

Draft Board Minutes

Meeting:
Board meeting

Time:
11.00 – 15.00

Date:
26/01/2010

Location:
Griffin House

Attendees:
Dr Bob Chilton, Chair
Professor Judy Simons, Deputy Chair
Lizzie Abderrahim
Councillor Shirley Flint
Paul Gott
Elizabeth Hall
Councillor Mehboob Khan
Councillor Stephen Knight
Councillor Sir Ron Watson

Apologies:

In attendance:
Glenys Stacey
Steve Barrow
Dave Gray
Paul Hoey
Vivienne Horton
Tim Leslie
Freda Sharkey
Richard Scott
Richard Broom (Items 10/16 – 10/27)
Gary Hickey (Item 10/21)
Graham Shallcross (Items 10/01 – 10/09)
Maggie Yates (Items 10/01 – 10/09)
Steve Bannister (Item 10/26)
Jennifer Rogers (Item 10/26)
Jonathan Wigmore (Item 10/26)
Mark Jones (Item 10/26)

Minutes:
Caroline Matthews

Item No.	Subject	Action
10/01	Apologies None.	
10/02	Board to resolve which papers are open and closed Agreed as stated on the agenda.	

- 10/03 Minutes of the Meeting Held on 17 November 2009 (open session)**
- The minutes were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.
- 10/04 Matters arising**
- There were no matters arising.
- Paul Hoey presented his report of ongoing Board actions. The Chair agreed that committees and working ‘task and finish’ groups should be set up as appropriate, and the Board Actions spreadsheet updated accordingly. PH
- EH requested that PH consider guests to be invited to Board meetings as he develops the forward plan. GS confirmed that Tony Travers, from LSE, will be attending the away day in March 2010. PH
- The report was received.
- 10/05 Declarations of Board member interests**
- LA joined the meeting.
- The Chair asked each Board member to declare any interests relevant to the meeting.
- There were none.
- 10/06 Chair’s report (oral)**
- The Chair reported that the Board appointment process was progressing, and that long-listing of candidates is due to take place the first week of February 2010.
- The Chair proposed that Judy Simons be appointed as the new Chair of the Audit Committee, and Elizabeth Hall as the new Chair of Remuneration Committee. This was agreed by the Board. PH
- The Chair reported that he had attended the Hammersmith and Fulham, Kensington and Chelsea standards committee meeting, and also the London Government dinner.
- The Chair informed the Board that he intended to hold a session on Board appraisals at the March 2010 awayday, including work on the competencies against which the Board will be assessed.

JS suggested that the Board appraisals should feed into a general review of the effectiveness of the Board, its governance and performance. This was agreed. SB

LA suggested that the NHS documents on Board effectiveness be referred to and this was agreed. SB

The Chair circulated Board member's expenses for inspection prior to publication on the website.

PG confirmed that he will check his expenses and submit any outstanding claims promptly, and requested details of the date of his last claim. PH

Board member's expenses were otherwise agreed to be accurate.

JS suggested that some explanation be given regarding what sort of claims were included in each expense area, and PG suggested that 'accommodation' be re-titled 'hotel accommodation'. PH

The Chair requested that some contextual information be added prior to publication. GS confirmed that the senior management team's expenses will also be published online. PH

10/07 Board members' feedback (oral)

The Chair requested details of recent events attended by Board members.

EH confirmed that she would be attending the New Local Government Network (NLGN) annual conference on 27 January 2010.

10/08 Chief Executive's report

The Chief Executive introduced her report to the Board, and confirmed that the format had been revised since the November 2009 meeting.

GS confirmed that she would be attending the NLGN annual conference with EH.

GS reported that developing reporting to the Board around compliance with the framework by local authorities would be covered at the March 2010 awayday. GS

SK joined the meeting.

The Board reviewed corporate risks and noted and reviewed operational performance.

GS asked the Board to note that the low number of 'standard', rather than complex cases received by Standards for England affected the ability to meet KPI 7B.

LA asked for feedback regarding staff morale following the restructure of the organisation. GS confirmed that the staff survey would be carried out in April 2010, and details fed back to the Board following this. She also reported that the staff conference has been arranged for April 2010. SB

BC informed the Board that he had provided a whole staff address in December 2009, and that he was content that performance levels were being maintained.

LA queried whether it was felt that the senior management team were maintaining good communication links with staff. GS confirmed that this is the case, and that further improvements to internal communications are being considered, such as publishing open SMT papers on the intranet.

The Board received the report and noted progress.

10/09 Performance Dashboard

FS presented the report and confirmed that work on the format of reporting will continue now that the new team responsible for corporate assurance is in place, and that reporting around the Risk department and External Affairs is being developed for inclusion on the dashboard.

The Chair sought comments from the Board on whether the format and level of detail were felt to be appropriate, and the Board agreed that the general format worked well.

LA requested that the ease of 'read across' in sections 2A and 2B between text and RAG rating be improved, and that the risk graphic in section 3B be increased in size to improve readability. This was noted. FS

EH queried whether, in section 8, there was sufficient detail given around the time taken to carry out local investigations. The Chair suggested that consideration be given to including a second column to show the trend between the situation now and the situation one year ago. It was agreed this would be considered. FS

The report was received.

10/10 International Standards Conference

SB presented the report and reported to the Board that the Living Room at City Hall had been offered as the conference venue by the GLA.

SB informed the Board that it would be left open to the participating cities to determine their attendees, and that the conference was likely to take place in April 2011.

The Board noted progress on the development of the event.

The Board noted the provisional costings supplied and agreed that more detailed costings be brought to the March 2010 Board meeting. SB

LA queried whether the cost of translator attendance at the conference, and costs of translating conference materials had been included, and it was agreed that SB would check details of this. SB

The report was received.

10/11 Annual Assembly 2010 – Update

RS presented the paper and circulated an updated Appendix A.

The Board noted progress on planning for the 2010 Annual Assembly.

The Board considered the issues raised and confirmed they were happy with the proposed content and themes.

The Board considered the delegate costs, and SK queried whether organisations benefited from a reduced fee for sending more than one delegate. RS confirmed this is not something we have offered in the past, and that there is a limit of six places per organisation. BC requested that the Annual Assembly steering group give consideration to delegate costs. RS

The Board agreed to the recommendation to approve a two-day delegate cost of £430, and a one-day delegate cost of £230.

The Board agreed that plans for the 2011 Annual Assembly should be considered at the July 2010 Board meeting. RS

The report was received.

10/12 Board Awayday, March 2010

PH presented the paper and confirmed that the event would be taking place at the City Inn, Manchester, with Tony Travers attending on the Monday evening.

The Board noted the administrative arrangements for the Board awayday.

The Board agreed to the recommendation to approve the proposed timetable for the awayday, with note from the Chair that the session on Challenges could perhaps be shortened. PH

The report was received.

10/13 Adjudication Panel for England Changes

FS presented the paper and reported to the Board that guidance for all staff would be issued. TL

PG queried where the First-tier Tribunal was based, and

FS confirmed this is in Leeds.

The Board noted the position regarding the transfer of the functions of the APE to the First-tier Tribunal (Local Government Standards in England).

The Board noted that the Director of Regulation is arranging for general guidance to be given to Ethical Standards Officers and other relevant staff in relation to the carrying out of their functions on the implications of costs awards and applications.

The Board noted that Standards for England's published guidance is being reviewed to reflect the changes generally.

FS reported that she is awaiting clarification on any changes regarding who can now make an appeal, as this may have implications for Standards for England.

The Board noted the position on appeals and that a further paper will be submitted to the Board in due course.

FS

The Board noted the general costs position.

The report was received.

10/14 Core Business Schedule 2010

PH presented the paper for consideration by the Board.

The Board noted the proposed core business schedule for the coming year.

The Board considered any further items they wished to have discussed during the year, and agreed with the proposed schedule.

The report was received.

10/15 Terms of Reference for Remuneration Committee

GS presented the paper and sought comments from the Board on the revised terms of reference.

The Board agreed to the recommendation to approve the revised draft terms of reference for the Remuneration Committee.

The Board agreed to the recommendation to approve

that the Remuneration Committee should be a stand alone committee and not part of the Audit Committee.

The Chair proposed that the Chair of Remuneration and Audit Committee should differ, and that membership should be broadly different. JS requested that it be clarified in the terms of reference that the membership of the two committees should not be replicated. GS

It was agreed that GS should amend the section on membership to note that members can sit on both committees, and that decisions regarding membership should sit with the Chair of the Board. GS

The Board agreed to the recommendation to approve that the membership of the Remuneration Committee should be different from membership of the Audit Committee; and that it should consist of at least three Board members, with the caveat that there may be some crossover. GS

The Board agreed to the recommendation to refer the revised terms of reference to the Remuneration Committee for information and adoption. GS

LA requested that details of the new membership of both Remuneration and Audit Committee be clarified and it was agreed that new members would be informed shortly. GS

The report was received.

10/16 Single Equality Scheme

The Board considered the direction being taken in the development of Standards for England's Single Equality Scheme and its proposed structure.

The Board considered its role in the development and approval process of the scheme in light of the need to meet the 4 March 2010 deadline.

The Board agreed that the scheme be circulated by email for comment, with authority delegated to the Chair to approve. GS confirmed this should be ready in the second week of February 2010. FS

The Board agreed that the final scheme should be brought back to the Board for information at the March 2010 meeting. FS

GS confirmed that a reference note on how the

obligations have been interpreted would be included when the scheme was circulated to the Board. FS

LA suggested that the final document should be signed by both the Chief Executive and the Chair, and this was agreed. GS

The Chair requested that equality gap analysis be included in annual business planning. FS/DG

The report was received.

10/17 Organisational Design Business Case

GS presented the business case and asked the Board to note the change in staff costs between 2009-10 and 2010-11. She confirmed that the financial case had been adjusted following strategic decisions made.

The Board approved the organisational design business case.

10/22 Qualitative Assessment of Advice and Guidance

SB presented the report for consideration by the Board.

The Board noted the content of the report and paper and agreed to pass any further comments to SB via email. SB

The report was received.

10/23 Partnerships Update

SB presented the report, compiled by Hannah Pearson.

The Board noted progress on partnership projects.

The report was received.

The Board went into closed session.

The next meeting will be held on 23 March 2010.

Chair