

STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP BOARD MEETING – 15 AUGUST 2007

ESTABLISHMENT OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT MODERNISATION SUB-GROUPS

AGENDA ITEM: 5

SUMMARY: **Setting out proposals on the Terms of Reference and Standing Orders for the establishment of the two Local Government Modernisation Sub-Groups.**

ACTION REQUIRED: **Agreement on Terms of Reference and Standing Orders. Note proposed work of the Sub-Groups.**

Proposed Terms of Reference

1. The role of the Local Government Modernisation Sub-Groups is to support the Strategic Leadership Board in the development and implementation of the local government modernisation programme. The Strategic Leadership Board has agreed that two Modernisation Sub-Groups would be established with responsibility for (a) Legislative Framework and Capacity Building and (b) Service Delivery.
2. Each Sub-Group will be chaired by an elected member from the Strategic Leadership Board, assisted by an elected member from the Strategic Leadership Board as Vice-Chair. They will be supported by a secretariat provided jointly by the Department of the Environment (DOE) and the Northern Ireland Local Government Association (NILGA).
3. The primary role of each Sub-Group is to provide overall direction and management of the work to be agreed and delivered.
4. The specific remit and functions of the Sub-Groups will be to:
 - Lead the development of a detailed programme of work, including timescales and resources, and to agree that programme with the Strategic Leadership Board;

- Ensure that the programme of work remains on track and report regularly to the Strategic Leadership Board on progress;
- Present costed options and recommendations on policy and implementation proposals to the Strategic Leadership Board for agreement;
- Ensure that policy proposals are subject to consultation and the relevant impact assessments;
- Ensure that requests to Strategic Leadership Board for financial resources are supported by an appropriate business case;
- Commission task and finish projects on key work areas; and
- Develop, where appropriate, proposals for local pilots in specific geographic areas.

Work Programme for the Modernisation Sub-Groups

5. There is a large range of issues to be considered by each of the Modernisation Sub-Groups:

Sub-Group A (Legislative Framework and Capacity Building)

Proposed Immediate priorities

- Review position on legislative issues (including Local Government finance, remuneration and severance arrangements and ethical standards and mandatory code of conduct).
- Review position on other legislative issues (including regulatory framework re participation in limited and PPP/PFI arrangements).
- The latter is likely to require a scoping and investigative exercise to examine best practice ways forward.
- Review current position on Capacity Building and commission development of a Capacity Building strategy and programme.

Other priorities

- Performance management framework
- New governance arrangements
- These issues are more dependent on the RPA Review outcome and would be better considered at the end of the year.

Sub-Group B (Service Improvement)

Proposed Immediate priorities

- Common ICT Infrastructure for Local Government.
- IS Strategy about to be commissioned (NILGA E-Gov Group)
- Review position on underlying network and systems (including Microsoft and Local Authority Customer Relationship Management (CRM)).
- Review position on procurement issues (including e-procurement and sustainable procurement).
- Review position re EU/ERNACT and access to funding for projects.
- Finalise position re participation in NI Direct.

Other priorities

- Review position on joint/collaborative working (shared services).
- Finance (systems).
- Estates (systems, asset management and public service office concept).
- Wider application of Geographic Information Systems (GIS).
- Review of pilot projects (Environmental health, LPS/Building Control, on-line services, mobile working etc).
- Review position on Customer Insight approaches and applications.

Work of Sub-Group Members

6. In the case of both Modernisation Sub-Groups, much of the work will be co-ordinating and directing:
 - reviews of the current position on a range of issues;
 - examination and investigation of potential ways forward;
 - consideration of options and formulation of proposals and business cases;
 - steering of proposals through the Strategic Leadership Board;
 - monitoring implementation; and
 - evaluation.

Modernisation Sub-Group Timetable

7. It is intended to have initial meetings of the two Sub-Groups in September 2007 (subject to finalisation of membership), with a view to reporting to SLB in October 2007 on a proposed initial work programme

THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT MODERNISATION SUB-GROUPS – STANDING ORDERS

Membership of the Modernisation Sub-Groups

Elected members

1. Each Sub-Group will be composed of two elected members from each of the five main political parties. The Chair and Vice Chair of each Sub-Group will be a member of the Strategic Leadership Board.

Local Government Officers and Central Government Officials

2. Membership of each Sub-Group will also include three local government officers and a maximum of two central government officials.

Others

3. Others with expertise and/or experience relevant to the Sub-Group may also be invited by the Chair to join the Sub-Group on a permanent or ad hoc basis as appropriate.

Secretariat to the Modernisation Sub-Groups

4. A joint secretariat to each Sub-Group will be provided by the DOE and NILGA.

Resignation from a Sub-Group

5. A member may resign from a Sub-Group by giving written notice to the secretary of the Strategic Leadership Board who will notify the Chair of both the Sub-Group and the Strategic Leadership Board of any such resignation. The appropriate Sub-Group organisation should then reappoint a member within a one month period.

Meetings of the Sub-Groups

6. The Sub-Groups will meet, with due regard to the timetable for Strategic Leadership Board meetings, as each Sub-Group may determine. Each Sub-Group will determine venues for meetings.
7. Each Sub-Group may invite any other person to attend meetings and may invite such a person or body to submit evidence and produce documents, or to speak.

Agendas

8. The Chair of the Sub-Group will determine the agendas for meetings of the Sub-Group.
9. Documents relating to the business to be taken at a Sub-Group should normally be made available to members at least five working days before the meeting to which they relate.

Minutes of Sub-Group meetings

10. Minutes of Sub-Group meetings will be produced by each Sub-Group secretariat for agreement by the Sub-Group. Once agreed the minutes will be placed on the Department of the Environment's website, as will papers discussed at Sub-Group meetings