

## **COMPANIES HOUSE STEERING BOARD**

### **Minutes of meeting held on 28 February**

#### **Present:**

Andrew Summers	Chairman
Tim Moss	Acting Chief Executive
Mike Hathorn	Independent member
Nigel Paul	Independent member
Alex Jablonowski	Independent member
Hilary Douglas	Chief Operating Officer, DTI
Geoff Dart	Director of Corporate Law and Governance, DTI
Peter Mason	Director of FRM, DTI
Tom Smith	Director of Customer Delivery
Tim Knighton	Director of Finance
Kevan Robinson	Interim Director of e-Transformation and Technology
Phil Bushby	Prospective Director of Human Resources

#### **Apologies:**

Dan Bernard	Independent member
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#### **Chairman's introduction**

1. Andrew Summers welcomed members to the meeting, particularly new members. He paid tribute to his predecessor, Ian Percy and to Claire Clancy, former Chief Executive, who had both made valuable contributions to Companies House.
2. He had talked individually to Steering Board members and recognised the strength of their commitment to Companies House. He recognised Companies House's strengths as an organisation but was clear that it was not complacent. It faced short term pressure from CHIPS and the Companies Act Programme but was willing to embrace change. Transformation over the next three to five years would be critical in moving it from an organisation which is customer responsive to one which is customer-centric.

#### **Minutes of the last meeting**

3. Agreed as a true record.
4. Hilary Douglas said that the Capability Review had shown DTI to be one of the better performing government departments but had identified significant challenges. DTI would be working with its delivery partners to look at common issues and their common business purpose. DTI would report back to Treasury on progress in six months.
5. DTI had reviewed its sponsor arrangements and John Alty would replace Hilary on the Steering Board.

#### **Review of minutes from Audit Committee (4 December 2006 and 16 January 2007)**

6. Mike Hathorn presented the minutes, which were accepted by the Steering Board. The main feature was a detailed analysis of conventions around CHIPS.

### **Steering Board monthly briefs (December 2006, January and February 2007)**

7. Tim Moss reported that February had seen record levels of electronic filing and that expected changes in the tax regime led to incorporation level doubling in the last five weeks. Companies House's staff and systems had shown themselves to be highly resilient and had coped well with the additional workload.
8. The high level of incorporations meant increased cash receipts in the short term but with the nature of the extra companies, could have longer term implications for compliance. Companies House had discussed this issue with Treasury and HMRC. The Finance Bill would be key in determining how this issue is treated in the future.

### **CHIPS and Companies Act Implementation**

9. Tim Knighton and Kevan Robinson reported that they had reviewed the CHIPS testing framework, ensuring there was business agreement on testing, and they had streamlined the governance framework for both programmes, ensuring they reflected key business and project players. These measures would give added focus and confidence.
10. Helen Thewlis joined the meeting and outlined the programme for implementation of the Companies Act 2006. Geoff Dart gave DTI's perspective.
11. The Steering Board discussed issues around performance testing, timing, finance and contingency. Members recognised that CHIPS and the Companies Act programme were increasingly one programme. They welcomed the frankness and openness of the discussion and endorsed the approach to governance and prioritisation. They recognised that there was a need to balance value for money with the critical nature of delivery. The Steering Board would be updated through its Monthly Brief and it was agreed that an extra meeting would be arranged in April to review the situation.

### **Business Plan 2007-08**

12. Tim Moss gave an overview of the Business Plan, while Tom Smith reported on its operational aspects and Tim Knighton on finance. The plan stressed the key importance of the Companies Act 2006, while recognising the need to ensure good quality services, satisfied customers and stability.
13. The Steering Board endorsed the Plan. It was important to maintain strategic focus for the future, and a three-year strategic model would be useful in doing this. There should be a clear awareness of risk, and targets should remain stretching, with honest reporting of performance.

### **Steering Board Awayday (23 May 2007)**

14. Members put forward ideas for an awayday, which would help Companies House with its strategic planning and move it towards a customer-centric model.

### **Conclusion and close**

15. Andrew closed the meeting, thanking everyone for their contributions. He thanked Hilary, particularly, for her contribution over the last year.

**Companies House**  
**March 2007**