the lessons learned from this applied widely across the organisation.

Action: Ensure lessons learned from Merthyr Tydfil, in particular the agile working pilot programme, are incorporated into the strategy. (Paul Sullivan)

- 1.4 James Turner queried whether there may be an opportunity to think more widely about the public sector estate as a whole in Wales, especially in the context of Local Government Reform. It was agreed the 8/10 ratio of staff to desks policy had not caused any significant pressure to date, as there remains sufficient capacity in existing offices, although Katie Antipass highlighted this could change if a major office were to close. To date the implementation and delivery of the strategy has realised substantial savings, and Katie also queried whether these savings could potentially be re-invested into the ICT digital programme to ensure flexible agile working for staff is fully supported.
- 1.5 The Permanent Secretary agreed lessons learned from the establishment of the WRA should be captured, and in particular the ability to build expert teams outside of the Cardiff region.

Action: Capture and consider lessons learned over establishment of Welsh Revenue Authority. (Paul Sullivan)

- 1.6 The Permanent Secretary congratulated Paul and his team on the achievements to date. Shan agreed the principles should strike the right balance in their approach to cost savings, but also support culture change and new ways of working, including digital needs and agile flexible working. Shan also requested further information on the financial risks inherent in estate rationalisation.

Action: Further information on financial risks to be provided to Permanent Secretary. (Paul Sullivan)

- 1.7 It was agreed Paul and his team would review key estate lease dates on an ongoing basis, to ensure savings opportunities are not missed as they arise. Oversight and consideration of these opportunities, and any key decisions required, will in future be made by the Executive Committee.
- 1.8 Early dialogue will be required with the incoming First Minister in scrutinising the remaining proposed estate rationalisation, before the Board can fully endorse the strategy. A fully costed proposal, incorporating the Board's discussions, is to be prepared for consideration by the incoming First Minister.

Action: Location Strategy proposals to be updated and prepared for consideration by the incoming First Minister. (Paul Sullivan)

2. Diversity & Inclusion

- 2.1 Gillian Baranski was joined by Joanne Glenn, Head of Equality in the Workplace, to present to Board an update on Diversity & Inclusion matters.
- 2.2 The Permanent Secretary recently wrote to Jeremy Heywood, setting out the achievements made over the last year, and the challenges faced by Welsh Government in its ambition to be an exemplar in this field. There is a firm desire to embrace open and ambitious targets, but also to ensure the targets are credible, as Shan does not wish to pass on unrealistic targets to her successor. The Board noted progress in achieving the targets and goals is not possible in isolation, there needs to be close linkages to wider policies and strategies, such as; the location strategy, flexible and agile working, workforce/succession planning, recruitment, and talent management.
- 2.3 The Board received an update on the staff diversity networks, and discussions covered the importance of ensuring success in job-sharing, and strengthened maternity support available to women in the workplace. The Board was informed of measures undertaken to address the gender wage gap. Efforts have already been taken to attract more women into senior posts, and WG remains committed to the '50:50 by 2020' initiative. The Board noted the work underway to meet this. Development courses are now available for women and there is further support for women who are pregnant or on maternity leave. Action has also been taken to ensure job adverts are inclusive. Work is underway with Chwarae Teg to benchmark the pay gap and produce an action plan to help tackle gender barriers. A number of suggestions were made by members including affordable, safe child care, tackling unconscious bias, the importance of mentoring, having part-time posts available in the SCS and Executive Band and reviewing some corporate policies.
- 2.4 Also discussed was the success of the apprenticeship programme, and Black and Minority Ethnic (BAME) recruitment issues. The new targets for recruiting disabled and BAME people to the SCS by 2025 were noted. Desmond Clifford considered t the team could consider framing the BAME targets to broadly reflect the composition of the population of Wales, and offered to put Gillian and the team in touch with Brexit colleagues who already have the breakdown of this data. The Permanent Secretary noted more thought needed to be given to using sponsorship as a way of encouraging BAME and disabled staff in the feeder grades to apply to the SCS. The Board also noted the importance of encouraging social mobility.
- 2.5 The Board were informed the Civil Service trans and intersex network, a:gender, had re-awarded Welsh Government "Gold Status" Trans Intersex Policy standards (TIPs) for the second year running.
- 2.6 Members noted the new SCS Inclusion and Diversity sponsors and champions in place and agreed they are making a valued and welcome contribution to improving the culture and attitude of the organisation by being visible role models. They also serve to ensure there is transparency and accountability at all levels of the organisation with regards to these matters. Ellen Donovan also expressed interest in becoming involved in mentoring schemes, particularly in reverse mentoring. The Board noted the work to support disabled staff and to encourage people to update their diversity data.

- 2.7 The Board congratulated Gillian and Joanne Glenn for the progress to date against targets, particularly on the success of the Outreach programme in relation to external recruitment, especially of apprentices. Members agreed the Outreach Strategy should continue to focus on BAME and disabled people in order to maximise all opportunities to meet the 2020 targets and agreed the extension of remit in developing specific placement opportunities for additional underrepresented groups. Tracey Burke and Des Clifford offered their personal support for the outreach programme.
- 2.8 The Permanent Secretary recognised the challenges of a relatively static workforce with a tight headcount for increasing representation, however re-iterated her firm commitment that, by the time she left the organisation, Welsh Government should be a place where everyone should feel valued and comfortable in being themselves in the organisation. The Permanent Secretary emphasised the need for day to day messages and a long term commitment to meet this goal and was clear that only those who shared these values would prosper in the organisation

3. Corporate Risk Register

- 3.1 Helen Morris, Deputy Director, Corporate Governance & Assurance, presented the bi-annual update to the Board on the Corporate Risk Register (CRR). The Board reviewed the current corporate and cross-cutting risks, as well as proposed risks for inclusion and removal from the register.
- 3.2 The Board endorsed the updates recommended by Helen Morris in the paper, however Ellen Donovan asked the risk relating to Arms Length Bodies (ALBs) be considered further, and reminded the Board of the recent Review on ALBs, which included 30 actions and recommendations. Board agreed an update on these actions would be welcomed.
- 3.3 Tracey Burke highlighted the possibility to review and consider escalating Local Government Reform risks to the CRR, specifically it's potential impact on areas of work such as regional education and curriculum reform.

Action: Paper to Note to be prepared for the Board on progress against the 30 recommendations of the Arms Length Body Review.

- 3.4 Elan Closs Stephens noted the Transport for Wales & Welsh Revenue Authority risks should be considered at the Welsh Government Audit & Risk Committee level.

Action: TfW & WRA risks to be considered at a future WG ARC meeting.

4. Prosperity for All Stocktake Cabinet Paper - Progress Update

- 4.1 Jo Salway, Head of Cabinet Office, gave the Board a brief update on the key messages which will be covered in the Prosperity for All "stocktake" Cabinet Paper being prepared for discussion at Cabinet on 15th May 2018.
Ann Keane suggested a further update following the presentation to Cabinet would be welcomed, which would hopefully provide more in depth analysis and granularity on the specific issues.
- 4.2 The Permanent Secretary expressed her gratitude to Jo for the update, and also to the entire senior team and all present for performing their duties to an exceptionally high standard in a challenging political environment.

5. Non Executive Director Reflections

- 5.1 The departing Non-executive Directors, Elan Closs Stephens and James Turner, both reflected on the previous successes, and future challenges, the organisation faces and how the Board may wish to address them. The Board thanked them for their many years of valued service.

Permanent Secretary's Private Office, 30 April 2018

Actions arising at Board meeting, 30 April 2018

ACTION	LEAD OFFICER	LATEST POSITION
Location Strategy		
Ensure lessons learned from Merthyr Tydfil, in particular the agile working pilot programme, are incorporated into the strategy.	Paul Sullivan	
Capture and consider lessons learned over establishment of Welsh Revenue Authority.	Paul Sullivan	
Further information on financial risks to be provided to Permanent Secretary.	Paul Sullivan	Complete. Gawain Evans provided.
Location Strategy proposals to be updated and prepared for consideration by the incoming First Minister.	Paul Sullivan	
Corporate Risk Register		
TfW & WRA risks to be considered at a future WG ARC meeting.	Secretariat/ ARC Secretariat	Complete. Audit & Risk Committee Secretariat informed and have added to forward look plan for future WG ARC.
A Paper to Note to be prepared for the Board on progress against the 30 recommendations of the Arms Length Body Review.	Peter Kennedy/ Julia Douch	Ongoing: Julia Douch preparing response, to be cleared by Peter Kennedy.

Outstanding Actions 2017-18

ACTION	LEAD OFFICER	LATEST POSITION
Prosperity for All		
Jo Salway and Permanent Secretary to meet to discuss Wellbeing for Future Generations Accountability table	Jo Salway/ Secretariat	Complete. Discussions held, and item will be added to forward agenda for Senior Team/Executive Committee.
GDPR		
Project resources issues to be addressed	Steve Marshall/ Peter Kennedy	Complete. Additional resource source, Stephen Gray joined project team.

GDPR		
Staff with WG iphones and remote workers to be enrolled on the emergency text message service	Peter Kennedy/ Paul McDonagh	
Business Continuity		
An update on communications channels available to staff to be issued	Natalie Pearson	Complete. Reminders featured on intranet news page