

THE STANDARDS BOARD FOR ENGLAND
Board Meeting

Board Room
1st Floor, Cottons Centre
Cottons Lane, London SE1 2QG
14 May 2004
9.30am – 11.40am

Meeting Minutes

Present: Sir Anthony Holland, Chair
Patricia Hughes, CBE, Deputy Chair
John Bowers QC
Cllr Celia Cameron, CBE
Cllr Peter Chalke, CBE (from item 04/94)
Professor Alan Doig
Margaret Pratt
Roger Taylor

Apologies: Paul Sabapathy, OBE

In attendance: David Prince, Chief Executive
Tim Bailey, Head of Referrals
Tim Bogan, Communications Manager
Chris Boothman, Head of Legal Services
Allister Duncan, Head of Corporate Services
Paul Hoey, Head of Policy and Guidance
Lisa Klein, Senior Ethical Standards Officer

ACTION

Apologies

Paul Sabapathy

04/81 Minutes of Board Meeting held on 31 March 2004 (Open Session)

The minutes of the meeting held on 31 March were approved and signed by the Chair.

04/82 Matters Arising

Item 04/54 – Budget 2004/05 – Board members noted with considerable concern that formal confirmation has still not been received from the ODPM and is not expected until July.

04/83 Declaration of Board Member interests and forthcoming engagements

The Chair declared that he recently met with Robert Rogers, Chair of Herefordshire Standards Committee (and a senior officer in the House of Commons), who had given him a book (value thought to be less than £25)

04/84 Team Briefing

The Board noted the report.

04/85 Guidance on Prejudicial Interests and Lobbying

Comments from the Board were noted. The Board approved the recommendation to consult with key stakeholders on the draft guidance and noted that it is planned to bring the guidance back to the Board for approval at their July 2004 meeting. It was also noted that the Chair wishes to raise this issue at the Graham Committee hearing on 18 May 2004.

HP&G

04/86 Communications Strategy Update

The Board approved the recommendations which was to consider the strategy to reposition the Standards Board for England that included proposals to:

1. Issue a statement of intent describing what can be expected from us in terms of service and approach;
2. Organise a series of roadshows to listen to feedback and promote our progress to be held in February 2005;
3. That the above events are paid for by cancelling events at the party conferences and the production of the third issue of the Case Review as an electronic document only; and
4. Combine the local authority and planned press roadshows that were scheduled for November 2004.

The Board also approved the recommendations to:

5. Ration places for the Annual Assembly; and
6. Delay and delete projects as a result of the need to re-focus resources

However, in the case of item 3, the Board asked the Communications Manager to investigate alternative, cheaper means of producing the Case Review.

Comms.Mgr

04/87 Research Strategy 2004/05

The Board approved the proposed projects and the proposed realignment. They noted the work on the ethical environment that will be undertaken jointly and said that the Standards Board must be recognised for its input and be appropriately placed in the framework.

HP&G

04/88 Formal Guidance Strategy

The Board noted the review of guidance produced so far and the improved processes planned and already implemented, and approved the new formal projects proposed for 2004/05.

04/89 Assessing Written Allegations – Preliminary Enquiry

The Board approved the proposal for further work to be undertaken to enable officers to produce a more detailed set of proposals to be considered at the July 2004 meeting of the Board. However, they did not approve the recommendation to consult on the central issues with key stakeholders as they did not think this was necessary. They also suggested that a small, controlled pilot scheme is undertaken with smaller authorities. With regard to the issues for resolution (para 16), the Board agreed that item 16(a) should be the exception (not the norm) and that in item 16(b) the contacts should be made with parties appropriate to the case.

HLS

It was noted that the impact of this proposal will be discussed at the next meeting of the Board Referrals Panel.

HP&G

04/90 Moved to closed items

04/91 Authorising Signatories with Lloyds TSB Bank plc

The Board agreed the resolutions:

1. That the Chief Executive, namely David Prince, and the Head of Corporate Services, namely Allister Duncan, are hereby authorised to sign on behalf of the Standards Board for England any contract with Lloyds TSB Bank plc for the provision of any of the electronic banking services (together known as "LloydsLink") by Lloyds TSB Bank plc to the Standards Board for England. (Resolution 1)
2. That Lloyds TSB Bank plc is authorised to accept instructions from any person specified as a "person authorised to sign" in the mandate provided

by the Standards Board for England to Lloyds TSB Bank plc, as amended from time to time, in connection with any amendments to the authorised LloydsLink users, their payment limits and/or access rights for LloydsLink. (Resolution 2)

04/92 Chief Executive's Report

1. The Board received the report and agreed that the current format, along with the regular departmental reports, currently provides the Board with regular reporting of significant matters and developments. However, it was pointed out that their knowledge is restricted to what they are told and it was stressed that officers must be open in their dealings and reporting to Board members. **CE**
2. The CE advised that the actions and outcomes from the Board Awayday on 11 May 2004 will be discussed at the informal meeting of the Quality and Strategy Panel on 19 May and circulated to Board members. **HP&G**
3. Lyons Review – draft will be brought to June Board Meeting and final submission to July Board Meeting. **CE/HoCS**
4. Graham Committee Hearing (18 May 2004) – responses to the questions that will arise were discussed. **HP&G**
5. Disclosure letter – Littlejohn Frazer to be advised of the recent paper on Roles and Responsibilities and the non-executive status of Board members. **HoCS**

04/93 Referrals Unit Report

The Board noted the report.

Peter Chalke joined the meeting

04/94 SESO and Productivity Report

The Board noted the report.

04/95 Finance Report

The Board noted the report and wished to place on record their thanks for the work carried out by the Corporate Services team during the recent office refurbishment and expansion works.

04/96 Human Resources Report

The Board noted the report.

04/97 Information Technology Report

The Board noted the report.

04/98 Mediation

The Board noted the report and legal advice. The Board endorsed a suggestion from one of the members of a way of working with NALC on this issue and the Head of Policy and Guidance will take this forward. The CE will report back to the Board at their June meeting on ways in which the parties might be encouraged to seek mediation where a matter does not merit investigation. **HP&G
CE**

04/99 – Closed Items

04/104 The Board then went into closed session to consider confidential matters.

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, 23 June 2004 at 10.00am

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Chair