**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE JOINT MANAGEMENT BOARD**

**Meeting held in Dover House, on 28 October 2014 commencing at 14.00**

Secretary of State (Chair)

Parliamentary Under Secretary of State

Advocate General

Alun Evans (Principal Accounting Officer)

Michael Chalmers

Glenn Preston

Ruaraidh Macniven

John Aldridge

Edward Adams

**Item 1: Introduction & apologies**

1. Apologies for absence: Margaret Porteous.

1. The Secretary of State noted that this was John Aldridge’s final meeting as a non-executive member of the Board. Mr Aldridge had served on the Audit Committee, and latterly the Joint Management Board, for eight years. The Offices were greatly in his debt for his wise counsel and meticulous attention to their best interests. He would be much missed.

**Item 2: Minutes of the meeting of 12 November 2013 and matters arising**

1. The minutes were agreed as an accurate record of the previous meeting, subject to one amendment. There were no matters arising requiring further action.

**Item 3: Offices’ strategy and current policy**

1. Alun Evans reported that since the board last met the referendum had concluded and the Offices had commenced work on supporting the Smith Commission. HMG had provided a factual analysis of the five political parties’ proposals and was studying the submissions from different stakeholders. Lord Smith would report on 27 November and draft clauses would be prepared by 25 January for a Bill to be introduced after the General Election.
2. Michael Chalmers reported that OAG was preparing departmental legal advisers for the work they would have to undertake at very short notice on the draft clauses.
3. The Secretary of State noted that the Offices were raising awareness in other departments of the nature of the commitment the three pro-UK party leaders had made to legislate for the Smith Commission heads of agreement.

**Item 4: Future direction of the Scotland Office**

1. The Board reviewed proposals for changing the way that the Scotland Office functions and relates to other departments and agreed that officials should take them forward.
2. The non-executive board members noted that the devolution settlement was little understood in Scotland and that the UK Government would need to communicate a coherent narrative of its functions in and in relation to Scotland.

**Item 5: Finance report**

1. The Board reviewed the Offices’ prospective outturn for 2014-15, the implications of its provision for 2015-16, and the management of the Offices’ leasehold property.

**Item 5: Monitoring Scotland Office performance**

1. The Board reviewed the Scotland Office’s performance in respect of the measures relating to correspondence, PQ answers, FOI requests and invoices. The Board noted that performance was broadly satisfactory. The Board agreed to keep under review the question of whether or not additional performance measurements should be devised.

**Item 6: Any other business and date of next meeting**

1. The Secretary of State reiterated his gratitude to John Aldridge for his long and invaluable service to the Offices. John Aldridge thanked the Offices’ staff for their work in supporting him during his time on the Audit Committee and the Board.
2. It was reported that Edward Adams has kindly agreed to become chairman of the Audit Committee and to continue to serve on the Board. The Offices would advertise for new non-executives members on the public appointments website.
3. The next meeting of the Board would be held before the end of the financial year.