

Management Board

Parliamentary Programme and Project Assurance

Paper by the Head of the Office of the Chief Executive

Purpose

1. This paper re-presents to the Board a paper from the Parliamentary Programme and Project Assurance Steering Group originally submitted for consideration in February 2010, but which was not considered owing to lack of time. The paper is largely informative but seeks decisions from the two Management Boards. Also attached for information is the PPPA's annual report for 2010.

Matters for decision

2. The Board is invited to:
 - (a) Formally recognise the PPPA Steering Group and endorse its Terms of Reference (annex 1 to the attached paper)
 - (b) Endorse the requirement for reviewer commitment to two reviews a year (para 7)
 - (c) Recognise and endorse the target figure of 30 OGC reviewers (para 8).
 - (d) Agree either to accept the recommendation for the PPPA team to be based in the Office of the Chief Executive (para 6) or to leave it in current position
 - (e) Take note of the PPPA annual report for 2010 (annex 2 to the attached paper).

Consultation

3. The House of Lords Management Board *agreed* to the recommendations in the paper in February this year.

Background

4. The attached paper was sent to the Board in February this year with a recommendation from the then-Head of OCE that the Board:
 - agree that Gateway reviewers should be required to commit to carry out at least two reviews a year
 - endorse the target of 30 accredited reviewers across Parliament
 - Encourage staff to undertake this commitment
 - Defer consideration of the other recommendations until wider questions about the future of project and programme governance, and future departmental structures, have been resolved.

5. During 2010, a programme of training and accreditation in partnership with the Office of Government Commerce (OGC) has increased Parliament's pool of accredited reviewer resources from three to 16, and a further 13 have been trained but not yet accredited. We are therefore on track to reach 29 accredited reviewers and it would be helpful for the Board to endorse the target of 30, as the Lords MB has done.
6. The team has completed 13 reviews since November 2009 and three more are due to complete by the end of 2010. Full details are available in the PPPA's annual report.
7. The PPPA consists of two staff, the Head of Parliamentary Programme and Project Assurance and an administrative assistant. It sits outside the departmental structure of both Houses and is funded from top-slicing of programme budgets. The Head of PPPA is line-managed from within PICT. When the paper was first circulated to the Board, concern was expressed that the Lords might not wish to move the PPA's governance into a Commons-only department. The Lords Management Board subsequently agreed to the proposed change. In practice, the main substantive change would be a change of line management for the head of PPPA. There is some synergy between the assurance work already done within OCE (e.g. internal audit) and that of the PPPA. OCE would seek to build on this regardless of what decision is taken on the structural issue, but it would be easier to do so if PPPA were transferred into OCE. The move would not affect the OCE's budget as the current funding arrangement would remain in place.
8. Since the paper was submitted in January, the Board and Commission have agreed to the creation of separate Departments of Finance and of Human Resources and Change. The idea of a separate Project Office has been mooted but not proceeded with. There may be arguments for including the PPPA in the DHRC in the longer term, but the exact remit and functions of that department are not yet clear. The OCE already has a role in providing other forms of assurance; hence the argument for the PPPA to sit with the OCE function. A decision to move the PPPA anywhere other than the OCE would require fresh agreement from the Lords MB.
9. It would be very helpful for the PPPA team, and the current line manager of the Head of PPPA, to have some certainty about their position in the organisation, given that the steering group made this recommendation 10 months ago.

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