31st Meeting of Senior Officials from Centres of Government

London, 23 - 24 October 2012

AGENDA
AGENDA

MONDAY, OCTOBER 22, 2012

18:30-20:00 Welcome Reception hosted by Lord Sainsbury at the Institute for Government

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 23, 2012

9:00-9:45 Welcome
- Head of the UK Civil Service, Sir Bob Kerslake – Opening remarks
- Deputy Secretary to the Cabinet and Counsel, Canada, Yvan Roy – Building on last year’s success
- OECD Secretary General, Ángel Gurría – The role of the Centre in meeting today’s economic challenges

9:45-12:00 Session One: Key issues, challenges and opportunities facing Centres of Government today, chaired by Sir Bob Kerslake

Centres of Government (CoGs) today are continuing to face substantial economic and fiscal challenges. At the same time, the long-term challenges posed by wide-ranging demographic and societal changes, increased complexity and rising citizen expectations remain. While the challenges are significant, opportunities continue to emerge, for example, through the adoption of new technologies.

This session aims to move beyond a general and broad discussion of today’s challenges and opportunities to a more focused consideration of the specific priorities and most pressing issues facing CoGs today and the way in which CoGs are evolving to respond to these challenges. Questions for discussion include:

- Where is the CoG’s attention and time currently focused? How has this changed over the last five years?
- How effectively is the centre managing the balance between short-term pressures and long-term strategic thinking?
- Has the centre changed its approach to dealing with risk and uncertainty?
- What approach is being taken to engage citizens in the difficult choices that need to be made?

12:00-13:30 Lunch

13:30-17:00 Session Two: Delivering open and innovative approaches to current challenges, chaired by Sir Jeremy Heywood

These challenging times require us to adopt new approaches to the way we develop and deliver policy. This session will offer the opportunity to share the latest innovative practices we are implementing and explore new approaches that we are trialling.
• What open and innovative approaches are we taking to address the challenges we face?
• How are we engaging with others (e.g. citizens, civil society) to generate solutions to the problems we face?
• What steps are we taking to test the effectiveness of innovations?
• What role should the centre take in developing, promoting and implementing innovative approaches across government? What incentives can be developed to encourage the adoption of these approaches?

**Breakout sessions**

Breakout sessions will allow for sharing of the latest thinking, best practice and emerging approaches on:

• Session One: Open Government (chaired by Sir Bob Kerslake)
• Session Two: Innovative approaches, models and techniques (chaired by Sir Jeremy Heywood)

**Wrap up**

Sharing key conclusions from the breakout sessions

19:00-22:00  **Official Dinner, hosted by the Minister for the Cabinet Office, the Right Honourable Francis Maude MP**

**Wednesday, October 24, 2012**

9:30-11:30  **Session Three: How do Centres of Government need to change to meet today’s challenges?**

chaired by Sir Bob Kerslake

The final session will address the impact of the current challenges on the organisation of the Centre of Government; our structures and the skills, capacity and capabilities we now require.

• Has the centre’s relationship with line ministries/departments changed in response to current challenges?
• What are the current key priority functions in the centre – how is the centre approaching building capacity in these areas?
• Have the skills, capacities and capabilities required of our public sector workforces changed? If so, what steps is the centre taking to address this?
• Has the centre changed its approach to managing its own performance and that of the public administration more broadly in response to current challenges?

11:45-12:30 **Wrap-up and Closing remarks by the Co-Chairs**

12:30-13:30 **Lunch**