

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CHIEF OFFICER GROUP,
HELD ON TUESDAY 8 APRIL 2014 AT 10.00 AM
IN THE KING ORRY ROOM, CABINET OFFICE, GOVERNMENT OFFICE**

Present: Mr W Greenhow, Chief Secretary, Cabinet Office
Prof R Barr, Chief Executive, Department of Education and Children
Mr C Corlett, Chief Executive, Department of Economic Development
Mr R Lole, Chief Executive, Department of Environment, Food and Agriculture
Mr C Kniveton, Acting Chief Executive, Department of Health and Social Care
Mr M Kelly, Chief Executive, Department of Home Affairs
Mr N Black, Chief Executive, Department of Infrastructure
Mr J Callister, Chief Officer, Office of Human Resources, Cabinet Office

In attendance Mr D Davies, Director of Business Change and Reform, CO
Mrs A Martin, Chief Operating Officer, Attorney General's Chambers
Ms C Hunter, Head of Communications, CO
Ms J D Hetherington, Assistant to the Chief Secretary, CO

040/14 MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF 18 MARCH 2014

Having been previously circulated, the minutes of the meeting of 18 March 2014 were agreed and signed by the Chief Secretary.

041/14 MATTERS ARISING

a) Consultation on 14-16 qualification reform

Minute 038/14c

The Chief Executive Officer, Department of Education and Children advised that there had been 97 responses to its 14-16 qualification reform consultation in the first 48hrs of publication. The Group noted that this level of response was very encouraging and should support the collection of a meaningful sample of responses.

The Group also noted that the Department was due to meet with members of the Chamber of Commerce. Following discussion, the Group agreed that the consultation was a very good example of Government actively seeking the views of the public and other key stakeholders by asking the critical question: "*What do you want?*".

Mr C Randall, Chief Internal Auditor, joined the meeting for the following item.

042/14 OUTPUT FROM COST IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMME

Paper 005a/14

The Chief Internal Auditor presented an amended Cost Improvement Programme paper to the Group, following initial consideration at the meeting of 18 March 2014 (Minute 032/14 refers).

Following discussion, the Group considered recommendations for the next three steps of the Programme, which were categorised as follows:

- Cost Improvement Approach Framework
- Project Advisors
- Cost Improvement Assessments

The Group welcomed the guidance and support being offered to Departments as part of the Programme and agreed the recommendations therein. The Group also agreed that it should provide feedback and direction to the Chief Internal Auditor in terms of the prioritisation of work, in order to ensure compliance with the Government's strategic imperatives (i.e. Protecting the Vulnerable; Balancing the Budget; Growing the Economy).

Mr Randall left the meeting

043/14 MODERNISATION OF GOVERNMENT

The Chief Secretary and Acting Chief Executive of the Department of Health and Social Care provided updates on the progress of measures to modernise Government.

Following discussion, it was agreed that Departmental presentations should be made to the Group which focus on future plans and strategies. It was agreed that the Department of Economic Development would provide a further update on its "Vision 2020" programme and the Department of Infrastructure would provide detail of its vision for 2050 to the Group

044/14 "HAVE YOUR SAY" EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT SURVEY

The Director of Business Change and Reform advised that the "Have Your Say" employee engagement survey had closed on 21 March 2014 and feedback was 38%.

During discussion, it was noted that there were significant differences in feedback levels amongst employment groups, with Civil Servants providing the highest response rate. It was also noted that a full and detailed analysis of results would be presented to Chief Officers on 20 May 2014.

045/14 MINISTERIAL CAPACITY BUILDING PROGRAMME

The Chief Secretary advised that the Ministerial Capacity Building Programme was progressing well and supported a constructive, cross-Departmental working environment for the Council of Ministers and Chief Officers.

046/14 GOVERNMENT REFORM

The Group noted that the guidelines for the provision of Government car parking places to staff was to be reissued by the Cabinet Office.

047/14 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

a) Mutually Agreed Resignation Scheme (MARS)

The Group noted that Prospect had made representations to Government to launch MARS more broadly. It was further noted that the overall scheme was currently under review by the Office of Human Resources and Chief Officers would be consulted further.

b) "Managing Change" pilot – Department of Infrastructure (DoI)

The Group noted that the DoI would be piloting a "Managing Change" scheme which would focus on the following three keys areas:

- Individual resilience;
- Mental health of staff; and
- Change management

c) Financial savings agreed between Departments

The Group noted that any outstanding financial savings which had been agreed between Departments should be actioned as soon as possible, with refunds made to the DoI.

048/14 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

10.00am, Tuesday 13 May 2014, King Orry Room, Cabinet Office.

W. Alow
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Chief Secretary
13/5/14
.....
Date

