

STRATEGY, PLANNING AND REPORTING REVIEW - UPDATE

Executive summary

1. LG have previously agreed a continuous improvement approach to strategy, planning and reporting with the aim of delivering: -

- Improved use of our resources;
- Better engagement with, and line of sight for our staff on how they are contributing to the Parliament's plan;
- Time and cost-effective approach to planning and delivery, with improved monitoring and reporting of deliverables and achievements.

2. LG is invited to

- Note the overall progress of the review.
- Discuss implementation of the recommendations for change in office planning.
- In addition to the steps outlined in the accompanying Governance paper, agree that strategic leads/sponsors should work with PPO to identify those business areas that need to support/ be impacted by change and broadly what that might involve by mid-February.

Background

Strategic and delivery plans

3. The agreed [Strategic](#) and [Delivery](#) plans were shared with Office Heads together with the 2019/20 SPCB Finance papers on 4th December 2018.
4. The delivery plan is now more directly linked to the strategic plan by including '*run the Parliament*' objectives, in addition to '*improve the Parliament*' objectives, which collectively contribute to our strategic aims. This allows a more direct line of sight to our operational activities within the delivery plan and provides a solid base for performance reporting in the future.

Board Governance and Risk

5. As LG is aware we have also considered improvements around governance and a further paper is being taken at this meeting. Progress has also been made on the approach to strategic risk and a further discussion on risk is scheduled for March taking account of the new 2019/20 Delivery Plan.

Performance Reporting

6. Work is also underway to examine and recommend changes to the measures we use for tracking progress against the delivery plan as well as the processes and systems for how this is done. Interviews with colleagues have commenced along with fact finding exchanges with other organisations. We are aiming to engage LG in April on measures and the reporting approach for the new financial year.
7. We are also working on a high-level timetable for planning and budgeting which we aim to bring back to LG in April. This will take account of the ongoing discussions with G6s and other office heads about how they get involved in and shape those discussions. A high-level timetable that the Steering Group is working to is [here](#)

Issues and Options

Office Planning

8. The Office Planning Working Group has reported to the Steering Group on its proposals for initial changes to the processes, guidance and templates for office planning. The Steering Group has agreed the detailed proposals and we wish to share with Leadership Group summary feedback and key changes proposed. More specifically this paper invites Leadership Group to discuss the behavioural changes that would develop a more meaningful planning process and therefore drive improvements in delivery.

Overview of Progress to Date and Key Findings from Engagement Exercise

9. In June 2018, the Working Group conducted 28 stakeholder interviews which included Office Heads/Team Leaders, Group Heads and Chairs of Boards. The purpose of this engagement was to understand the extent to which the current process is applied, establish requirements and obtain suggestions on process improvements as well as barriers to change. Please find below a high-level overview of the key themes, issues and outcomes:

EXISTING APPROACH TO OFFICE PLANNING – KEY ISSUES

- Overall, common understanding of the purpose of the office planning process and the links to the strategic plan and individual job objectives;
- Lack of use after submission – not a living document, therefore is not an effective planning tool;
- Inconsistent approach across the organisation to office planning throughout the various stages and aspects, in some instances the approach differed significantly;
- Office Plans are currently not the driving force and planning is undertaken via other detailed separate plans;

- General aspects of the process: timing - difficulty completing over summer recess, non-value adding, tick box exercise, “cut and paste job”.

MAIN ASPECTS MISSING FROM CURRENT PROCESS

- Lack of accountability (and consequences), scrutiny, monitoring, evaluation and reporting;
- Lack of engagement, consultation & collaborative working;
- Resource and capacity requirements;
- Support & training in planning (including toolkits and methodologies);
- Corporate overview (particularly in relation to risk management and identifying themes, synergies and dependencies across plans).

WAY FORWARD TO MEET NEEDS & REQUIREMENTS

The overall view was to retain the Office Planning Process including the 5-step approach to Office Planning (as set out in original guidance) and make improvements. There was an emphasis on the following key aspects:

- Accountability, scrutiny and review is required by Group Heads and LG collectively;
- Introduce reporting mechanisms with meaningful, performance measures and outcomes to report progress against the Office Plan (this work is being undertaken by a working group on performance reporting);
- Improved collaborative working;
- Improve visibility and transparency of Office Plans;
- Format of the Office Plan template: allows a high-level overview; flexible and suitable for the different nature and services of the Offices; should become a living document which is easy to update, assists with prioritisation, potentially tracks the progress of decisions; covers more than one year and becomes an evolving/rolling plan covering more than one financial year rather than a fresh exercise every year;
- Links to other aspects such as business continuity, workforce planning, budgeting as needed.

Office planning - Action for 2019/20

10. Based on the stakeholder feedback and research into external organisations a number of potential change improvement ideas were identified for further exploration, development and implementation. The overall findings and approach was proposed and reported to the Steering Group in October 2018. At that point it was agreed that an iterative short/medium/long term approach to the development of the Office Planning Process should be taken

11. For the 2019-20 Office Plans focus has been on revising the overall guidance and strengthening the process to emphasise the importance of planning especially in respect of office capacity, budgets and performance; improving the use of the Office Plan as a planning discussions tool; to better define roles and responsibilities and move away from a static once a year process to an iterative, rolling Office Plan. Please find below some of the key changes incorporated:

- Provides a framework based on an Office Planning cycle rather than a linear process;
- The Office Plan is now a rolling plan and can cover more than one financial year;
- Emphasis that the Office Plan itself should provide a **high-level overview** only of the offices Run the Parliament services and continuous improvement; Improve the Parliament activities; and office risk management; (more detailed plans, where appropriate, will sit beneath the Office Plan (links can be provided));
- Outlines minimum requirements providing flexibility for offices, whilst providing a level of consistency to be applied across the organisation;
- Outlines Office Head/Team Leaders responsibilities and Group Head responsibilities;
- An [Office Planning Portal](#) has been created on the Planning and Reporting SPShare site, which provides easy access for all offices to each others' plans.

12. Although the Office Planning cycle emphasizes that Office Planning should be continuous, Offices were unanimously of the view that an annual stock take exercise is extremely valuable and should be retained.

13. The draft [Office Planning Guidance](#), [template](#), and [portal](#) were presented and discussed with the Steering Group in December 2018; with testing of the revised documentation and process with some offices being carried out during January 2018.

Key Messages & LG Discussion

- The Office Planning Working Group and the Steering Group both recognize that for Office Planning to be successful, offices need to be supported and a change in culture and behaviours is required so as an organisation we can become more adept at planning, and hence effective delivery of our work.
- The short-term change improvements mainly focused on process changes, defining roles and responsibilities, template changes, setting expectations etc. Future medium-term change improvements will predominantly focus on ways in which Offices can be supported, this will also contribute towards promoting and facilitating change in organisational culture and behaviours. This change effort will require effective collaboration in particular from the Office Planning Working Group;

Strategy, Planning and Reporting Steering Group; Leadership Group collectively and individual Group and Office Heads.

- A key emphasis is to have meaningful conversations and collaborative working between Office Heads/Team Leader(s)s and their Group Heads, their team and with other offices across the SPS – the Office Plan should be a tool to help facilitate these conversations.

14. We would welcome a discussion with LG on their thoughts, views and endorsement on the following key aspects which are required to help successfully manage the change:

- To create a positive behaviour change, there must be commitment from the Leadership Group to role model the new behaviour. How can we achieve a shared understanding about the change and the new behaviors that we want to see, hear and experience from both Group Heads and Office Heads/Team Leaders? There is a need for a culture change in how Group Heads and Office Heads/Team Leaders work together to agree and monitor the Office Plans - how do we work differently to make this happen? As an organisation, we must be explicit that office planning discussions are essential to the successful delivery of the Strategic Plan, and it is therefore mandatory. We would welcome your initial thoughts on how this can be achieved.
- Holding people to account: accountability is critical to the success of office planning by both Group Heads and offices; the plans should be discussed at regular intervals to ensure they are 'live' documents – these discussions provide an opportunity to challenge any aspect and for Group Heads to provide the necessary support.
- Clearly defined roles & responsibilities (set out in refreshed Office Planning Guidance) should be incorporated into Performance Management objectives;
- Establishing consequences of not having and/or maintaining Office Plans
- Robust discussion and co-ordination of Improve the Parliament objectives at a corporate wide level is required (corporate overview).
- The refreshed Office Planning process provides an ideal opportunity for offices to take stock, understand and challenge on their core (and essential) services and deliverables.
- Further understanding is required on capacity. This is critical and provides a clear steer towards offices being consulted and informed in advance on initiatives that might impact on its resources. In discussions with the Steering Group we think there is scope to build engagement with office heads as part of the development of the Delivery Plan – as we experimented with earlier this year.

- In the few instances, where Group Heads produce Office Plans (e.g. Committee, Chamber, Solicitors Office), we invite those Group Heads to consider how the challenge/scrutiny of Office Plans can be facilitated.

Office planning - Next Steps

15. In terms of timing, we are currently testing the plans with a number of offices and dependent on feedback we plan to roll out the guidance and plan templates to all offices/ teams mid-February with the aim of having plans completed by 31 March. Feedback will be received from Offices and Group Heads thereafter.
16. In order to facilitate the completion of office plans and in light of feedback from group heads and the governance being proposed around delivery plan activities, we propose that as an interim step, strategic leads indicate to office heads what the expected resource demands from offices will be over the coming year. In order for this to be used for the coming 19/20 office planning exercise we would ask that strategic leads work with PPO to identify those business areas that need to support/ be impacted by change and broadly what that might involve by mid-February
17. In addition, the Office Planning Working Group will explore other medium-term improvement ideas, reporting to the Steering Group.

Resource Implications

18. There are no additional resources required to support the Strategy, Planning, Reporting workstream. The PPO role has been broadened in agreement with the Group Head to support the corporate planning process and Finance Office already provide additional support on office planning and performance reporting.
19. Planning discussions are a key part of every management and leadership role and we would look to LG to support their reports in undertaking these discussions within and between teams.

Dependencies

20. The Parliament's strategy is a rolling one. Increasingly SRB is also trying to take a more ongoing approach to resource management beyond the yearly financial cycle and the helpful feedback that office plans would benefit from being rolling has led the Steering Group to consider the benefits of a rolling delivery plan. The Delivery Plan includes *run the parliament* objectives which should not vary significantly, and several *improve the parliament* objectives that span more than one financial year for delivery. As such we would propose that all levels of planning are seen as rolling rather than a fresh static exercise each year.

Governance issues

21. LG will be invited to reconsider its overall strategic risks in the context of the refreshed Strategy and Delivery Plan for 2019/20.
22. The Strategic Planning Review working group continues to meet to consider the other streams of work associated with improvements in office planning, performance reporting, risk and the overall corporate timetable and approach for strategic planning and budgeting. LG will be invited to agree significant changes as this work progresses. Iterative improvements and feedback as part of the current strategic planning approach will inform this work.

Publication Scheme

23. This paper can be published

Communications

24. Further work will be developed, with strategic leads, to communicate the impact of the strategy and delivery plan on offices' capacity planning and office plans.

Next steps

25. As highlighted in the paper and the forward [plan](#).

Decision

26. LG is invited to
 - a. **note the overall progress of the review and the forward timetable into Q1 of 2019/20 FY**
 - b. **Discuss implementation of the recommended alterations to the processes around office planning**
 - c. **Agree to the timetable for initial feedback on resource requirements by mid-February for office heads on Delivery Plan activities.**

**Michelle Hegarty, Assistant Chief Executive
January 2019**