

Land & Property Services

Summary of the Management Board meeting held in Queen's Court on Thursday 25 August 2011 at 9.30am

Present:

John Wilkinson	Chair and Chief Executive
Alan Brontë	Director of Mapping and Valuation Services
Stephen Boyd	Director of Business Services
Anne Flanagan	Change Management Advisor
Mervyn Adair	In place of the Director of Revenues and Benefits
Wilfie Hamilton	Independent Board Member
Dennis Licence	External Advisor
Patricia McAuley	Director of Transformation and Customer
Patricia Montgomery	Director of Registration
Trevor Steenson	Agenda item 7 only
Ruth Thompson	Secretary

Apologies:

Iain Greenway	Director of Revenues and Benefits
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1. Conflicts of interest.

There were no conflicts of interest.

2. Minutes of the meeting held on 28 July 2011.

The minutes of the meeting held on 28 July 2011 were agreed, as was the summary for the website.

3. Finance Report

Management Board reviewed the Finance Report for July 2011. It was noted that there were both pressures and easements, with the main pressure being the Registration income budget. Work on a new Fees Order was being progressed. Other key issues were discussed, including filling vacancies and the potential Registration claim, on which the Director of Registration was working and would provide further information.

The Chief Executive would arrange a meeting with the Director of Business Services regarding the filling vacancies issue. The Director of Business Services would provide the Board with a detailed update on the situation regarding pressures and easements at the September Board meeting.

The Board noted:

- The July Management Accounts.
- That DARD's confirmation was awaited regarding the recharge of notional costs.
- The Registration contingent liability.
- The work required as a result of the restructuring the Agency, and the potential impact on the Agency's ability to monitor its budget in this time of change.

The Board approved an adjustment to the Corporate Services and Registration budgets, and also the proposed bid to the Monitoring Round on 30 August 2011.

4. LPS Customer Feedback

This paper set out proposals as to how LPS should collect customer feedback in the current year in order to meet the 2011-2012 Business Score-card target, including an update on the current customer feedback processes, and options to target any gaps in those processes.

The Chief Executive referred to the need to ensure that staff put customers at the heart of the business; while a lot of good work had been done it was important that this message was reinforced. The Change Management Advisor spoke about the importance of drawing information from staff regarding how they thought improvements could be made, and the focus on customers that would be included in the work with AAs and AOs over the next few months.

Following consideration and discussion of these issues, the Management Board agreed the recommendations in the paper that the existing customer feedback should be collated, with gaps in the customer feedback being addressed as set out in the paper. This included a comprehensive report on customer feedback to be prepared by December 2011, and a prioritised action plan to address the issues raised and to help ensure a strong customer focus in LPS.

5. LPS Web Services

The Board discussed the progress that had been made to date to develop web services in LPS, and agreed that, while considerable work had been done, there remained considerable scope for further improvement, particularly to improve and enhance customer services, increase efficiency and reduce costs.

The Board agreed:

- The further development of web services and the implementation approach proposed in the paper.
- That development of web services through the NI Direct procurement exercise would be a priority, and any 'stand alone' development of such services should now cease.

6. Progress update on LPS Information Security and Assurance

This paper provided Management Board with details of the significant progress that had been made over the past year to improve information security and assurance throughout LPS. There had been a determined focus across LPS on compliance, better awareness of and promotion of data protection had been delivered, and LPS was fully complying with the Departmental guidelines. Management Board stressed the importance of this and approved the steps that would now be taken to build on this focus, including:

- The development of an Information Asset Register for all electronic information stored on main business applications.
- The next series of ICT health checks starting in January 2012.
- Reviews of risk registers to ensure data protection compliance.

The Business Services Directorate would take the lead in this work.

7. LPS/DARD EU Audit Compliance Programme.

The Board received a presentation on the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (DARD) work, and discussed the progress to date as set out in the presentation and in the Board's regular update paper. It was noted that a meeting with the DARD Permanent Secretary had been arranged at which key issues would be discussed, including project structure, protocols and management. The Chief Executive would update the Board at the September meeting, along with the monthly update from Mapping and Valuation Services. In the meantime the Board noted the recommendations contained in the paper.

8. Management Information Pack

8.1 Absence Management Report

The Board reviewed the latest absence management report including long-term and intermittent sick absences. It was noted that the average working days lost per WTE member of staff for June 2011 was 0.7 days, at a cost of approximately £70,000. The Board also discussed the LPS absence rate target and agreed that this should be set at 8.3 days.

8.2 LPS Corporate Balanced Scorecard Monitor

Management Board examined the Corporate Balanced Score-card Monitor, paying particular attention to those targets where the projection to year-end had changed. There were no targets currently projected as not being achieved at year-end, although six targets required action and monitoring. Management Board reviewed the steps that were proposed in mitigation where needed. It was agreed that improvements had been made to achieve the current position, and the Chief Executive thanked Directors for their work with regard to this.

8.3 CCCU Statistics

The Management Board reviewed the latest CCCU Statistics. The Director of Transformation and Customer would consider including comparison figures to the previous year's statistics.

8.4 Revenues and Benefits Performance Report

Management Board considered this latest report on progress with regard to rate collection, recovery and penny product, including:

- That progress on the net collectable rate target based on assessments at 30 April 2011 was ahead of the profiled target.
- That cash transferred to the Paymaster General's Account was ahead of the profiled target.
- The debt position at 31 July 2011. Information provided included an analysis by payment methods.
- The position with regard to direct debits which had increased by 1.1% compared to the same period last year.
- Details of the 30 June 2011 actual penny product forecast information.
- That capacity plans were being developed for all areas including Rating of Empty Homes.

The Chief Executive stressed the need to understand the make up of prior years' debt in terms of age and how much was now irrecoverable, so that appropriate plans to deal with this could be made.

It was noted that when the work on capacity plans had been completed, there would be a better understanding of how to deal with the backlog in relation to unprocessed Certificates of Revision, and the Board would return to this issue.

The Board discussed the analyses provided in the various tables and agreed that consideration would be given as to whether Table 4 could include the comparable position for the previous year.

8.5 LPS Risk Register

This paper provided the Board with an updated 2011-2012 Corporate Risk Register. The Board noted that overall, there were now nine items on the Risk Register, one of which was deemed to be 'serious', while the others were 'significant'. The Board reviewed the debt risk and the work and processes put in place to manage this risk, and also discussed the possible impact of Rating of Empty Homes on the debt target and the subsequent mitigating actions..

9. Review of matters arising and action points

The Board reviewed matters arising and action points, and the attached schedule was updated accordingly.

10. Key Management Board issues for the next Team Brief

It was agreed that the issues for the next team brief would be:

- The work on customer feedback.
- Information security and assurance.
- Progress regarding the DARD project.

The Director of Business Services would consider whether there should be something with regard to finance/staffing issues.

11. Any other Business.

- The Director of Registration advised of a meeting on the following Tuesday with the Law Society. The Chief Executive undertook to contact the Departmental Solicitor's Office.
- The Director of Customer and Transformation advised of progress with regard to proposed amendments to the Rates Order: disappointingly, because of timing issues, it was unlikely that these could be in place before 2014.
- The Director of Mapping and Valuation Services advised that he had attended the first meeting of the new Asset Management Group.
- The Chief Executive informed the Board that, in future, information in relation to mapping and valuation and Registration would be included in the Management Board Information Pack.

12. Date of the next meeting

The next Management Board meeting would take place on 29 September 2011.