

Minutes of the nineteenth meeting

Office for Legal Complaints (OLC) Remuneration & Nomination Committee

Wednesday 30 January 2013 10.30am – 13.00pm

Present:

Rosemary Carter (Chair)
Maureen Vevers (Member)
Margaret Doyle (Member)

In attendance:

Adam Sampson – Chief Ombudsman
Rob Hezel – Chief Operating Officer

The quorum requirements for the meeting were met.

There were no declarations of interest.

Item 1 – Welcome, apologies and conflicts of interest

1. The Chair welcomed those in attendance and noted that the topics under discussion had meant that it was appropriate to limit the attendance of the executive.

Item 2 – Minutes of the previous meeting

2. The minutes of the meeting held of 13 November 2012 were approved for publication subject to some amendments to be made by the Chair.

Item 3 – Matters arising & action points

3. Members noted those items where action had been completed and that others were included as agenda items. It was agreed that succession planning should be an agenda item for the June meeting.
4. The executive reported that the RemCo decision on maternity policy had been reported to the Staff Council, who had understood the rationale. However, the Council had asked that in future any papers prepared by them should come to RemCo in their entirety, together with a commentary from management if appropriate. This was agreed.

ACTIONS

- The Secretary to publish the approved minutes of the meeting held on 13 November 2012, once amended by the Chair.
- A paper on succession planning to come to RemCo in June.
- All papers from the Staff Council for RemCo to come to the meeting in their entirety.

Item 4 - Chair's update

5. There was no Chair's update.

Item 5 – Management changes

6. The COO presented a paper on the changes which had been implemented. The villages had now been created and the office moves completed successfully. The key principle behind the changes was a move from decision making by committee towards individual accountability; as a result, many of the complex decision-making structures were being removed. It was agreed that the manner in which the management team functioned as a group was vital to success. It was therefore important that the terms of reference for that group were correct, and RemCo requested that these were shared with them.
7. Three objectives had been proposed to the organisation: readiness for growth, improvement in delivery, and greater clarity in what was being done. Greater flesh needed to be put on the values, particularly to describe the behaviours expected.
8. The COO also presented the revised responsibilities for his direct reports. Recruitment for the new role of Head of Quality and Knowledge and the vacancy for Head of IT was to begin in a week. It was agreed that in view of the removal of the EMT, RemCo would need to consider whether its role in relation to the approval of senior staff salaries should be revisited. It was agreed that the role of Head of IT was vital in view of the current challenges and it may be necessary to consider the wording of the advert and salary to ensure an adequate response. The COO will send a proposal to RemCo in relation to salary, job description and advert.
9. There was a discussion about the proper placement of E&D. While it was agreed that it was sensible that it be located as part of HR for the current period, this would need to be reviewed.

ACTIONS

- The COO to share terms of reference for Management Group meetings with RemCo.

- The COO to copy to RemCo job descriptions for Head of Knowledge and Quality and Head of IT, together with the proposed advert for Head of IT and any suggested changes to salary.
- RemCo to revisit its terms of reference for approvals of senior management salaries.
- Placement of E&D to be reviewed at a future RemCo meeting.

Item 6 – Ombudsman changes

10. AS reported on the implementation of the planned changes. The Ombudsmen had now been assigned to their new roles, with Charlie Gordon being given responsibility for CMCs and John Norton for Knowledge/Quality. Although there had been no volunteers, this had been entirely consensual. The remaining Ombudsmen would move to their new villages on 4 February and there were promising signs of their response to the new arrangements.
11. The new village structure could only work effectively when the current waiting list for decisions had been dealt with; this was being tackled by the secondment of additional staff to the team. It was likely that the target number of decisions to be done per Ombudsman was eight a week; the Chief Ombudsman was working closely with the Deputy Chief Ombudsman on ensuring this was met. However, there were sickness issues with two Ombudsmen which rendered accurate prediction difficult. The Chief Ombudsman would liaise with the Chair in relation to how the management of the team was working.

ACTION

- The Chief Ombudsman to liaise with RemCo Chair in relation to the management of the Ombudsman team.

Item 7 – PDR update

12. The COO reported that the PDR and pay process had thrown up a number of issues which needed urgent examination and resolution. The process had been challenging for some managers, who had perhaps not been as honest with their staff as they should, and resultant overly high scores produced difficulties. These had had to be moderated down, which had created some unhappiness which again had been exacerbated in some cases by inadequate managerial feedback. There had also been a linked decision not to implement a pay increase for some of the high performers in the manner we had the previous year. The impact of these could be clearly seen in the staff survey result.
13. Our PDR processes, pay approach and management competence need examining. The pay and PDR review were being led by HR; the staff survey was being discussed with management team on Thurs. The results of review would come to RemCo in June.

ACTION

- COO to bring the report of the PDR and pay review to June RemCo meeting.
- COO to bring the results of the staff survey to the March RemCo meeting.

Item 8 – Recruitment report

14. A paper was presented by the COO. Among the positives was the fact that there were now clear data which had been properly analysed, and that some actions had been identified. However, it was fair to say that the actions taken up to this point had perhaps been limited in impact; nevertheless, it was also fair to say that HR was beginning to improve its response in this area. The fact that this was a more coherent and useful report than previously was a good example of positive impact of sitting E&D in HR. It was agreed that we needed to look again at the aspirational figures we used to measure success and at the way we publicly present our commitment to E&D. It may be that we needed to re-examine our approach to recruitment more generally now that the organisation was more fully established. There will be an update on plans for recruitment in March given the potential timetable for CMCs.

ACTIONS

- A further update on recruitment plans to be presented at the March meeting.

Item 9 AOB

15. The COO asked RemCo to approve a pay increase for the Head of Operations following their PDR score. After discussion, an increase in line with organisational policy was agreed. However, it was emphasised that in future such requests should be made with a formal paper attached.

ACTIONS

- Requests for approval to senior salary increases should have papers in support.

16. The next meeting will be held on 12 March 2013 at 11.30 am at Baskerville House, Birmingham

Adam Sampson
CEO
31 January 2013