

LBRO

Local Better Regulation Office

BOARD MEETING

Minutes of the 11th Meeting of the LBRO Board
Held on 03 December 2008
The Axis, 10 Holliday Street, Birmingham B1 1TG

Present:	Clive Grace	Chair of LBRO Board
	Robin Dahlberg	Board Member
	Uday Dholakia	Board Member
	Michael Gibson	Board Member
	Ann Hemingway	Board Member
	David Thurston	Board Member
	Graham Russell	CEO and Board Member
In attendance:	Carol Brady	Project Director
	Jane Martin	Director of Policy & Engagement
	Sarah Smith	Director of Delivery & Performance
	Loris Strappazzon	Head of Board Support & Strategy
	Richard Wilson	Head of Resources & Corporate Services
	Lynne Howard	Chair & Board Support Officer

**Person
responsible
for action**

Wednesday 3 December 2008: BOARD MEETING

1. WELCOME

The Chair, Clive Grace, welcomed everyone to the Board meeting.

1.1 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

1.2 Apologies

Apologies were received from Rob Leak and Rebecca Marsh.

1.3 Minutes of previous meeting and summary of outstanding actions

Apart from one typographical error, the minutes were approved as an accurate record of the October Board meeting. **Lynne Howard**

2. REPORT FROM THE CHAIR

The Chair reported on the workshops which were held the previous day, and felt that these gave LBRO good traction on three major issues:

1. National Enforcement Priorities
2. Co-Production
3. Excellence Standard

The Chair also thanked both the Board and Executive for their support during this last year.

3. REPORT FROM CEO

- 3.1 The Chief Executive updated the Board on some staff changes: Sara Barry has now joined us to work on Regional Co-ordination and PA, Grahaeme Dodge as Project Manager on REP and Shingy Kachembere to work on our Intranet and IT generally.

The Board were updated on the e-coli issues in Wales and a report was circulated. The full inquiry report is due on 19 January and a statement will be made by the First Minister. LBRO should be a strong support and contact has been made with Andrew Davies, Welsh Assembly Government, to this effect. An action plan will be produced and the Board will be kept updated.

The Welsh Assembly Government has issued a consultation document, 'Inspection, Audit and Regulation in Wales' with Section 8 mentioning LBRO. This document to be circulated to the Board, with any comments back to Pauline Mawson.

The Board felt that a workshop on licensing would be beneficial and this will be arranged at a future Board meeting.

The 'Baby P' report was discussed and how it reflected on regulation. The Chief Executive will circulate a paper to the Board.

Actions

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|---|--------------------------|
| An action plan to be produced on e-coli and brought back to the January Board Meeting. | Jane Martin |
| Wales Audit Office consultation document to be circulated to Board Members. | Lynne Howard |
| Workshop on Licensing to be held at a future Board Meeting. | Loris Strappazzon |
| Report on 'Baby P' issues for regulatory services to be circulated to Board Members. | Graham Russell |

4. ORGANISATION AND STAKEHOLDERS

4.1 Budget

This item was taken later in the meeting.

4.2 Programme Overview

Loris Strappazon presented this report to show the Board how programmes of work were progressing, which the Board duly noted.

4.3 Risk

Richard Wilson presented this paper, updating the Board on risk management.

The risks had been revised since the September Board report, with a reduction in the overall scoring. There were no significant issues to be brought to the Board's attention. The Board were pleased with the way this has been developed.

The Audit Committee had also reviewed the risk management process at their recent meeting.

The Board asked the executive to add two new risks. The first is the risk that we do not actively affect culture change amongst regulatory services, and the second is that we do not positively influence low performing authorities.

Decision

The Board approved that the Board policy on risk be to provide assurance that the identification and management of risks will facilitate the effective delivery of strategic objectives and policies, to identify arising risks and review the executive's scoring and control measures, and to ascertain the Board's risk appetite.

4.4 Pinnacles Update

All Pinnacles are now underway, with the Chair's, David Thurston's and Rob Leak's being particularly advanced. This reflects the original decision of a phased approach, and is now at a stage where preparation and a forward plan have been produced and is ready for the Board to take it forward. This is a Board-led programme and is critical to how we are seen externally.

The Board were asked to report all intelligence to Laura Robinson, together with any changes as we go forward, especially as some stakeholders also cross portfolios.

A database is held which can provide statistics on engagement. A review of Pinnacles will take place before Summer 2009.

5. STRATEGY AND GOVERNANCE

5.1 Strategy and Corporate Plan

Loris Strappazon presented this paper to invite discussion on the development of a new strategic narrative focussing on co-production; outcome focussed activity; risk based regulation; and a new relationship between the regulators and the regulated.

Decision

The Board noted the proposed process for the production of the corporate plan and business plan, and will provide feedback on the strategic narrative drafted using the outputs from the strategic assessment session.

5.2 Governance Items For Decision: Complaints Review

Richard Wilson presented the revised Complaints Policy and Procedure to the Board, incorporating the recommended enhancements to the original draft.

All complaints will be logged and a register kept for reporting purposes and timescales have been identified for responding to and for closing out complaints. To date, LBRO has received no complaints or negative feedback.

Decision

The Board approved the revised policy.

Actions

All complains to be logged and a register kept for reporting purposes.

Kevin Griffiths

6. SUPPORT SERVICE IMPROVEMENT

6.1 Leadership Update

Carol Brady presented an update on the development of the Leadership project and to seek approval to scope further works on leadership with our partners on the summit group and with local authority regulatory services.

The leadership course 'Strategic Leadership in Modern Local Government' is run by KBA Solutions in partnership with LACoRS.

LBRO will continue to support the programme and should evaluate the outcomes, and will continue to drive forward the leadership summit group and work with the professional bodies TSI and CIEH to identify how they might embed leadership as a core component of professional training from 2009-10.

The Board were supportive of how this project links to world class and asked how we could include those authorities least inclined to become engaged. A paper on Improvement Journeys will be brought to the January Board.

A unitaries workshop is being held on 17 December. This group may be a natural group to undertake assessments against the world class standard.

Decision

The Board agreed the overall aim of the leadership project is consistent with the leadership standards as defined within World Class.

Actions

A paper on Improvement Journeys to be brought to the January Board. Carol Brady

6.2 Greater Manchester Public Protection Partnership

Carol Brady informed the Board of the work being undertaken by the Greater Manchester Public Protection Partnership with a view to supporting the continuation and development of this work. They have successfully delivered the pilot stage of the Business Compliance Project, and the next stage of this work will look in more depth at risk and competency. Both of these are key components of the LBRO World Class project.

The Board approved the request for £71,000 funding with a view to considering, but not committing, additional funding after April 2009.

The Board also agreed that we should request an appropriate level of branding wherever we provide funding.

Decision

The Board approved the request for £71,000 funding for this project.

Action

Executive to contact all funded projects with branding guidelines and our requirement to acknowledge LBRO contribution on all publicity materials. Karl Turner

6.3 Initial results from NEP action research

Sarah Smith presented an update on the findings of the action research carried out by the Institute of Local Government Studies (INLOGOV), on the use of the national enforcement priorities by local authorities in England.

The initial findings suggest that the initial hypothesis that current national enforcement priorities, as drafted, conflict with local priorities is incorrect, and that local authorities have in fact combined these national priorities with local priorities without significant change.

Work is underway in Wales to publish a list of service priorities for Welsh local authorities and it is proposed that the opportunity for LBRO to work with the Welsh Assembly Government is progressed directly.

Decision

The Board agreed that LBRO should work with the Welsh Assembly Government on developing the list of national enforcement priorities for

Wales.

6.4 LBRO Guidance in the economic downturn

Loris Strappazon gave an update on the proposal to produce statutory guidance for local authorities in the economic downturn.

The Board approved the proposed process and timescales for production of the guidance. They felt that the guidance should refer to the principles of better regulation and the Hampton principles. The Board will have an opportunity to comment on the final document. It was suggested we plan a significant engagement process including potentially a Conference taking place in the Spring on this issue.

Decisions

The Board approved the proposed process and timescales for production of the guidance.

The Board agreed to the commencement of a twelve week consultation period on LBRO's draft Statutory Guidance, subject to the actions below.

Actions

Guidance to be redrafted as indicated.

Loris Strappazon

Prepare an engagement plan including potentially an LBRO conference on the economic downturn.

Jane Martin

7. IMPROVE THE SYSTEM

7.1 Trading Places Update

Jane Martin presented an update on this project.

Participation on the pilots has involved some costs, including expenses for participants. In order to continue to roll out the exchange and meet the one year objective of providing exchange places for five hundred LARS colleagues, an additional project cost of up to £75,000 will be incurred before April 2009.

The pilots are now completed and we are following up how they have gone. Feedback to date is positive and has identified significant outcomes. The Board extended their thanks to Gordon Maddon for his contribution to this project.

The Board noted that there may be the potential to increase the scale of the project if phase 1 rollout continues to be successful. There could be potential to provide placements for all the LARS officers. The Chair and Board expressed an interest in taking part in the Trading Places placement project.

Decision

The Board approved the rollout based on the successful outcome of the pilots.

The Board approved the additional cost plus costs for an engagement plan.

Actions

An engagement plan for this project should be prepared and delivered. Jane Martin

7.2 NI Statement of Intent

Graham Russell presented this item and updated the Board on the situation regarding the statement of intent drafted by departments in Northern Ireland.

LBRO has no jurisdiction in Northern Ireland save for PA in relation to matters which are not transferred. Discussions to date with key stakeholders in Northern Ireland have indicated a keenness on their part to work constructively with LBRO, and they have drafted a document, which although called a 'Memorandum of Understanding', is more a 'statement of intent'. LBRO is not a signatory to the document.

The Board noted the executive have established a positive awareness and engagement in Northern Ireland, and have laid the ground for collaborative working, subject to matters of funding and legal powers.

Decision

The Board noted positively the Northern Ireland Statement of Intent.

8. DIRECTLY DELIVER CONSISTENCY

8.1 PA – Update

Sarah Smith introduced this paper.

This project is making good progress. The workshops have been well attended and well received and the level of engagement between authorities and businesses is encouraging and improving rapidly.

Preparing local authorities and the business community for the implementation of the scheme is essential. A programme of activity will be required for stakeholders leading up to the launch of the scheme in April 2009, and then through the roll-out and development of the scheme.

The 'go-live' April deadline is challenging, and there is some concern about the level of resource available to support this programme. We need to recognise that this is an absolutely core programme for LBRO and we need to think very carefully about switching resources in the short term.

Decision

The Board noted the progress made in respect of this programme.

The Board agreed to the commencement of a twelve week consultation period on LBRO's draft Statutory Guidance.

PA – IT

A further paper was circulated looking at the approach to implement the IT for PA.

Three tenders were submitted. Two of these were presented to the Board. One supplier has now been provisionally selected.

The Board were asked to authorise a spend of £638k at this stage and Robin Dahlberg explained the background to this.

The Board requested that references from end-users be taken up and it was agreed that this would be done before signing the contract.

Decision

The Board approved the £638k spend.

Actions

References from end-users of the preferred suppliers to be taken up. Sarah Smith

4. ORGANISATION AND STAKEHOLDERS

4.1 Budget: including anticipated spend 2008/09

Richard Wilson presented this report to the Board to provide them with the budget position statement to the end of October 2008 and the anticipated outturn spend for 2008/09.

The budget has been restated to maximise the delivery of LBRO's key objectives and a number of new or revised proposals are included in the report for the Board to consider. The funding from the Welsh Assembly Government may not be fully spent during the financial year; discussions will be held to determine if any flexibility can be offered to LBRO.

Decision

The Board noted the budget position.

The Board approved the new and revised budgets.

9. CLEARANCE OF PAPERS

Board papers to be sent to BRE.

Actions

Full set of Board Papers to be sent to Rachel Holloway, BRE.

Lynne Howard

10. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

1. The Chair confirmed that the Board Effectiveness Review is going ahead and the Board would be kept updated. **Loris Strappazon**
2. Re Dec 2009/Jan 2010 Board dates it was agreed that these dates should remain as scheduled, ie 01/02 December 2009, and 19/20 January 2010. **Lynne Howard**

11. CLOSE OF MEETING

The meeting closed at 12:30 hrs.

Minutes taken by Lynne Howard, Chair and Board Support Officer.