

## MINUTES OF THE HR SUB GROUP MEETING HELD ON 18 APRIL 2007

### Attending Members

Vivienne Dews	D/RPD
Sandra Caldwell	D/FOD
Jane Willis	D/PG
Mike Weightman(items 1-3 a-c)	D/ND
Les Philpott (items 1- 3a)	H/PG/Specific Interventions
Heather Bolton	H/OPSD
Gaynor Coldrick	HR Director
Alison McKenzie-Folan	HR Programme Manager S & P
Amanda Shaw	HR L & D

### Invited Speakers

John Rowson (item 6)	HR S & P Workforce Planning and Internal Diversity
Peter Brown (item 4)	HR S & P Pay and Reward
Wendy Rimmer (item 3b)	FOD NW
Marie Tamblyn (item 3a)	HRSC

### 1. Welcome

Vivienne welcomed everyone to the meeting.

### 2. Update of Action from the last meeting (HRSG Action Note 06 V 1.0)

A paper giving an update of the actions from the HRSG 06 was issued prior to the meeting. An oral update was given on action 3, and the remaining actions were either cleared or incorporated into the papers submitted for this meeting.

### 3. Managing Performance/Building capacity

As an introduction to this item, an overview on the current activities taken forward under the L & D strategy was delivered. The HRSG agreed the L & D strategy should be taken forward at the forthcoming away day event on 28/29<sup>th</sup> June and asked that members be consulted on objectives for the event. They also asked that some scenario thinking take place beforehand, to develop a set of L & D criteria or principles, which would help establish some key strategic options to be included in the strategy.

**Action 1: Gaynor Coldrick to consult on objectives for the away day event and to take forward the scenario thinking, to develop a flexible set of criteria which would help with the key strategic direction of the L & D strategy.**

One paper and two slide presentations were taken together as a wider discussion on L & D aspects.

#### a) HRSG 01/07 Investors in People – Application for liP recognition 2008/11

This paper reviewed HSE's approach for reapplying for Corporate liP recognition against new standards, due December 2008 and asked for the views of the HRSG on the most appropriate re-assessment option. The options are to either choose from a rolling review of assessment by D/Ds, leading to corporate recognition or a single assessment across HSE.

The rolling review would take place over a 12 – 18 month period, with D/Ds having a greater role in working with liP assessors. The one off assessment would take less time and be administered centrally by HRD. HSE's last two assessments have been undertaken on a

corporate basis with D/Ds assessed individually as part of a central approach to corporate recognition.

The HRSG agreed a rolling review leading to corporate recognition, with further work and more central detailed planning to help minimise resource implications. The HSE Board should also be advised of this decision and liP timescales

**Action 2: Amanda Shaw to take forward corporate liP reassessment and to undertake further work on detailed planning. The HSE Board to be advised of decision.**

#### **b & c) Competency Framework presentation and demonstration**

Presentation slides were issued prior to the meeting. These provided information on definitions, update on current the position, use of core framework and options on the way forward. At the meeting, a demonstration was given on how the competency framework model would function and inter-link the various Frameworks (e.g. PSG, Technical, & Specialist and Behavioural). An information pack was handed out at the meeting on the technical and specialist frameworks.

The HRSG decided the demonstration had shown that there could be merit in having such a framework model, which should in essence apply across the whole organisation. However, they expressed concern at the scale and detail of information presented through the various frameworks and this prompted discussion around whether the model could be scalable and whether it was clear enough that not all of the model need to apply to everyone.

There was still clarity needed around, how PSG fits into the model and also links to or sits alongside the HSE Behavioural core framework, regardless of whether it was the current or an updated version. It was a general view that there would need to be significant communication to ensure greater buy in from staff and therefore careful consideration would need to be given to the timing and rollout, should any model be introduced. HRSG decided that the introduction of any competency framework model should be signed off by the Board.

A further issue was raised about the findings of the work, being undertaken by the internal diversity team, (reviewing the usage of the core framework elements in the vacancy filling process), for the BME Career progression study. The HRSG agreed further work on the framework model must also include this evidence, although diversity findings could be down to genuine assessments but could also be down to the application of the core framework.

It was agreed further consideration needed to be given to showing how the model would in practice pull everything together, ensuring a holistic and cohesive approach in terms of where the model would link into other things happening within the organisation e.g. NVQ for Regulators, internal vacancy and HPA processes.

**Action 3: Amanda Shaw to undertake more work on what we are trying to achieve and how a more holistic and cohesive approach to the model would link to various things happening in HSE e.g. NVQ for Regulators, vacancy filling and HPA processes. It should also pick up and address the findings from the BME career progression study.**

#### **4. Pay and Reward**

##### **HRSG02/07 Lunch break arrangements for full-time and part-time staff (Closed)**

The paper presented the case for equalising lunch break arrangements for full-time and part-time staff, recommending that HSE take this step in anticipation of the undoubted forthcoming changes to the Working Time Regulations, to comply with the Working Time Directive. As importantly, HSE needed to be at the forefront of good health and safety practice, and needed to protect its position against possible discrimination challenge.

An update on the latest HSE Trade Unions position was provided. During informal talks the TUs had signaled acceptance of a gentle easing in of the change, however, their formal

response has been to reject the changes and suggest that we wait until DTI firm up the legislative position.

The HRSG agreed that we needed to amend our policy in the way suggested and for HR to return to the Trade Unions to have further discussion on taking this forward. It was agreed that any future communication to staff on this issue should include some suitable wording to reflect desirable behaviours for all staff, with senior managers demonstrating these, leading by example and taking breaks; as well as a reminder to managers that they should also consider business and health issues when considering requests from staff to alter working patterns.

**Action 4: Peter Brown to initiate further discussion with HSE Trade Unions on taking this forward in light of the discussion by the HRSG**

#### **5. Occupational Health**

A briefing note on the current issues relating to in the Occupational Health contract transfer, was issued prior to the meeting. Time did not allow for discussion on this item.

#### **6. Workforce Planning Presentation**

Presentation slides were issued to members prior to the meeting. These provided information on the process used by D/Ds to develop workforce plans, explained some of the challenges faced, highlighted emerging themes, sought guidance on balanced scorecard indicators and proposed next steps in developing an HSE workforce plan.

The HRSG decided that the way forward was not to have one all-embracing HSE workforce plan, but from the D/Ds plans to produce a report pulling together the key corporate and cross cutting workforce issues and to identify the major risks to the business. The report could then inform the development of a set of options and choices for managing the risks.

**Action 5: John Rowson to produce a paper reflecting the discussion and direction given by the HRSG**

#### **7. Overview of Progress on HR Strategy Implementation**

The overview slides were issued to members prior to the meeting. Time did not allow for discussion on this item.

#### **8. Any Other Business**

No other business was raised.

The next meeting of the HRSG will be held on 28<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> June 2007