

## Land & Property Services

### Summary of the Management Board meeting held in Queen's Court on Tuesday 27 July 2010 at 9.30am

#### Present:

John Wilkinson	Chair and Chief Executive
Stephen Boyd	Director of Corporate Services
Alan Brontë	Director of Valuation
Anne Flanagan	Change Manager
Anne Johnston	In place of the Director of Operations
Wilfie Hamilton	Independent Board Member
Dennis Licence	External Advisor
Patricia Montgomery	Director of Customers and Business Improvement (CBI)
Tommy O'Reilly	Director of Transformation (Item 3 onwards)
Trevor Steenson	Director of Data Information and Systems (DIS) Items 1 to 6 and then 9 onwards.
Ruth Thompson	Secretary

**Apologies:** An apology for non-attendance was received from the Director of operations.

#### 1. Conflicts of interest

There were no conflicts of interest declared.

#### 2. Minutes of the Management Board meeting held on 24 June 2010.

The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed subject to the following amendments –

- **Paragraph 3** Revenues and Benefits Monthly Update – the last sentence in the penultimate paragraph would be removed.
- **Paragraph 4** Monthly Update, Valuation – The second sentence of the second sub-paragraph would be amended to read “Management Board noted that the Minister had met with the British Retail Consortium and that LPS would brief RICS.”
- **Paragraph 6** – the heading would be amended to read “IRRV presentation and draft report”.

#### 3. Monthly Update – LPS Revenues and Benefits

Management Board reviewed the information provided in this paper, which included

- That general good progress continued to be made.

- That there were, however, still challenges for Revenues and Benefits, including resource issues in connection with clearing backlogs.
- The forthcoming Penny Product forecasts for councils.
- That collaborative work across LPS would be needed in the development of predictive Penny Products.

In reviewing the information provided, the Board stressed the importance of driving collection and also of resolving the remaining backlogs. These included occupancy management work, returned mail, the issue of bills against Certificates of Revision and old debt.

To urgently progress this, Members noted that the Board would consider a strategy paper at the August meeting setting out a debt action plan. When the plan had been agreed there would be regular progress reports to the Board.

It was agreed that –

- The draft plan would be brought to a Directors' Weekly Meeting prior to the August Management Board.
- The Directors of DIS, Valuation and Operations would look at the issue of incomplete occupancy information (the gathering of ratepayers and effective dates at the time of valuation).

In response to concerns regarding the resources that would be required in connection with the rating of empty homes, the Chief Executive advised that there should be a separate business case in connection with this issue.

The Chief Executive also acknowledged the good work carried out by the Communications Team in connection with the recent release of the debt figure.

#### **4. Monthly update – LPS Valuation.**

The July update on valuation matters asked the Management Board to note:

- The achievement of the first two rating targets on clearance of new properties carried over from 2009-2010.
- Progress made in agreeing the membership and activities of the Rating Service Liaison Group.
- Progress made in agreeing a resource plan to clear the backlog of domestic alterations, and the ongoing work to accelerate this work.
- The outcome of a Senior Valuer board, and ongoing work to restructure management responsibilities in the Directorate to help ensure business continuity.

Management Board reviewed the progress made. The Director of Valuation assured Management Board of the Directorate's focus on productivity and proactive action.

## **5. LPS Finance Report**

The Director of Corporate Services provided Management Board with the LPS Finance Report for June 2010.

The Chief Executive drew Management Board's attention to the fact that income from Registration had decreased and that careful attention would need to be given to this area regarding meeting the forecast figure.

Management Board approved the June Management Accounts and noted that the financial accounts for the year ended March 2010 had been laid before the Assembly by the target date of 1 July 2010. It was also noted that LPS had achieved an unqualified audit opinion for the first time.

## **6. Customer Satisfaction Survey**

In considering the outcome of the LPS Customer Satisfaction Survey results for 2009-2010, the Board was pleased to note that the results were generally positive, with a customer satisfaction score of 78.2% compared to 76.4% in the 2007-2008 baseline survey. It was considered, however, that the outcome of the survey also raised the scope for improvement in customer services.

The Board considered the priorities that had been identified and, in discussing how best to move forward while balancing work and resources, the Board suggested:

- Identifying quick wins and simple things that could be done on a daily basis.
- A message to staff about 'getting it right first time' and helping to develop that culture.
- Giving managers customer responsibilities in terms of what they could do to improve in their areas.
- Considering how best to shape the customer experience of LPS.

It was agreed that -

- The Director of CBI would take this forward with individual Directors, including a review of the customer charter, and linking into PSIF, in order to develop specific recommendations.
- A short paper would be prepared for the Minister on the outcome of survey, as well as a note to staff.

## **7. Corporate Governance Framework**

The Director of Transformation advised the Board that the LPS Action Plan required a review of the Corporate Framework document. As a result, an earlier paper had been brought to the Board and the Board's comments had subsequently been incorporated into the current version of the Framework.

Management Board considered the Framework document and agreed the

revisions and alterations to the original, and that the Framework document could now be submitted to the Department for approval.

## **8. Leadership Challenge Action Plan and Best Practice Guidance**

Management Board reviewed and discussed this paper, which asked for the Board's endorsement of the proposed action plan and best practice guidelines.

Following discussion, Management Board stressed the continuing need to inspire and engage with staff. They endorsed the Action Plan and Best Practice Guidance and, in addition, the Chief Executive proposed that he would meet with Directors and Senior Managers following September to discuss the staff engagement issues.

## **9. Senior Managers' Conference – Evaluation Report**

Management Board reviewed the feedback from the Senior Managers' Conference which, overall, had been very positive

## **10. Outline Business Case – Belfast Accommodation**

The Director of Transformation provided a verbal update on the outline business case for the Belfast Accommodation Project. He advised the Board that, following the submission of the case to the Department, the Department had brought up some new proposals. Further work was, therefore, in progress.

## **11. LPS Health and Safety Policy**

Management Board endorsed the LPS Health and Safety Policy, which had been developed with input from staff and TUS. It was agreed that the Policy should be published on the Intranet for all staff, and that an email note would draw staff's attention to this. The communications strategy was agreed.

## **12. Update on Stakeholder Engagement Plan**

Management Board reviewed and agreed with the progress made to date in connection with the Stakeholder Engagement Plan, which included the requirement for Directors to provide detailed briefing notes for the Chief Executive on relevant issues for visits, and for a Director or Senior Manager to also attend visits is required. It was noted that a template for the provision of information would be provided shortly for further discussion.

## **13. Report to Management Board from the Chair of the Transformation Sub-Committee**

Management Board reviewed the report on the second meeting of the Transformation Sub-Committee, which had been held on 28 June 2010. The agenda had included update reports from the Transformation Programme such as capital investment areas, the Transformation budget update and the six-month

review of the EO leadership programme.

#### **14.1 Managing Attendance Report**

Management Board considered the latest figures on staff absences. The average number of days lost per member of staff in May 2010 was 0.6 days, at a cost of approximately £50K. The Board also noted the summary of actions that had been carried out to reduce absences.

The Board welcomed the fact that more a detailed analysis of short-term absences would soon be available, and agreed that once the Departmental target had been received, absence management would be a regular item in the team brief.

#### **14.2 Staffing Report**

Management Board reviewed the staffing report and noted the current position with regard to critical vacancies, temporary promotions and staff baselines. It was noted that five Senior Valuers had been appointed.

#### **14.3 Accommodation Report**

Management Board considered this report and noted that work was ongoing to implement the findings from the evaluation of new working environment in Academy House.

The Board also heard that quotations had been received for work on the new LPS office in Marlborough House, and agreed that there would be further discussions around the options for proceeding with this work.

#### **14.4 Corporate Balanced Score-card Monitor**

Management Board reviewed the current position with regard to the Corporate Balanced Score-card and agreed that:

- The status of target R51.2 would be changed from green to amber, with a note as to the reasons.
- The Department would be notified accordingly.
- The associated risk would change from amber to red.

#### **14.5 CCCU Statistics April to June 2010**

Management Board reviewed the latest position with regard to CCCU statistics and expressed concern that the number of complaints received in the first quarter was higher than the number received in the first quarter in the previous year. Work was being done to look at the reasons for this.

Other issues being addressed were in relation to the numbers of interim replies

being issued. Management Board agreed with the need for centralised correspondence and scanning, and noted that work was ongoing on developing a single process for handling correspondence for implementation in the next financial year. In the meantime, it was important that CCCU and Revenues and Benefits would continue to work together on correspondence issues.

#### **15. Review of matters arising and action points.**

Action points from previous meetings were reviewed and updated as recorded in the attached schedule.

#### **16. Key issues for the next Team Brief**

The key issues agreed for the next Team Brief were:

- The ongoing focus in debt.
- The outcome of the customer satisfaction survey.
- The Health and Safety Policy Statement.
- Performance in Revenues and Benefits and Valuation Directorates.

#### **17. Any Other Business**

On behalf of the Board, the Chief Executive thanked the Director of Transformation, Tommy O'Reilly, who was moving on to a new post, for his work and help in driving the Transformation programme. The Board wished the Director every success in his new post.

#### **18. Date of next meeting**

The date of the next meeting would be 26 August 2010.

#### **19. Below the Line papers**

Management Board reviewed and discussed the information which had been provided in two 'below the line' papers, the update on resource issues re non domestic Revaluation, and the review of EO to DP Leadership Development Programme.

Ruth Thompson  
10 August 2010

