

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 December 2010 Board, as one decision about the Parliamentary Programme and Project Assurance (PPPA) team was deferred from that meeting.

Matter for decision

2. The Board is invited, in the light of its further discussion of the remit of the new Department for HR and Change, to decide whether the PPPA team should be based in the Office of the Chief Executive, be moved elsewhere, or remain with PICT (para 8).

Background

3. The Board discussed this issue at its meeting in December 2010, when it considered a paper from the Parliamentary Programme and Project Assurance Steering Group, which had been deferred from the February 2010 Board meeting. (The paper is annexed.) The Group recommended that the PPPA team should sit with the OCE. The Lords Management Board agreed last year to the proposed move to the OCE; a decision to move the PPPA anywhere other than the OCE would require fresh agreement from the Lords Management Board.
4. At the December Board meeting, the following points were made:
 - It was not good practice to have an assurance function sitting within the department to which it was providing assurance
 - It was not sensible for the team to continue to be based in PICT
 - It would be best to leave a decision on the team's location to the January Board, when it could be considered in the context of the creation of the new departments of Finance and HR & Change.
5. The Board agreed to reconsider the location of the PPPA team at its meeting in January.
6. 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 currently line-managed from within PICT. In practice, the main substantive change would be a change of line management for the head of PPPA. There is some synergy between the roles of the PPPA and the OCE, which already has a role in providing other forms of assurance (e.g. internal audit). The OCE intends to build on that synergy

whatever the outcome on the structural issue, but it would be easier to do so if the PPPA sat with the OCE. The move would not affect the OCE's budget, as the current funding arrangement would remain in place.

7. Since the Steering Group's paper was first submitted in February 2010, the Board and Commission have agreed to the creation of separate Departments of Finance and of Human Resources and Change (DHRC). The Board will discuss the remit of the new DHRC on 27 January.
8. It would be 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 nearly a year ago.
9. **The Board is invited, in the light of its further discussion of the remit of the new Department for HR and Change, to decide whether the PPPA team should be based in the Office of the Chief Executive, be moved elsewhere, or remain with PICT.**

Matthew Hamlyn
Office of the Chief Executive

January 2011

MANAGEMENT BOARD**Report on the First Meeting of the
Parliamentary Programme and Project Assurance Steering Group**

Name: **Jane Rumsam on behalf of the Steering Group**

Date: **25 January 2010**

Purpose

This paper, which has been prepared for both Houses, summarises the outcomes of the first meeting of the Parliamentary Programme and Project Assurance (PPPA) Steering Group. It is in the main for information but also makes recommendations for the future of the small PPPA team.

The annexes to this paper cover the Terms of Reference for the PPPA Steering Group, a draft known list of Programmes across Parliament, the profile of a Gateway Reviewer and the current list of known Gateway Reviewers, both accredited and non-accredited.

Actions for the Board

The Board of Management is invited to:-

- Recognise the PPPA Steering Group and endorse its Terms of Reference
- Accept the recommendation for the PPPA team to be based in the Office of the Clerk
- Endorse the requirement for reviewer commitment to two reviews a year
- Recognise and endorse the target figure for reviewer numbers

Background

1. Assurance has become an important aspect of programme and project management throughout central civil government. It is intended to assist in the improvement of delivery of programme and projects, on time, within budget and to an acceptable standard of quality. One of the tools used to facilitate this assurance process is the OGC Gateway™ Review process. This process was initially started within Parliament in 2003.
2. In the summer of 2008 a project to revive OGC Gateway™ Reviews, training and liaison with OGC (and other partner organisations) was initiated jointly by PICT and the Commons Department of Resources. By the end of 2008, with the active support of both Houses, the project carried out by Jane Rumsam of PICT had resulted in groups of Parliamentary staff being trained in awareness of Gateway principles and in the conduct of reviews; links had been re-established with OGC and with the Land Registry as a review partner for Parliament; an assessment had been carried out of the volume and scale of projects currently planned for the next few years and their likely requirement

for reviews; and urgent outstanding reviews had been scheduled. As of early 2009 Parliament has 32 trained reviewers, of whom 7 are now OGC-accredited.

3. By the start of the current financial year (09/10), the Financial Directors of both Houses and PICT agreed that it was to the benefit of Parliament to continue with the assurance review. As there was no obvious area that should assume responsibility for this function, Jane Rumsam agreed to take on the role of coordinator as a secondment.
4. The steering group was formed in order to oversee the work of this team and to ensure assurance best practice is adhered to. It also gave the PPAO team a point of escalation (see Annex 1 for the Terms of Reference)

Explanation of Recommendations

5. The Terms of Reference were created to ensure a clear definition of what was required from and to the Steering Group. The main requirement here was support and sponsorship of this function
6. The Steering group met formally for the first time on 5 January 2010 and agreed, in order to provide clarity of employment and reporting lines and provide the necessary accommodation, to recommend to the two Clerks that the function should sit within the Office of the Chief Executive in the House of Commons.
7. One of the issues facing any central civil government department utilising the Gateway process (it is mandatory) is finding the appropriately qualified and accredited reviewers. The practice is to share the gateway reviewer pool across all departments as required. This means that reviews can then guarantee independence and objectivity. OGC expects that accredited reviewers will undertake a minimum of 2 reviews per year. This may be within their own department or if appropriate, at another department. This sharing allows the cost of assurance to be kept to a minimum. Therefore to participate fully, Parliament must also expect and support its reviewers in undertaking these reviews.
8. A list of known programmes has been compiled for which programme and project assurance will be required. Based on the predicted number of reviews required in the forthcoming year it is likely that 2 reviews per month will be carried out. This requires 3 reviewers per review. In order to limit the number of reviews parliamentary staff will be required to undertake the target number of accredited parliamentary reviewers is 30.