

## **Land & Property Services**

### **Summary of the Management Board meeting held in Queen's Court on Thursday 28 July 2011 at 9.30am**

#### **Present:**

John Wilkinson	Chair and Chief Executive
Alan Hazlett	In place of the Director of Mapping and Valuation Services
Stephen Boyd	Director of Business Services
Anne Flanagan	Change Manager
Iain Greenway	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
Ruth Thompson	Secretary

#### **Apologies:**

Alan Brontë	Director of Mapping and Valuation Services
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#### **1. Conflicts of interest.**

There were no conflicts of interest.

#### **2. Minutes of meeting held on 23 June 2011**

The minutes of this meeting were agreed, as was the summary for publication on the LPS website.

#### **3. LPS Finance Report**

The Board reviewed the latest Finance Report and noted that the audit of the 2010-2011 accounts had been completed and the accounts laid in the Assembly by the 1 July 2011 deadline. With regard to budgets 2011-2012, the Board reviewed the current situation including pressures, adjustments and income, and noted that revenue was in a balanced position. On the capital side, the Board reviewed the current situation with regard to allocations and noted that the Chief Executive had arranged to discuss the position further with the Directors of Transformation and Customer and Business Services, and, following this, the Board would receive a further report at the August 2011 meeting.

The Director of Business Services also provided updates for the Board on the

situation regarding Monitoring Rounds, and the need for all Directors to review and forecast budgets for the remainder of the financial year. The Chief Executive advised that a paper regarding Direct Award Contract procurements was being prepared for the Board; there would be engagement with the Permanent Secretary regarding this, and the possibility of getting support from Internal Audit would be explored.

#### **4. Progress update on Making a Difference in LPS – 2011-2012 Stepping Stones.**

This paper, presented to the Board by the Change Manager, provided an update for the Board on the progress made with regard to 'Stepping Stones'. The Board reviewed the information provided and was pleased with the progress that had been made. It was agreed that it would be extremely important to keep up the momentum on this, and to keep it on the Team Brief agenda.

The Board agreed the proposed communications to staff about the progress made.

#### **5. Update on the implementation of Rating of Empty Homes**

The Director of Revenue and Benefits provided the Board with an update on the work being done to prepare for implementation of Rating of Empty Homes on 1 October 2011. This included:

- Tracing owners of empty properties.
- Responding to requests for reviews of entries in the valuation list.
- Procedures for issuing completion notices.
- Preparation for billing.
- System changes
- Communications.

The Board noted that this implementation work affected many parts of LPS and all of these areas were working closely together in the run-up to implementation. Whilst a lot of work had been completed, there was still much to do. The Board discussed resourcing issues in connection with this work, and the need to identify and action derelict property cases to avoid nugatory work by Revenues and Benefits. It was noted that more information would be provided at future Board meetings.

#### **6. Universal Credit – impacts on LPS**

The Board received an update on the current LPS involvement with regard to the preparation for the introduction of Universal Credit. This included the scale and scope of the impact on LPS, but it was agreed that there was a need for more clarity and decisions to be made at a national level before substantive work could be started. The key issue to be decided by Government was whether Council Tax Benefit (Housing Benefit and Rate Relief in Northern Ireland) would become part of Universal credit or localised.

In discussion the Board agreed that the Chief Executive would discuss these issues with the Permanent Secretary.

## **7. Progress update on LPS/DARD EU Audit Compliance Programme**

The Board reviewed the information provided in this latest update on the LPS/DARD project, including the progress made and the current risks. It was noted that the Chief Executive would meet with the DARD Permanent Secretary soon and these issues would be discussed.

## **8. First Quarter Actual Penny Product (APP) Projections 2011-2012**

The Board considered information on the first quarter indicative APP for 2011-2012 and noted the outcome results. A submission would go to the Minister shortly and results would be released to Council Finance Officers for their review and consideration.

## **9. Management Information Pack**

### **9.1 Managing Attendance Report**

The Management Board noted that the Department was considering a revised target for LPS. Members were pleased with the progress made, and it was agreed that this would be mentioned in the Chief Executive's introduction to Team Brief.

### **9.2 Accommodation Report April 2011 to June 2011**

Management Board noted the current accommodation position including:

- The completion of the new Customer Information Centre in Marlborough House.
- Discussions with Properties Division regarding the possibility of minor accommodation work on the first floor of Boaz House.
- The completion of the moves of 300 staff within the Belfast area.

On behalf of the Management Board, the Chief Executive asked that thanks be passed on to all involved in arrangements for the moves, and, in particular, to Margaret McClenaghan for her work.

The Board noted that a schedule of lessons learned from the College Street moves was being prepared.

### **9.3 LPS Corporate Balanced Score-card**

Management Board reviewed the current position in relation to the Corporate Balanced Score-card, in particular, examining those targets where the projection to year-end status had changed. The Director of Business Services advised that the key Departmental targets were on track, although there could be a

resource issue around Rating of Empty Homes. The Chief Executive said that he would raise lengthy timescales around filling posts with the Permanent Secretary at the forthcoming LPS update meeting.

#### **9.4 CCCU Statistics**

The latest statistics on complaints and correspondence cases were reviewed, and the Board noted that statistics on FOI cases would be included with effect from August 2011.

#### **9.5 Revenue and Benefits Performance Report, June 2011**

Management Board considered this report which provided detailed information on performance to the end of June 2011, and which had been prepared taking account of the Board's earlier thoughts and requirements. The report included information on collection, recovery, and penny product. It was noted that, overall, performance was on or ahead of profile for the first quarter for rate collection, cash collection and debt reduction. The Board also noted the actions being taken to address the issues where action was needed.

There was discussion around providing information to staff on progress, and the Director of Business Services advised that a paper would be brought to the Board in September 2011 regarding Management Information Systems development progress.

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

Action points from the previous meetings were reviewed, and the attached schedule was updated.

#### **11. Key issues for Team Brief**

Key issues for the Management Board update in the next Team Brief were agreed.

#### **12. Any other business**

The Chief Executive provided an update on the Stocktake meeting on 26 July 2011.