

# The Electoral Commission

## Minutes of the Executive Team meeting

14 May 2009

Present:

Peter Wardle (PW) (Chair)	Chief Executive
Clare Ettinghausen (CE)	Deputy Chief Executive
Carolyn Hughes (CH)	Director of Finance and Corporate Services
Lisa Klein (LK)	Director of Party and Election Finance
Stephen Rooney (SR)	Director of Communication
Andrew Scallan (AS)	Director of Electoral Administration and Boundaries

In attendance:

Louisa Parry (LP)	Strategy and Planning Manager (For Item 2)
Helen Reeves (HR)	Head of Human Resources ((for Items 3 and 4)
Donna Huggett ((DH)	Internal Communications Officer (For Item 3)
Katharine Sparrow (KS)	Minutes

### 1. Apologies

1.1 There were no apologies

### 2. Operating Plan – review of April

- 2.1 Executive Team reviewed the Operating Plan. LP said Management Team had updated the Operating Plan, but some detail still needed to be added. This was due to a mix of the information not yet being known, staff getting used to the new management tool and staff finding the time to update the Plan.
- 2.2 Executive Team supported LP's suggestion that for the first few months could hold meetings with Management Team members to help them update the plan.
- 2.3 LP reminded Executive Team that for the Operating Plan to be useful it should be used in all their regular one to one meetings.
- 2.4 For the May update PW requested that Directors come ready to give highlights/concerns in their areas of work. PW said he intended the Plan to form part of his regular update meetings and said Directors should also use it with Managers.

### **3. Staff Focus Group/Times 100 survey – update and how to move forward**

- 3.1 HR thought overall the comments from the staff focus groups were positive, but there were a number of learning points to be picked up.
- 3.2 Executive Team reviewed the proposed action plan. HR said there was a clear message from staff that they wanted to see more of senior managers; Executive Team discussed different approaches to this.
- 3.3 Around the themes of delegation and empowerment PW said would like to hold a briefing session for those that write letters, reports and PQs. Executive Team would also encourage staff to talk to PW and Jenny Watson before they started drafting reports.
- 3.4 Executive Team discussed situations where it might be appropriate for Management Team members to deputise for them.
- 3.5 Executive Team discussed communication and the cascade of information. PW said he would re-launch his monthly memo. Executive Team agreed to implement a more formal cascade system; they agreed that Directors would update their Heads by Friday afternoon on outcomes from Executive Team meetings. Heads would then be encouraged to cascade information down to their team members.
- 3.6 Executive Team agreed the Focus Group report should be published on the intranet. They thought existing groups should be used to take forward action plan.

### **4. Accommodation update**

- 4.1 HR updated Executive Team on the findings of the accommodation questionnaire and space survey.
- 4.2 Staff had indicated they would like more flexible working. HR said Flexibility suggest that team based desk sharing could reduce the space needed by 80% of the head count. LK noted that the reaction in her team was quite negative to increased home working. HR agreed that it would need a complete change in the cultural of the organisation for it to work successfully.
- 4.4 Executive Team discussed wider issues around an accommodation move.

### **5. Issues for June Board meeting**

- 5.1 Executive Team reviewed the items on the June Board agenda. They agreed to discuss the Commission of the Future Board paper at the next

meeting.

**6. Priorities**

- 6.1 Jenny Watson would attend the Executive Team meeting on 11 June. This meeting could be used to discuss priorities as well as working with the Chair. Colleagues should continue to review their operating plan and start to put budget numbers against activities for the discussion on 11.

**8. Any other business**

- 8.1 There was no other business.



# The Electoral Commission

## Minutes of the Executive Team meeting

21 May 2009

Present:

Clare Ettinghausen (CE) (Chair)	Deputy Chief Executive
Carolyn Hughes (CH)	Director of Finance and Corporate Services
Lisa Klein (LK)	Director of Party and Election Finance
Stephen Rooney (SR)	Director of Communication
Andrew Scallan (AS)	Director of Electoral Administration and Boundaries

In attendance:

Louisa Parry (LP)	Strategy and Planning Manager (For Item 2)
James Haddon (JH)	Senior Project Officer (for Item 2)
Katharine Sparrow (KS)	Minutes

1. **Apologies**

1.1 Apologies were received from Peter Wardle.

2. **Risk**

2.1 Executive Team reviewed the Commission wide Risk Report. LP said the Strategic Risk Register had been updated following a meeting with PW. It was still missing some information which would need to be added before the report went to the Audit Committee meeting on 1 July.

2.2 Executive Team reviewed the Strategic Risk Register. A number of amendments were agreed.

2.3 Executive Team reviewed the Corporate Risk Register. LP highlighted there were three new or amended risks and four changes to status for existing risks.

2.4 **Action**

Executive Team to make updates to the Strategic Risk Register where necessary by 11 June.

2.5 Going forward Executive Team agreed to move to a quarterly reporting of risk.

## **2. Capital Programme Board update**

- 2.1 Executive Team reviewed the Report from the Capital Programme Board.
- 2.2 Executive Team **approved** the Business Case for GIS.
- 2.3 Executive Team noted the updates for the ongoing capital projects. LK updated Executive Team on PEF On-line.
- 2.4 CH updated Executive Team on the roll out of the new Finance system.
- 2.5 Executive Team reviewed the budget for the Capital Plan going forward.

## **2. Commission of the Future Board paper**

- 2.3 Executive Team discussed the draft presentation for the Board meeting on 10 June.

## **2. Any other business**

- 2.5 Committee on Standards in Public Life – call for evidence  
CE noted a draft response to the CSPL call for evidence had been drawn up. Executive Team were generally happy with the direction the response was taking.
- 2.6 Peter's meetings  
KS updated Executive Team on the different meetings Peter had asked to be scheduled over the coming weeks. She would circulate a list of all the meetings; if any Executive Team members or members of their Team had not been specifically invited but they thought it would be useful they were welcome to attend.
- 2.7 Special Bonus nomination  
Executive Team reviewed the Special Bonus nomination held over from a previous meeting. It was agreed the paper work would be reviewed and resubmitted to Executive Team.
- 2.8 Pay negotiations  
CH updated Executive Team on the first pay negotiation meeting held the previous day.
- 2.9 Executive Team development  
CH said Natalie Sayer was trying to put together a development plan for Executive Team and asked for any ideas of what they might want to see included. Executive Team identified a couple of possible topics, but noted there was a difference between personal needs and needs as a Team.
- 2.10 Eleanor Laing

SR and AS updated Executive Team on a meeting they had with Eleanor Laing.

2.11 Stockholm conference

LK updated Executive team on the conference she had recently attended in Stockholm.

2.12 Ministry of Justice

CE updated Executive Team on a meeting she had recently at Ministry of Justice to discuss their planning



# The Electoral Commission

## Minutes of the Executive Team meeting

Clearing Board Papers

28 May 2009

Present:

Peter Wardle (PW) (Chair)	Chief Executive
Clare Ettinghausen (CE)	Deputy Chief Executive
Lisa Klein (LK)	Director of Party and Election Finance
Stephen Rooney (SR)	Director of Communication
Andrew Scallan (AS)	Director of Electoral Administration and Boundaries

In attendance:

Katharine Sparrow (KS)	Minutes
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### 1. Apologies

1.1 Apologies were received from Carolyn Hughes.

### 2. Draft Board papers for 10 June meeting

#### 2.1 9 June informal meeting

PW updated Executive Team on his attendance at the Commissioners informal meeting the previous day, where they had been looking at governance issues.

#### 2.2 Minutes

Executive Team reviewed the minutes.

#### 2.3 Chair's Report

Executive Team reviewed the Chair's Report.

#### 2.4 Report from the Executive Team

Executive Team reviewed the Report; it was noted it still needed to be updated in some areas.

#### 2.5 Directions for electoral reviews – Stoke

Executive Team reviewed the Report. PW suggested some additional information on the referendum in Stoke and the transition board should be included. He also suggested the communication plan be reviewed.

- 2.6 Commission's role at referendums  
Executive Team reviewed the Report. It was suggested some additional information needed to be included and some amendments made.
- 2.7 Devolution – 10 year on  
Executive Team reviewed the Report. Some amendments were suggested and PW said thought needed to be given to what was needed from the discussion with Commissioners.
- 2.8 Realignment of areas of work in the Northern Ireland Office  
Executive Team reviewed the Report. PW suggested some amendments.
- 2.9 Electoral Commission of the Future  
Executive Team reviewed the presentation.

### **3. Priorities**

- 3.1 Executive Team had a further discussion on priorities. LK said some decisions needed to be taken sooner rather than later as it could have an impact on her Directorate's ability to deliver against their current objectives. It was agreed this would be revisited at the following week's meeting when CH had returned from leave.

### **4. Any other business**

- 4.1 Annual Report  
SR said the Annual Report was progressing well and it was shortly due to be sent to Commissioners for comment; he would also copy it to Executive Team at that time. Any comments that needed further discussion would be brought to a future Executive Team meeting.
- 4.2 Risk Report  
Executive Team were reminded they had until 11 June to make the necessary amendments to the strategic risk register.