

**Commissioners present:**

Michael O'Higgins (Chairman)  
Steve Bundred (Chief Executive)  
Jim Coulter  
Dr Jennifer Dixon  
Sheila Drew Smith  
Sir Tom Legg  
Brian Pomeroy  
Prof. Peter Smith  
Cllr. Chris White

**Staff in attendance:**

Gareth Davies  
Tracey Dennison  
Martin Evans  
Jenny Grey  
Roger Hamilton  
Julie Hope  
John Kirkpatrick (for part)  
Ian Hickman (for part)  
Andy McKeon  
Siobhan O'Donoghue (minutes)  
Bridget Rayner  
Dave Stewart  
Peter Wilkinson  
Brian Willmor

**Apologies, Announcements and Declarations of Interest**

**Verbal**

1. The Chairman opened the meeting and made the following announcements:
  - a) Apologies for absence had been received from Cllr. Steve Houghton and Cllr. Peter Jones.
  - b) Dave Stewart, MD Corporate Services was welcomed to his first Board meeting.

**Minutes of the 10 May 2007 Board and Matters Arising**

2. The minutes were approved and the following matters arising were raised:
  - a) Paragraph 2a, Minutes of the last meeting, Annual Lecture: Professor Laura Tyson had been confirmed as guest speaker at the Annual Lecture.
  - b) Paragraph 17, Annual Review: Copies of the Annual Review were now published and available.
  - c) Paragraph 22, Appointment of New Commissioners: CLG had confirmed their approval of new Commissioner appointments and an announcement was expected imminently, subject to approval by the Secretary of State for Health.

*[Secretary's note: CLG announced the new Commissioner appointments on 31 July 2007.]*

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| <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>3. <b>The minutes of the 251<sup>st</sup> meeting of the Board held on 10 May 2007 were approved as a correct record and would be signed by the Chairman.</b></li></ol> |
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**Report of the Chief Executive**

**CP 45-07**

4. Ministerial and Shadow Cabinet Changes. Since the report was drafted, Phil Woolas MP had been announced as Minister for Climate Change: this appointment was a good opportunity for the Commission. Hazel Blears, the recently appointed Secretary of State for Communities, had already been in contact with both the Chairman and Chief Executive. **John Healey, the Local Government Minister, would be invited to attend the next Board dinner and subsequent meeting in September 2007.**
5. Other governmental issues to note included the policy shift outlined in the Housing Green Paper around local authority housing subsidy, which was a possible area that the Commission could follow up. HM Treasury's Sub-national Review of Economic

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Development and Regeneration may have medium- and long-term implications for CAA. The NAO had now joined the CAA Strategy Group and therefore would be engaged from the earliest stage.

6. There had been an announcement the previous day that nine new unitary authorities would be created. The authorities had to demonstrate cost savings, and a role for the Commission might be to monitor and discuss the situation with Ministers, particularly John Healey if he was able to attend the next Board. It might also be worthwhile conducting a piece of research around what we knew about previous mergers and restructures. This would be useful in reminding auditors of lessons learned.
7. Appointment of Auditors to Local Authority Companies. Since the report had been drafted, further meetings had been held with CLG officials and it appeared that Ministers would be advised not to support the amendment to the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Bill, as proposed. This was disappointing as numerous legislative opportunities had now been missed. **Further discussions would be held.**
8. Studies Consultation. The studies consultation had received helpful responses and useful suggestions for possible studies topics.

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| 9. <b>The Board noted the Chief Executive's report, in particular that the leasehold, design and build acquisition of new offices at Grove Park, Leicester was approved by the Board in accordance with Standing Order 5.</b> |
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## Review of Board Effectiveness

CP 46-07

10. Commissioners Brian Pomeroy and Sir Thomas Legg gave a brief presentation on the findings of the internal review of the Board's Effectiveness. MDs and Commissioners had been interviewed separately on areas of the Board's activity. Issues that were covered in the interviews included: the composition of the Board; agenda management; atmosphere and effectiveness of meetings; and visibility of the Board outside meetings. Overall messages from MDs and Board members were positive, but some areas for focus were highlighted as follows:
  - a) The Board could spend more time on performance monitoring and provide more challenge.
  - b) Board papers were still too long. Where this was unavoidable the important issues should be presented early in the paper.
  - c) The Board would welcome time-limited, single-subject sub-groups, for example on CAA.
  - d) The Board dinners were popular and useful. Dinner guests or a programme of speakers at Board meetings should be revived, where this was practical and timely.
  - e) The new studies programme had made improvements but it was too early in the process to draw firm conclusions.
  - f) The importance of the Board's visibility had been acknowledged in interviews, but there was more that could be done. There should be an expectation that Board members would attend a minimum number of regional or staff events.
  - g) The Chairman and Chief Executive should take the lead role with stakeholders but Board members were keen to be involved where this would be helpful, for example in launching and presenting studies.
  - h) The Board and Management had to look periodically at where wrong decisions had been made, to assess what had gone wrong and to learn from previous mistakes.
11. The Board noted the presentation and made the following observations and suggestions:
  - a) Where Board members were attending staff or external events, staff needed to be aware of this.

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- b) Other opportunities to raise visibility included management conferences and with stakeholders. Where the Chairman or Chief Executive were not available for report launches, perhaps this could be delegated to the lead Commissioner, rather than staff, although there would be media training issues to consider. Using the party political Board members, for example at national party conferences, would be an easy win.
  - c) The Board still appeared overly London-centric and more should be done to address this perception, including more regional visits. Perhaps thought could be given to how a regional Commissioner role might work.
  - d) A series of specialist lunch time talks by Commissioners, short essays, or features written by Commissioners for staff publications, were suggested.
  - e) Commissioners felt there was a tension between pushing themselves forward and waiting to be invited to participate. Some Commissioners felt they were underused, but did not know how they could do more.
  - f) The Chief Executive reported that Commissioners' attendance at the previous year's staff conference had been very successful, and staff had been being particularly positive about this. Commissioners could be invited to participate more fully in this year's conference programme, by hosting dinner tables and mixing on a more informal basis.
  - g) The MD, Policy Research and Studies reported that regional and site visits had proven beneficial in developing studies and getting an external perspective. These were perhaps an opportunity for those Commissioners involved with studies to engage more with emerging conclusions and communications.
12. The Chairman thanked Brian Pomeroy and Sir Tom Legg for leading the review. **The Chairman and Management Team would consider the suggestions made, particularly around visibility.**
13. **The Chairman requested that Board members keep an informal log of time spent on Commission business from September to November 2007.**

14. **The Board noted the key findings of the review, and suggested a number of possible next steps for further exploration, as outlined above.**

## Review of Housing Regulation

CP 47-07

15. The Chief Inspector of Housing briefed the Board on the latest draft of the Commission's response to the Cave Review, *Every Tenant Matters* and the CLG's consultation, *Delivering Housing and Regeneration*. The draft was still a work in progress in advance of the submission deadline of 10 September 2007. The external environment continued to change, and the recently published Housing Green Paper *Homes for the Future* and the Sub-national Review of Economic Development and Regeneration would need to be reflected in our final draft. The Commission's submission attempted to address all the areas raised in the government's consultation but would also look at more in-depth regulatory issues. The Housing and Regeneration Advisory Board had met the previous day, and a summary of their discussion of the Commission's response was also tabled.
16. Commissioners were welcome to contribute further to the draft outside the meeting, but were asked to delegate authority for final sign-off to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Chairman.
17. The Board was invited to comment on the draft, and the Chief Inspector of Housing drew particular attention to the section which outlined Professor Cave's arguments against the Commission as the regulating body, and the Commission's proposals for how social housing could be regulated. **[Section 36(2)(b)(ii)]**

18. **[Section 36(2)(b)(ii)]**

19. **The Board:**

- a) **noted the conclusions of Professor Cave's report on the regulation of social housing and the government's initial response and further consultation;**
- b) **commented on the Commission's draft response to government, as outlined above;**
- c) **noted the opportunity to contribute to further drafts if desired; and**
- d) **agreed that the sign-off of the final submission to government be delegated to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Chairman**

**Single Tier & County Councils CPA 2007**

**CP 48-08**

20. The Director of Local Government presented the report summarising assessment proposals for CPA 2007, and asked the Board to approve the CPA 2007 methodology document for publication. The Cabinet sub-committee's formal consultation response on the service assessment BVPI issues, expected on 20 July and detailed in the report, had not yet been received. Individual government departments had requested certain changes in order to pursue their policy priorities. However, the Board's previous steer had been to make only the minimum changes necessary to ensure an effective transition to CAA, whilst maintaining the relevance of the framework, and this was also the view shared by local government. The devil was in the detail and it was important to keep a close eye on the BVPIs.
21. A main issue was whether to take forward the BVPIs for cleanliness of public spaces, which included fly-tipping, fly-posting and graffiti. As Defra was not likely to push too hard for their inclusion, it was not recommended to take these forward. However, we should retain the BVPI on energy requirements of council housing. The Board agreed that it would be beneficial for the Commission to take a fresh look at BVPIs in the autumn of this last year of CPA. Individual Commissioners commented as follows:
- a) The removal of C12 (libraries stock level and return) was welcome as it was somewhat archaic.
  - b) Paras. 51, 52 and 86 were somewhat opaque and should be re-phrased.
  - c) Paras. 14-16 should be re-worded to remove their ambiguity.
  - d) The presumption against change could be made a little clearer and we should set out the principles on which we made the choice to include, or exclude, certain BVPIs.
  - e) A particular advantage of CAA was that this type of discussion would no longer be necessary.

22. **The Board:**

- a) **commented on the issues in Appendix 1 of the report relating to the service assessment indicators; and**
- b) **Subject to comments above, agreed the CPA 2007 methodology document in Appendix 2.**

**Use of Resources 2008 – Consultation Results**

**CP 49-07**

23. The Board received the report summarising the responses to the consultation on the Use of Resources assessment for the final year of CPA. The response from government and professional bodies was generally favourable to the proposals, but councils had reservations about some aspects and had voiced concern that although it was right to 'raise the bar', the proposals were not gradual enough. Also, as the proposals related to the financial year already underway, there may be insufficient time to embed them and it was a concern that this might lead to an authority dropping in overall score in the final year of CPA.

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24. In response to these concerns, the Commission proposed to modify the extent to which it 'raised the bar'. Specific proposals to move ten criteria from level 4 to level 3 and one criterion from level 3 to 2 would not be pursued. The wording of some of the criteria could also be modified or explained in more detail.
25. The Board felt that this was the right approach as it allowed authorities to prepare for CAA whilst still striving for improvement. To ensure that authorities were aware we had taken their concerns into account, we should emphasise our reasoning behind the proposals was to continue to raise the standard to support improvement and prepare for CAA, by focusing on the most important areas of change. This view was supported by the significant improvement in councils' scores in 2006.

26. **The Board:**
- a) **noted the responses received to the consultation on the proposed changes to the key lines of enquiry for 2008;**
  - b) **subject to the comments above, approved the proposed approach to updating the key lines of enquiry; and**
  - c) **noted the publication on our website of an analysis of stakeholder responses along with a report summarising the Commission's response to the consultation.**

## Fire and Rescue Corporate Assessment 2007 to 2009

CP 50-07

27. The MD, Local Government presented the proposed approach to fire and rescue corporate assessments in the period to March 2009. Only those fire and rescue authorities (FRAs) demonstrating significant and sustainable improvement, or a decline in performance since the previous assessment in 2005 would be subject to an assessment. A Corporate Assessment Selection Panel would make this judgement, based on evidence from a Regional Manager or an FRA putting itself forward.

28. **The Board approved the proposals for fire and rescue corporate assessment as set out in the report.**

## Follow up to Employee Attitude Survey

CP 51-07

29. The MD, Human Resources presented the follow-up report on the Employee Attitude Survey, following the Board's request at its March 2007 meeting to consider the survey alongside benchmarking data, and for actions to be agreed that would address the issues identified in the survey. The Board discussed the findings and the following points were raised:
- a) The issues raised in the follow-up interviews tended to be the ones that the organisation was already aware of, and that were already being addressed.
  - b) Disabled staff had lower levels of satisfaction but in the same general areas, for example workload issues and people management.
  - c) Workload issues were not related to vacancy levels but more the natural peaks and troughs of the business. Contract staff were brought in during the busiest times, although this in itself caused different kinds of pressure on staff.
  - d) An important issue was how to address the concerns of the 46 per cent of staff who felt that senior management would not make changes as a result of the survey. It was likely that workload issues underpinned this high figure to a certain degree. Improved internal communications would help demonstrate where we were addressing concerns and making improvements.
  - e) It was acknowledged that making small changes could go a long way to addressing the

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- frustrations around workload management issues.
- f) The results around performance management had been something of a surprise, but this was now starting to be addressed within teams and now had a higher profile.
  - g) Individuals' performance management would be addressed in part by strengthening the mechanisms for upward feedback, and applying a greater emphasis on people skills in individuals' performance targets.
  - h) The NAO and firms could be contacted as part of a useful network that could be exploited.

<b>30. The Board noted and commented on the report.</b>
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### **Annual Review of the Commission's Corporate Governance Framework** **CP 52-07**

31. Following the internal annual review of the Commission's Corporate Governance Framework, the Commission Solicitor presented the updated version to the Board and highlighted the most significant changes. Of particular note were the amendments to the Audit Committee's Terms of Reference, as recommended following the external review of the Audit Committee's effectiveness (see item CP 57-07). The Terms of Reference now included a remit for the Committee to review tax and litigation matters involving uncertainty, amongst other areas. The Commission Solicitor clarified that the Audit Committee would have sight of any area where there were uncertainties around liability, and that the Management Team had already been considering implications of Corporation Tax in light of the new power of assistance.

<b>32. The Board approved the proposed amendments to the Framework, as explained in the report and highlighted through track changes in the Appendix.</b>
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### **Medium Term Financial Forecast** **CP 53-07**

33. The MD, Corporate Services introduced the three-year financial forecast that presented a three-range forecast of possible outcomes based on varying increases in volume of work. The report also highlighted the potential implications of charges. The Board commented that:
- a) This approach of a medium-term forecast was helpful and welcomed, but obviously the more accurate we could be about the potential size of increase, the better.
  - b) The Commission needed to have a clear idea of what the implications would be of the forthcoming changes to auditing standards following the International Auditing and Assurance Standards Board clarity project, and the adoption of International Financial Reporting Standards. Staff confirmed that a formal bid had been made for the necessary preparations, which took into account one day training for all auditors.
  - c) Early communication with AIBs was vital. They needed to be aware of what was coming and why, and of the financial implications.

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| <p>34. <b>The Board:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a) <b>noted the principle of charging client bodies for all work undertaken;</b></li><li>b) <b>agreed to an autumn communication for AIBs explaining the required changes and the reasons for them, and setting out indicative three year fees for the next three years; and</b></li><li>c) <b>noted the proposal to explore more fully the potential for targeted internal efficiency savings.</b></li></ul> |
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### **Board Away day – 13 & 14 September 2007**

**Verbal**

35. The Chairman updated the Board with further details on the forthcoming Board Away day

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and meeting. In advance of the lunch on Day One, Sir Tom Legg and Brian Pomeroy would meet the new Commissioners as part of their induction to brief them on the Effectiveness Review and other matters as necessary. Following lunch there would be a detailed session on CAA, including issues around sustainability and the Use of Resources assessment. Other items included a review and update on strategic targets. It was hoped that a Minister would be available to speak to the Board on Day Two. **The Chairman invited Commissioners to let him know of any other issues that might usefully be covered.**

### Performance Report

CP 54-07

36. The MD, Corporate Services introduced the first quarter performance report of 2007/08. This was the first Performance Report in the form of a balanced scorecard. Other developments in performance monitoring and reporting included a greater challenge of some of the assessments, a move toward a more coherent linking of targets, and investigation across lines of business.
37. The Board welcomed this cross-cutting analysis and the overall approach. This was a step in the right direction but there was still some way to go. In light of the Employee Attitude report elsewhere on the agenda, **staff would investigate the claim in the report that there were 'longer than anticipated' staff vacancies.** However, this may not have been a reference to the field force.

*[Secretary's Note: The statement that staff vacancies were remaining unfilled for longer than anticipated has been investigated and found not to be the case. There is no delay in recruitment and workloads are being managed by use of contractors. A full explanation will be included in the next Performance Report.]*

38. **The Board noted the Performance Report.**

### Audit Quality Monitoring Programme

CP 55-07

39. The MD, Audit presented the report that summarised the results of the Commission's in-house audit practice's annual quality monitoring programme (QMP). The report related to audits carried out in 2005/06: the first year of the new audit methodology developed to reflect the requirements of the new suite of International Standards of Auditing (UK and Ireland). The results would be published in the audit practice's first Transparency Report, which would be presented to the Board at its November 2007 meeting.
40. The QMP indicated that the quality of the audit work met professional standards and all opinions were considered safe. However, significant weaknesses were identified in the quality of work undertaken at a number of audits, in particular in relation to the documentation and evidencing of audit findings; the approach to audit sampling; and the use of analytical review techniques.
41. **[Section 36(2)(b)(ii)]**. The forthcoming AIU inspection in 2008 would provide valuable assistance with an independent benchmark of our quality relative to the major firms, and help us identify where further changes needed to be made.
42. As previously reported, a major change programme, *Promoting Audit Quality* was in place to address the issues highlighted in the review. Improvement was as much about a cultural change as the technical aspects of auditing, such as ensuring staff put more reliance on the control environment. These steps would have HR implications, for example there could be a decrease in reports of job satisfaction as the documentation and evidencing requirements would increase workloads. Staff would share the associated action plan with

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Commissioners, where requested.

43. The Board welcomed the report and its honesty.

44. **The Board noted:**

- a) **the results of this year's quality monitoring programme; and**
- b) **the actions being taken in response, to improve audit quality and help deliver our objective of delivering consistently world-class public audits.**

## Audit Issues

CP 56-07

45. The MD, Audit presented his report which sought Board agreement on various functional issues. The MD highlighted a number of these items and updated the Board on other matters, as follows: **[Section 33]**.

46. **[Section 33]**. Whilst their audit opinions were strong, there were perhaps training and communication issues to address around specific aspects of our regime. **The next Audit Issues report would reflect more widely on these issues.**

47. **The Board:**

- a) **approved the appointment of Steve Warren to deal with any questions or objections that may arise in connection with a waste PFI scheme at Cambridgeshire County Council;**
- b) **approved the appointment of Peter Lawrence as auditor to the newly-formed Devon and Somerset Fire & Rescue Authority;**
- c) **approved the changes in appointed auditors, as set out in Appendix 1;**
- d) **extended the current scales of fees for limited assurance audits carried out at small bodies under Schedule 1 of the Code of Audit Practice to 2011/12;**
- e) **rejected the request to direct an extraordinary audit at [Section 33];**
- f) **approved the revised Statement of Responsibilities;**
- g) **approved the transfer of our audit contracts from RSM Robson Rhodes to Grant Thornton UK LLP following the merger of the two firms; and**
- h) **noted the other regulatory issues set out in section 4 of the report.**

## Review of Audit Committee Effectiveness

CP 57-07

48. The Audit Committee Chairman presented the final report on the Effectiveness of the Audit Committee, following the spring 2007 review by Ernst & Young. The review had looked at the Audit Committee in ten areas and graded each as green, amber or red to indicate the relative strengths or scope for improvement in those areas. Eight areas had been graded green, and two as amber. The main opportunities for improvement were around establishing more of an anti-fraud culture and having a more robust internal audit function. Management had drawn up a corresponding action plan to address the issues raised in the review which included amending the Committee's Terms of Reference (see item CP 52-07).

49. **The Board noted:**

- a) **the key findings of Ernst & Young's Review of the Audit Committee's Effectiveness; and**
- b) **the corresponding action plan.**

## Minutes of 5 June 2007 and 26 June 2007 Audit Committee meetings

CP 58/59-07

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50. The Board noted the minutes of the 5 June and 26 June 2007 Audit Committee meetings without comment.

51. **The Board received the minutes of the Audit Committee held on 5 June 2007 and 26 June 2007 for information.**

## Minutes of 23 March 2007 NHS Financial Management Advisory Group

CP 60-07

52. The Board noted the minutes of the 23 March 2007 NHS Financial Management Advisory Group meeting without comment.

53. **The Board received the minutes of the 23 March 2007 NHS Financial Management Advisory Group for information.**

## National Study – Charging for Local Public Services

CP 61-07

54. The MD, Policy, Research and Studies and the Director of Studies gave a short presentation to the Board on the emerging findings, key messages and draft recommendations for the national study, *Charging for Local Public Services*. Key findings included that councils could make more of the opportunities that charging provided, and that there were assumptions about the public's attitude toward charging for services, but these were not necessarily accurate. The Board was asked to consider how to present the key messages publicly, and in particular, to what extent the focus should be on the financial opportunities that charging afforded.
55. The Board considered the issues raised in the presentation and commented, as follows:
- There needed to be some straightforward and proper research of public opinion.
  - Language was important: for example the public's attitude would differ greatly toward the idea of being 'taxed', 'charged', or 'subsidising' a public service. It was all about how the charges were marketed. This might be useful when considering the current issue of household waste collection.
  - There were references in general to 'users', but there were other groups to consider.
  - Local government needed a structure of charges to be able to judge better if they were fully exploiting their powers.
  - Benchmarking would be useful to show where the powers were being used to the best effect.
  - In the health sector, equity meant user-charges were not felt to be acceptable. A concrete example of where user-charges would be of benefit would be really useful, for example around leisure services.
  - There had to be an understanding of the true cost of services and therefore the extent of the subsidy.
  - The 'triangle' diagram of how to assess a charging strategy provided a good beginning for presentation. A case study for the various scenarios would be useful. Also, the fact that service charges raised £9.5 billion for English local authorities in 2003/04 was a fairly significant point. It was remarkable that such a large amount had been raised without any real strategic vision.
  - The paper picked up the wider point of the Commission's 1999 study *The Price is Right? We should consider why the original message in this report did not get across, and ensure that in ten years time we wouldn't be in the same situation again with this study. There would be a more scientific and practical focus and therefore a firmer foundation.*
  - Could there be a Use of Resources judgement on whether there was a coherent strategy in place?
  - Could the study make a link to tax recovery in the planning system?

56. **The Board:**
- a) **commented on, and indicated its preferences for handling the key messages and recommendations; and**
  - b) **delegated authority to the Chief Executive to approve the full report for publication.**

### National Study – Competition and Contestability

CP 62-07

57. The MD, Policy, Research and Studies and the Director of Studies gave a short presentation to the Board on the emerging findings, key messages and draft recommendations for the national study on competition and contestability in public services. The key findings included that market mechanisms were an important tool in improving service quality and delivering increased value for money, but there were limits to the gains that could be secured, and competition and contestability worked best when certain conditions were in place.
58. A team from Cardiff University had generated the majority of the research for this study. Although further research in this area was an option, the Commission planned to publish the report simultaneously with Cardiff University's research findings in October 2007, in order to prepare accompanying guidance on the effective use of competition and contestability. This would align the Commission with CLG's forthcoming statutory guidance and associated National Improvement Strategy in 2008.
59. The Board considered the issues set out in the presentation and commented, as follows:
- a) Was there any cross over with the *Back Office to Front Line* work around lack of skills and procurement in small areas?
  - b) The findings had shown that there was a need for an informed client – this needed time and influences on understanding and culture, as well as tools.
  - c) There was a need for information that was specifically suitable for monitoring contracts.
  - d) A more general point that we should consider asking of all our studies was to what extent did the study impact on our strategic objectives?
  - e) There appeared to be a theme of sorts to a lot of our studies around creating the right kind of market and associated skill set development. The theme of commissioning might well be revisited several times over the next year.
  - f) Perhaps **we could give some thought on developing a workshop for commissioners and feedback for suppliers.**
  - g) If the Cardiff research was published separately, the worst scenario would be that there was a difference in emphasis, rather than fundamentally different conclusions.

60. **The Board:**
- a) **commented on the emerging key messages; and**
  - b) **delegated authority to the Chief Executive to approve final outputs.**

### National Study – Strategic Service Partnerships

CP 63-07

61. The MD, Policy, Research and Studies and the Director of Studies gave a short presentation to the Board on the emerging findings, key messages and draft recommendations for the national study on strategic service-delivery partnerships (SSPs). The study had found that whilst SSPs between councils and private contractors could deliver real benefits, they were complex arrangements that could be hard to govern and manage well. Despite some high profile failures, there was a sense of general optimism, and the Board was asked to consider in light of this, how sceptical we should be in

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presenting the findings.

62. The Board considered the issues set out in the presentation and commented, as follows:

**[Section 36(2)(b)(ii)]**

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63. There needed to be some thought on the order that the studies were released. On a more general point, the depth and length of the discussions on the studies at this meeting had been helpful, and this was the kind of presentational approach that we should try and take for all studies and reports. However, it was worth bearing in mind that in future there would be more Board members.

64. **The Board:**

- a) **commented on the content and handling of the draft key messages;**
- b) **delegated authority to the Chief Executive to approve the full report for publication; and**
- c) **noted the risks and their mitigation as set out in section 6 of the report.**

## Chairman's Speaking Engagements / Information Bulletin

CP 64/65-07

65. The Board noted the Chairman's speaking engagements and the Information Bulletin without comment.

66. **The Board received the Chairman's speaking engagements for information.**

## Any Other Business

Verbal

67. The Chief Executive announced that interviews for the Director, Northern Region had taken place the previous day and he was hopeful that an announcement on the appointment would be made in the next few days.

*[Secretary's note: Mark Fletcher was named as the new Director, Northern Region on Tuesday 31 July]*

Date & Venue of Next Meeting:

68. The next Board meeting and Away day would be held on 13 & 14 September 2007, at 42 The Calls, Leeds.

**Siobhan O'Donoghue**  
**August 2007**