

OFFICIAL SENSITIVE

MANAGEMENT BOARD (MB) POLICY MEETING MINUTES – 21.10.14

DATE: Tuesday 21st October **TIME:** 10:00 am **LOCATION:** G18

ATTENDEES: Richard Sanders, Acting Chief Executive (RS)
Sarah Glasspool, Director, Finance (SMG)
Jo Symons, Director, Director, Change & Development (JS)
Richard Frewin, Director, Enforcement (RF)
Paul Dixon, Director, Certification Services (PRD)
Lynnette Falk, Director, Regulation (LF)
David Barrett, Head of HR (DB)
Tania Raynor, Executive PA and Secretariat (TR)

Please note actions appear in **BLUE**

1. **Apologies for Absence/Substitutions:** Robert Gunn, Director, Programmes & Estate (RG)
2. **Minutes of the last meeting (24.9.14)**

The minutes of the last meeting were approved with one typo amendment to the penultimate action in the Action table: **Change “auctioned” to “actioned”.** (TR, October). This action had been completed immediately after the previous meeting.
3. **Matters/Actions Arising from Minutes of Last Meeting**

All actions were reviewed and the following comments were noted:

 - DB confirmed that the action regarding Line Manager training on the updated Probation Policy and Probation Procedure had been discharged with a session arranged for 23 10 14.
 - SMG confirmed that the Comprehensive Disposals policy had been electronically circulated to the Management Board for comment. No further amendments had been suggested and the policy had been published on the new QMS.
 - NMO had now formally responded to the XDIAS Business Continuity Management Letter, accepting all the recommendations therein. Now that a disposal had been made, the completion of quite a few actions that had emerged from the XDIAS internal audit recommendations had been triggered. **Forward RS action status update prior to the Audit Committee in early November (SMG, October).**
 - DB and the SFG Chair had liaised regarding how to strengthen internal processes to encourage staff to discuss concerns direct with NMO Management. However, more work needed to be done. **Report back to the MB once Staff Focus Group (SFG) opinion had been gauged (DB, October).**
 - DB confirmed that NMO's Whistle-Blowing Policy was up to date and had been published on the intranet.
 - The opportunity to represent NMO as a wider Equality and Diversity champion, to work with DB & RS to deliver the voice of staff had been opened up to all staff via email. Responses were asked for by end October and interest had been generated.
 - The following action remained open: **Establish consistency meeting with Line Managers to discuss the suitability and consistency of objective setting (DB, November)**
 - **Incorporate the following wording changes to the NMO Enforcement Accommodation paper (RF, November):**
 - **Replace the text on the title page of the document with something more appropriate**
 - **Amend bullet point 6 on page 2 Amend bullet point 6 on page 3**
4. **Draft ToRs for Management Board Operational Meeting and for the Management Board Policy Meeting**
 - The Draft Terms of Reference for both meetings were reviewed in detail and some wording amendments were agreed by the Board and noted for redraft. Incorporate changes and publish on Intranet (RS, November)

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- There was also discussion about the Head of HR attending the meetings, and whether this should be a standing invitation or part of the official meeting constitution. Most agreed that not only was the Head of HR's attendance very helpful, but also sent the right message to staff, that staff were represented and staff issues were being addressed with adherence to the correct procedures.

5. Paid Special Leave

- Following a number of recent social sporting events that staff had wished to attend, there appeared to be some ambiguity surrounding the granting of special leave. Thus, the need for clarity had been identified. Previously, DB had advised Managers not to grant special leave for such occasions, but to advise staff that they should take annual leave should they wish to attend. Following continued media interest, DB now sought the Board's agreement on a transparent and consistent Agency approach.
- RS thought that participation in the BIS Annual Sports Day could be approved on request as this was in line with current departmental policy, but that granting paid special leave to participate in other events presented a reputational risk to the Agency and the wider civil service as it was not an acceptable use of public money. All agreed that Special Leave could be granted for the BIS sports day.
- SMG was aware that some staff were involved in many Civil Service sporting activities and that the Agency should be mindful of fairness to those that did not attend such events.
- RF was concerned about conflicts with direct mailing from Minerva (the BIS Sports Club), who assume that all the Department's Executive Agencies follow BIS rules.
- PRD commented that Special Leave should be applied for and not presumed and this should be made very clear in the Agency policy.
- It was agreed that the two existing Agency Policies required updating to reflect the comments made that day. **Redraft and circulate for MB approval prior to publishing on the intranet (DB, Oct/Nov)**

Special Leave (with or without pay)

- **Consider including in the Special Leave Guidance, a reference to the policy regarding special leave for carers (DB, Oct/Nov)**

6. HR Policy Documents

Draft NMO Promotion Policy

- DB explained that he received many queries from staff who thought that they might be entitled to an in-situ promotion. It also appeared that clarity was needed regarding external recruitment at Stage 4. DB confirmed that one had to have been in a post for twelve months, and had to have completed probation, prior to applying for promotion. It was considered beneficial to the Agency to achieve a good return on the investment made in training new staff, and there was a reasonable expectation that a recruit should be required to stay within the post for two years prior to level transfer. However, it was important to be aware that this could have engagement implications.

It could be frustrating for Managers to invest much time in training a member of staff, only for the trainee to leave the organisation relatively quickly for higher pay or a more senior role. RS was keen to communicate that the Agency was prepared to invest much in the training of its staff, but with the expectation that staff remain within the post for a mandatory period. The Board agreed that this period should be increased from 12 to 18 months not including probation. **Amend policy accordingly (DB, October)**

- LF asked for clarity on whether one would have to advertise externally if the scope of a particular role had significantly broadened, and the staff in that post had increased expertise and extensive knowledge.
- JS said alternatively we should focus on our efforts to improve retention and said that NMO should really emphasise the opportunities within the organisation, and look at rotation as a counter balance. DB agreed there was a need to promote internal development procedures and long-term career paths & engagement strategies.

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- *Confirm whether posts advertised on CS Jobs at Stage 1 could also be viewed by staff at BIS, IPO, Insolvency Service, and UKTI as a reciprocal arrangement (DB, Oct/November)*
- *Redraft NMO Promotion Policy and circulate electronically to the MB for sign-off (DB, Oct/Nov)*

The Civil Service Compensation Fund Executive Summary

This document was enclosed for information. It was emphasised that there was no expectation of redundancies. However, given the turbulent landscape, it was important to demonstrate to enquiring staff that NMO had a clear process in place.

Draft NMO Restructuring Policy

- Again, although no redundancies were anticipated, this document had been redrafted to ensure the Agency was well prepared for every eventuality and in the interests of transparency and communicating well.
 - BIS were currently still drafting their policy and thus, there was no template or checklist to which to refer. Nevertheless, statutory requirements had been reflected therein, and the Union had had the opportunity to review and comment prior to that meeting.
 - SMG asked for clarification regarding redundancy approvals.
 - *Incorporate changes/comments (including job-share information) and resend to the Steering Board for comment, prior to recirculation to the Management Board for endorsement. (DB, November)*
 - *Publish on the intranet accordingly (DB, November)*
7. **Five Case Model Template – Refurbishment Business Case for CIG & Discounted Cash Flow**
- This paper would normally have gone through the Capital Investment Group prior to the Management Board. However, immediate progress for this laboratory refurbishment business case would be beneficial in order to resolve health and safety risk and ensure the labs were appropriate for continuing the NMS work safely, and because there was an opportunity to address some of the delay in the current capital spend. Failure to deliver this work would have funding implications for the Agency.
 - SMG said she had reviewed the business case in depth and agreed that from a financial viewpoint it was prudent to carry out the repairs soonest. SMG was content that the business case followed procedure and would forward it to NAO for scrutiny.
 - RF and JS agreed that it was important to start works immediately, but questioned the emphasis of the business case. SMG explained that Paul Broadbent had investigated all alternatives extensively. But, it was difficult to quantify H&S risks financially. Care had been taken not to mislead the Board in the absence of robust/concise figures.
 - The Board debated the pros and cons of trying to add an accurate sum, but recognised that there would be an absence of firm evidence to support this.
 - The Board approved the business case recommendations.
10. **AOB**
- DB reported that one Government Department was offering a property deposit loan scheme for its staff and thought NMO should consider running a similar scheme. *Produce paper for November Management Board Policy Meeting regarding the same (DB, November).*
 - Following a recent Enforcement recruitment campaign, offers had been made to four candidates for November or January start dates.
 - RS explained that NMO would be participating in the BIS festival for Partner Organisations on Tuesday 4th November. The Agency would have a ten minute slot in which to present NMO to others within the BIS family to raise our profile within BIS. RS asked the Directors to support their staff who were participating in the event.
 - *Put IIP Report on the Management Board Policy Meeting agenda the following month (TR, November)*
8. **Date of Next meeting: *Wednesday 26th November 2014***

Action List

Date of Meeting	Action	Action Officer	Date	Progress	Status
24.6.14	Establish Management briefing/training session on updated Probation Policy and Probation Procedure	DB	Sept	DB confirmed that this action had been discharged with a session arranged for 23 10 14.	Closed
24.6.14	- Send comments back to SMG regarding the Comprehensive Disposals Policy	MB	Oct	SMG confirmed that this had been electronically circulated to the MB for comment. No further amendments had been suggested and the policy had been published on the new QMS.	Closed
	- Publish the above policy on new QMS	SMG/PRD	Sept Ongoing		Closed
	- Complete XDIAS Disposals audit recommendations and review status of actions next month	SMG/RF	Nov	Now that a disposal had been made, the completion of quite a few actions that had emerged from the XDIAS internal audit recommendations had been triggered.	Open
	- Forward RS action status update prior to the Audit Committee in early November	SMG/RF	Oct/Nov		Open
24.6.14	- Liaise with SFG Chair and ask SFG to consider how the Management Board could strengthen internal processes to encourage staff to discuss concerns direct with NMO management.	DB	Nov	- There was discussion about this and it was agreed that SFG Chair would gauge the opinion of the SFG and report back	Open
	- Devise note on new Whistle Blowing Policy being rolled out by BIS, mentioning the above issue	DB	Oct	- DB agreed to forward this policy to SJ for comment by the SFG	Closed
24.9.14	<u>Equality and Diversity Guidance:</u> Open up to all staff the opportunity to represent NMO as a wider Equality and Diversity champion, to work with DB & RS to deliver the voice of staff.	Managers	Sept	The opportunity to represent NMO as a wider Equality and Diversity champion, to work with DB & RS to deliver the voice of staff had been opened up to all staff via email. Responses were asked for by end October and interest had been generated.	Closed
24.9.14	Make the following change to the guidance on managing and authorising staff travel and inform all staff noting this change to the procedure : "Until further notice, domestic flights will require prior approval from the CE in line with BIS Greening Govt. Commitments"	SMG	Oct		Closed
24.9.14	PDS Guidance: • Link the Performance Management Procedure to the Guidance as an Annex 4 and also provide direct link • Establish consistency meeting with Line Managers to discuss the suitability and consistency of objective setting some of the SFG recommendations	DB	Sept		Closed
		DB	Nov		Open
24.9.14	<u>NMO Accommodation</u> Incorporate the following wording changes to the NMO Enforcement Accommodation paper: ○ Replace the text on the title page of the document with something more appropriate ○ Amend bullet point 6 on page 2 ○ Amend bullet point 6 on page 3	RF	Nov		Open

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21.10.14	<p>Paid Special Leave Redraft Policy and circulate for MB approval prior to publishing on the intranet Special Leave (with or without pay) Consider including in the Special Leave Guidance, a reference to the policy regarding special leave for carers Draft NMO Promotion Policy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Board agreed that this period should be increased from 12 to 18 months not including probation. Amend policy accordingly. • Confirm whether posts advertised on CS Jobs at Stage 1 could also be viewed by staff at BIS, IPO, Insolvency Service, and UKTI as a reciprocal arrangement. • Redraft NMO Promotion Policy and circulate electronically to the MB for sign-off. <p>Draft NMO Restructuring Policy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incorporate changes/comments (including job-share information) and resend to the Steering Board for comment, prior to recirculation to the Management Board for endorsement. • Publish on the intranet accordingly. 	DB	Oct/Nov		Open
21.10.14	Produce paper for November Management Board Policy Meeting on a Property Deposit Loan Scheme for Rental Purposes.	DB	Nov		Open
21.10.14	Put IIP Report on the Management Board Policy Meeting agenda the following month.	TR	Nov		Open