

CONSUMER FOCUS FINANCE AND OPERATIONS

Director Finance and Operations: Graham Clark

1 ACCOMPLISHMENTS SINCE LAST BOARD MEETING

1.1 Finance

- Working with programme leads to identify forecast expenditure on existing and additional projects.
- Preparation of first cut Budget
- Finance support for Scotland
- VAT position agreed with HM Revenue and Customs
- Framework agreement with BIS completed

1.2 HR

- Agreement reached for permanent structure of HR team
- Introduced 'first point of contact' for Scotland and London to improve internal service levels and confidence in department
- Introduced equality and diversity impact assessments (EDIA) as a pilot for all newly drafted and reviewed HR policies in line with HR elements of the Equality Scheme
- Set up working groups across the organisation to consider operational input into HR policy development
- 17 out of 28 policies currently at different stages of the policy development cycle
- Carried out consultations and formal requirements in relation to change management within NSMC, resulting in staff redundancy and re-deployments
- Pay remit agreed with staff representatives
- Introduced a range of training interventions including: equality, presentation skills, management development, recruitment and selection
- Initial analysis of exit interviews to set format in place looking forward
- Developed appraisal system and documentation, including training materials and resource manual for managers/staff

1.3 IT

- Data and system backup reconfiguration complete, we now have a much higher confidence level in being able to recover from individual system failure
- Online IT Service Desk launched for all staff to log and track progress of IT Service Requests
- Final testing of new laptop solution, this includes full hard drive encryption and infrastructure changes to allow offline access to email
- Redundant IT equipment cleared from old Bournemouth office

1.4 Properties

- Negotiations opened with landlord of 20 Grosvenor Gardens on terms for early surrender

- Alternative government owned office space viewed as potential alternatives for London and Cardiff when the current leases expire in April 2011

1.5 Legal

- Defence to legal claim by ex NSMC contractor filed with the court

2 CHALLENGES RUNNING UP TO NEXT BOARD MEETING

2.1 Finance

- Interim audit by NAO in advance of year end
- Financial management of the significant project expenditure in February and March
- Final budget and balancing of resources by funding stream following consultation responses and review of annual plan projects

2.2 HR

- Gaining final agreement for trade union recognition agreement to stabilise collective bargaining arrangements
- Implement pay remit in the February payroll and notify all staff
- Ensure all managers and staff are trained in new appraisal process in time to meet appraisal cycle
- Introduce a stringent process for the entry and management of contract staff, currently engaged through procurement
- Issue revised pensions benefits statements (83)

2.3 IT

- Internal IT audit 8th March
- Engaging with a CLAS (GCHQ's listed advisor scheme) security consultant to benchmark our current practices for security and information handling against Cabinet Office requirements and guidelines
- Undertake a penetration test of our IT system
- Clearout of IT kit from 20 Grosvenor Gardens, Belgrave Road and Delta House Glasgow
- Undertake a trial of wide area network acceleration devices to improve system and file access response times
- Local Area Network redesign at Artillery House and the Park Royal data centre to remove bottle necks and improve resilience

2.4 Legacy Properties

- Completion of the agreements and landlord permissions for the transfer of the three ex Postwatch buildings to Royal Mail by ^t April 2010

2.5 Legal

- Ongoing work to prepare case papers, response to disclosure requests