MEETING NOTES

A summary of the meeting held on Wednesday 27 October at 10.00 in the Conference Room, John Yencken Building is provided below.

Present: Karen Hill, Change Manager (Facilitator)
Managers, F&S

In Attendance: Karen Ford and Sally Webster (Workplace Change - HR Division)

1. Meeting Purpose

The purpose and two part structure of the meeting was outlined by the facilitator:

- Briefing on the Self Review Process (Guidelines and Template)
- Discussion around process and general questions

Attendees were updated on the change management process to date and the objectives of the process; these being to capture the existing strengths of the Division so it can move forward leveraging what works well and improving on what does not.

2. Questions and Comments from the All Staff Meeting of 21.10.10

- It was noted that some employees have expressed a fear of job losses as a result of the changes. The facilitator reiterated that this is not an intended outcome of the process;
- Attendees were reminded that some employees had expressed a preference not to have managers participate in upcoming consultation meetings; if managers are present this could inhibit feedback;
- Attendees agreed a clear strategic direction is important; people need to know where they are going. The facilitator advised that all suggestions are welcome in order to obtain the best information possible for future strategies to support the strategic plan;
- The question of portfolios was raised (given that there are possible retirements), attendees were advised that these will be determined by consultations;
- It was noted that at a recent strategic planning discussions at CSIRO about the Division, attendees were asked to make recommendations; it appeared that nothing further has been done with this information. The facilitator noted that the strategic plan was the outcome but advised that a copy of the notes would be sourced for reference.

3. The Self Review Process

- The facilitator explained that in the first stage of the change management process, the objective is to obtain comprehensive information from staff and clients. There are various ways staff can respond. Including the Self Review process (team based meetings);
Attendees were provided with the Self Review Template and Guidelines. The facilitator explained that the objective is for managers to take responsibility for meeting with staff and facilitating an honest and frank discussion about current status, performance and future status of their work area and the broader F&S Division (comments on governance would also be welcomed);

Employees should be encouraged to actively participate in the change process by providing feedback; a key objective of the discussions is to obtain ideas and knowledge of issues from the ‘bottom up’;

Managers were reminded that meeting notes should include a list of attendees in order to demonstrate that the consultation has encompassed a broad range of employees but that comments need not be attributed to anyone unless they wish this to happen.

Discussion Points

4. Strengths of F&S

- Strong client service; service-oriented culture in which people are dedicated to the core business of the Division;
- Strong client relationships and good client rapport;
- Strong in-house knowledge and experience means that F&S Division has the ability to react quickly to a constantly evolving work environment;
- A “can-do” attitude.

5. Areas for Improvement

- Interaction and communication between F&S teams could be improved in particular with respect to the sharing of knowledge and skills;
- Build on existing strengths to enable a holistic approach F&S management at the ANU;
- Governance; there are too many meetings which are time consuming and inefficient taking away from the core focus of the Division; need to ensure that the meetings which people are required to attend are of the right type ie less meetings and a constructive and targeted approach;
- Accommodation arrangements for the Division are inefficient; attendees expressed a desire to co-locate the Division in one place as far as practically possible.

6. What is F&S not doing that could be done?

- A central repository for information was seen as important; the project register was viewed positively but further consolidation is needed so that a complete picture of F&S works is available;
- A new and updated Service Level Agreement between F&S and Colleges / Departments was seen as important in order to establish clear expectations.

7. Creativity and Innovation

- Attendees agreed that due to the constraints of budgets and legislation, it is necessary for F&S employees to be creative in order to achieve deliverables;
- It was also stated that while it is possible to be creative within budgets, there are limits to what can be done with finite financial resources;
- Balancing long and short term goals is difficult because the 3-5 year budget is restrictive; longer term funding tied to the strategic plan was viewed to be important;
- It was noted that for some areas (example parking and security) much of the work they do is determined by university policy which can restrict creativity and innovation;
- Some attendees expressed their frustration that time and effort is put into project inputs but the information is not then progressed this is debilitating to the Division and people become frustrated;
- F&S has made some notable achievements within budget including ANU Green. Student security patrols, planting for dry conditions;
It was noted that F&S is perceived as an “administrative overhead” at the ANU and therefore the budget is for core business only and there is no room for creativity and innovation. There is also a line of thought that “we won’t get the dollars” which stymies creative thinking.

8. What can Leadership do to take the Division Forward (what can be done differently)?

- Provide clear expectations and shared goals so that people know what to expect;
- Remove obstacles (example implement processes to enable cross team communication and a systems thinking approach);
- It was agreed that the existing “silo” model impedes the abilities of the Division;
- Better celebration of successes; acknowledge what has been achieved and communicate / share this with clients eg through staff awards, allow attendance at opening of new buildings, article in “On Campus” etc;
- Improved communication was seen as critical; it was agreed that F&S must move to a culture of open and transparent communications both internally and externally to the division.

9. Customer Relationships – How Solid Are These, How Do We Know We Have Been Successful?

- F&S has a range of feedback sources, for example:
  - Parking – targets a 50% success rate due to enforcement component of the function;
  - Security – generally good feedback. Example for Unisafe there is a webpage for feedback;
  - Landscape – feedback is through verbal and written comments;
- Other suggestions for collating and sharing feedback included the staff consultative committee, ANU Reporter and On Campus. It was agreed that a more robust process was needed for the collation of customer feedback and better promotion to the broader ANU community of some of the achievements and initiatives that F&S offers. It was agreed that there are a number of F&S initiatives that are not widely known for example it is known among students that locks and helmets are sold in the parking office but not among ANU staff;
- It was agreed that there should be a mechanism to link F&S achievements to the ANU vision of “Achieving Excellence” which would be beneficial for team morale

10. Other Discussion Points

- It was stated that the demise of the capital management plan had created a lot of issues and it was hoped that the asset management plan will replace it because at present there does not appear to be a holistic view and matters are dealt with “case by case”.
- Attendees were keen to understand what will be done with information obtained through these discussions. The facilitator advised that the themes from the meetings will be collated and a series of improvements - focussed recommendations will be made to senior management then to employees as part of the consultation process;
- Attendees agreed that the worst case outcome of this review would be for things to stay the same, budgets to be cut and/or there to be no further action.

Meeting was concluded at 11.00am