

WILTON PARK EXECUTIVE AGENCY

FRAMEWORK DOCUMENT

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This framework document has been drawn up by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office in consultation with Wilton Park. This document sets out the broad framework within which Wilton Park will operate. The document does not convey any legal powers or responsibilities. It is signed and dated by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and Wilton Park. Copies of the document and any subsequent amendments have been placed in the Libraries of both Houses of Parliament and made available to members of the public on Wilton Park's website.

Purpose

1.1 Wilton Park is a non-profit making Executive Agency of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO). It was established in 1946 to help restore peace and democracy in Europe as part of an initiative inspired by Winston Churchill. It was re-located in 1951 to Wiston House, a sixteenth-century Grade 1 listed building located at the foot of the South Downs in West Sussex. It became an Executive Agency on 1 September 1991. Wilton Park organises over 60 conferences a year, some overseas, all of which attract high-level speakers and participants from around the world.

1.2 Wilton Park remains at the forefront of British foreign policy, working to support the Government's vision of a more secure and prosperous United Kingdom with global reach and global influence – a major player on the world stage, tackling threats to our security and prosperity, protecting British interests, and upholding British values. For over 70 years, it has provided a neutral and discreet environment for “off the record” discussions on the most pressing of global problems. It brings together opinion formers, stakeholders and policy makers from around the world to create and strengthen links between ideas, policy and the delivery of practical results. These activities build networks for the future from the successor generation of decision and policy makers. Wilton Park promotes independence of views and inquiry rather than advocacy of any particular position.

Governance and accountability

2 Overall aims

2.1 As an Executive Agency of the FCO, Wilton Park's aim is to identify, convene and facilitate discreet and effective dialogue on the UK's strategic foreign policy priorities (and those of its friends and allies). As a front-line resource for the FCO, Wilton Park's purpose over the next five years is to support the strategic priorities identified in the FCO's Single Departmental Plan for 2015-2020 (published in February 2016). Wilton Park will also develop and run events to support the work of other government departments.

2.2 Wilton Park will cover its operating costs through a combination of core grant from the FCO, UK and overseas stakeholder sponsorship, charges raised from events and additional revenue-generating activity.

2.3 The core objectives of Wilton Park are to:

- Contribute to analysing, understanding and advancing the agenda on international issues;
- Contribute to the achievement of HMG priorities and inform the policy-making of HMG and the international community; and
- Support the FCO in pursuit of its objectives (to protect our people, project our global influence and promote our prosperity).

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2.4 Wilton Park will:

- Help achieve HMG's strategic foreign policy priorities by bringing together policy makers, opinion formers and expert practitioners to focus on practical challenges and policy delivery;
- Build the UK's reputation for resolving international problems through dialogue;
- Build and enhance the UK's ability to engage with a network of governments, civil society organisations, and the private sector;
- Maintain contact with and develop the networks of alumni from events by focusing on those who are likely to become the successor generation of opinion formers and policy makers; and
- Create and foster a strong and diverse community of investors and sponsors drawn from the private and not-for-profit sectors.

3 Ministerial responsibility

3.1 The Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs is responsible for all matters concerning Wilton Park. He/she appoints the Chair of the Wilton Park Board. The Secretary of State allocates core funding to Wilton Park via the FCO's Communication Directorate, who oversee the FCO/Wilton Park relationship.

4 The Foreign and Commonwealth Office's accounting officer's specific accountabilities and responsibilities as Principal Accounting Officer (PAO)

4.1 The FCO Permanent Under-Secretary (PUS) is the Principal Accounting Officer (PAO) of the FCO and has designated the Chief Executive as Wilton Park's Accounting Officer.

4.2 The PAO is accountable to Parliament for the issue of core funding to Wilton Park. The PAO is also responsible for advising the responsible Minister on:

- An appropriate framework of objectives and targets for Wilton Park in the light of FCO's wider strategic aims and priorities;
- An appropriate budget for Wilton Park in the light of the FCO's overall public expenditure priorities; and
- How well Wilton Park is achieving its strategic objectives and whether it is delivering value for money.

4.3 The PAO is also responsible for ensuring arrangements are in place in order to:

- Monitor Wilton Park's activities;
- Address significant problems in Wilton Park, making such interventions as are judged necessary;
- Periodically carry out an assessment of the risks both to the FCO and Wilton Park's objectives and activities;
- Inform Wilton Park of relevant government policy in a timely manner; and
Bring concerns about the activities of Wilton Park to the full Wilton Park Board, and, as appropriate, to the departmental board requiring explanations and assurances that appropriate action has been taken regarding Wilton's Park expenditure and performance.

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4.4 The Secretary of State will assign a senior member of staff (usually the Director of Communication) to act as Senior Departmental Officer (SDO) as the primary contact for Wilton Park. The SDO has the responsibility of ensuring that the FCO and Wilton Park have a clear understanding of each other's objectives, methods of working, and effective collaboration. The SDO will keep the Chair and Chief Executive informed of any central policy developments that might affect Wilton Park. The SDO will also be responsible for advising Ministers on the strategic direction of the Agency and also support the PAO on his or her responsibilities toward Wilton Park.

5 Responsibilities of Wilton Park's Chief Executive as Accounting Officer

General

5.1 The Chief Executive is appointed by the FCO PUS for a fixed-term on the basis of a 3-year contract, with the possibility of extension or permanent appointment with the agreement of all parties under the usual Senior Civil Service terms. The Chief Executive is appointed by the PUS / PAO as Accounting Officer (AO) for Wilton Park.

5.2 The Chief Executive as AO is personally responsible for safeguarding the public funds for which he or she has charge; for ensuring propriety, regularity, value for money and feasibility in the handling of those public funds; and for day-to-day operations and management of Wilton Park. In addition, he or she should ensure that Wilton Park as a whole is run on the basis of the standards, in terms of governance, decision-making and financial management that are set out in Box 3.1 of *Managing Public Money*.¹

Responsibilities for accounting to Parliament

5.3 The accountabilities include:

- Signing the accounts and ensuring that proper records are kept relating to the accounts and that the accounts are properly prepared and presented in accordance with any directions issued by the Secretary of State;
- Preparing and signing a Governance Statement covering corporate governance, risk management and oversight of any local responsibilities, for inclusion in the annual report and accounts;
- Ensuring that effective procedures for handling complaints about the Arms Length Body (ALB) are established and made widely known within the ALB;
- Acting in accordance with the terms of this document, *Managing Public Money* and other instructions and guidance issued from time to time by the Department, the Treasury and the Cabinet Office;
- Giving evidence, normally with the PAO, when summoned before the Public Accounts Committee (PAC) on the ALB's stewardship of public funds;
- Putting into effect any recommendations of the PAC or other Parliamentary Select Committees if they are accepted by the Government.

Responsibilities to the FCO

5.4 Particular responsibilities to the PUS/PAO

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https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/212123/Managing_Public_Money_AA_v2_-_chapters_annex_web.pdf

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The Chief Executive / AO must be able to provide the PUS / PAO with assurance concerning Wilton Park's stewardship of public funds and that Wilton Park is meeting its objectives.

Responsibilities to Campaigns and Engagement Department, Communication Directorate

5.5 Particular responsibilities to Campaigns and Engagement Department include:

- Establishing, in agreement with the Department, Wilton Park's corporate and business plans in the light of the Department's wider strategic aims and agreed priorities;
- Informing the Department of progress in helping to achieve the Department's policy objectives and in demonstrating how resources are being used to achieve those objectives; and
- Ensuring that timely forecasts and monitoring information on performance and finance are provided to the Department; that the Department is notified promptly if over or under spends are likely and that corrective action is taken; and that any significant problems whether financial or otherwise, and whether detected by internal audit or by other means, are notified to the Department in a timely fashion.

Responsibilities to the Wilton Park Board

5.6 The Chief Executive is responsible for:

- The day to day operations and administration of Wilton Park and for the leadership of its staff;
- Advising the Board on the discharge of Wilton Park's responsibilities as set out in this document, in the founding legislation and in any other relevant instructions and guidance that may be issued from time to time;
- Advising the Board on Wilton Park's operation and performance compared with its aims and objectives;
- Ensuring that financial considerations are taken fully into account by the Board at all stages in reaching and executing its decisions, and that financial appraisal techniques are followed;
- Taking action as set out in paragraph 3.8.6 of *Managing Public Money* if the Board, or its Chair, is contemplating a course of action involving a transaction which the Chief Executive considers would infringe the requirements of propriety or regularity or does not represent prudent or economical administration, efficiency or effectiveness, is of questionable feasibility, or is unethical.

Other specific duties of the Chief Executive include:

- Leading and developing an effective Senior Management Team;
- Motivating all staff at Wilton Park to deliver to priorities and targets;
- Developing and maintaining a strong relationship with Wilton Park customers and stakeholders in the FCO, the rest of Whitehall and key international stakeholders (including other governments and institutions);
- Leading and co-ordinating fund-raising strategies, including opening up new funding streams from non-FCO sources;
- Exploring new partnerships and business opportunities for Wilton Park consistent with the organisation's goals;
- Developing the integration of digital into the business to ensure delivery in the digital age;
- Ensuring that the commercial activities of Wiston House is run to a high business standard and in a way that provides the maximum benefit to Wilton Park; and

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- Ensuring that Wilton Park is run in a way that conforms to the values of the FCO and the standards laid down in the Civil Service Code.

Senior Management Team and sponsorship arrangements with the FCO

5.7 In line management terms, the Chief Executive reports to the Chair, who will work closely with the SDO on the strategic direction of Wilton Park in the context of wider FCO or cross-governmental policy priorities, objective-setting and personnel issues such as recruitment and appraisals. The Chief Executive will appoint the Senior Management Team (SMT) which will provide a forum to consult senior staff on performance and strategy, help in resolving management issues; contribute to financial and business planning, and develop fundraising and marketing strategies.

5.8 The Wilton Park SMT will consult closely with FCO Directorates, Posts and other Government Departments in the course of developing relevant programmes and will propose events that are closely aligned to the HMG's foreign policy, and to respective departmental priorities. Where appropriate, FCO posts will also help to identify and recruit speakers and participants, to disseminate event publicity material and support when events are held in-country. The SMT will inform the FCO Directorates, Posts and Departments of the results, and the participants in attendance. The SMT will share with Posts information drawn from their alumni database so Posts can better build on these relationships.

5.9 The FCO will also help develop and maintain institutional links and promote co-operation with overseas organisations. Where appropriate, Other Government Departments may be asked to help develop and maintain institutional links and promote cooperation with relevant organisations or bodies.

5.10 Communication Directorate will be the principal Department within the FCO responsible for managing the overall FCO relationship with Wilton Park. Wilton Park staff will liaise directly with FCO Directorates and Posts over specific programmes, and conferences.

6 The Wilton Park Board

6.1 The role of the Wilton Park Board is to oversee the leadership and direction of Wilton Park. The Board is specifically responsible for:

- Establishing and taking forward the strategic aims and objectives of the ALB consistent with its overall strategic direction and within the policy and resources framework determined by the Secretary of State; Ensuring that the responsible Minister is kept informed of any changes which are likely to impact on the strategic direction of Wilton Park or on the attainability of its targets, and determining the steps needed to deal with such changes;
- Ensuring that any statutory or administrative requirements for the use of public funds are complied with; that the Board operates within the limits of its statutory authority and any delegated authority agreed with the sponsor Department, and in accordance with any other conditions relating to the use of public funds; and that, in reaching decisions, the Board takes into account guidance issued by the sponsor Department;
- Ensuring that the Board receives and reviews regular financial information concerning the management of Wilton Park; is informed in a timely manner about any concerns about the activities of Wilton Park; and provides positive assurance to the Department that appropriate action has been taken on such concerns;

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- Demonstrating high standards of corporate governance at all times, including by using the independent audit committee to help the Board to address key financial and other risks;
- In consultation with the Department, set performance objectives and remuneration terms linked to these objectives for the Chief Executive which give due weight to the proper management and use and utilisation of public resources.
- Agree strategy and objectives, including the Business Plan, and annual financial and other performance targets;
- Monitor and evaluate Wilton Park's delivery of strategic objectives and performance targets, including continuous risk assessment;
- Advise on the allocation of financial and human resources, and the management of risk;
- Ensure that the planning, performance and financial management of Wilton Park is carried out efficiently and effectively;
- Oversee the process of change, encouraging innovation, and enhancing Wilton Park's capacity to deliver;
- Ensure that Wilton Park is run in a way consistent with FCO values and the Civil Service Code;
- Agree Wilton Park's Annual Reports and Accounts;
- Agree, together with the FCO, any appointments and term extensions for Members of the Wilton Park Advisory Council; and
- Propose or agree any amendments to the Framework Document.

6.2 The Wilton Park Board should ensure that effective arrangements are in place to provide assurance on risk management, governance and internal control. The Wilton Park Board has established an Audit and Risk Assurance Committee (ARAC) as a Committee of the Board, chaired by an independent non-executive member to provide independent advice. The Board is expected to assure itself of the effectiveness of the internal control and risk management systems.

The Chair's personal responsibilities

6.3 The Chair is responsible to the named Minister. Communications between the Wilton Park Board and the responsible Minister should normally be through the Chair. He or she is responsible for ensuring that policies and actions support the Minister's (and where relevant other Ministers') wider strategic policies and that its affairs are conducted with probity. Where appropriate, these policies and actions should be clearly communicated and disseminated throughout Wilton Park.

6.4 The Chair's primary duty is to chair and lead the Wilton Park Board and Advisory Council in the successful performance of their functions. Other leadership responsibilities include:

- Formulating the Board's strategy and shaping the annual meeting agendas for the Wilton Park Board and Advisory Council;
- Ensuring the Wilton Park Board provides appropriate advice, support and constructive challenge to the Chief Executive whilst taking account of guidance provided by the responsible Minister or the Department;
- Promoting the efficient and effective use of staff and other resources;
- Delivering high standards of regularity and propriety;
- Representing the views of the board to the general public;
- Providing an Annual Report to the FCO PUS on the work and impact of Wilton Park over the previous twelve months;

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- Ensuring members of the Wilton Park Board and Advisory Council receive the necessary information to enable them to perform their duties;
- Helping shape Wilton Park Board and Advisory Council composition and making provision to evaluate Board/Council performance;
- Networking at the highest level, developing and sustaining new strategic partnerships; promoting and explaining the aims and policies of Wilton Park to the outside world;
- Identifying new funding opportunities for Wilton Park in order to broaden the funding base; and
- Providing continuity of oversight and direction for Wilton Park.

6.5 The Chair also has an obligation to ensure that:

- The work of the Board and its members are reviewed and are working effectively;
- The Board has a balance of skills appropriate to directing the Wilton Park's business, as set out in the Government Code of Good Practice for Corporate Governance;
- The Board's membership is gender diverse;
- Board members are fully briefed on terms of appointment, duties, rights and responsibilities;
- He or she, together with the other Board members, receives appropriate training on financial management and reporting requirements and on any differences that may exist between private and public sector practice;
- The responsible Minister is advised of Wilton Park's needs when Board vacancies arise;
- He or she assesses the performance of individual board members when being considered for re-appointment;
- There is a Board Operating Framework in place setting out the role and responsibilities of the Board consistent with the Government Code of Good Practice for Corporate Governance; and
- There is a code of practice for Board members in place, consistent with the Cabinet Office Code of Conduct for Board Members of Public Bodies.

Individual Board members' responsibilities

6.6 Individual Board members should:

- Comply at all times with the Code of Conduct for Board Members of Public Bodies and with the rules relating to the use of public funds and to conflicts of interest;
- Not misuse information gained in the course of their public service for personal gain or for political profit, nor seek to use the opportunity of public service to promote their private interests or those of connected persons or organisations;
- Comply with the Board's rules on the acceptance of gifts and hospitality, and of business appointments; and
- Act in good faith and in the best interests of Wilton Park.

The Audit and Risk Assurance Committee

6.7 The Audit and Risk Assurance Committee (ARAC) consists of up to three Non-Executive Directors, one of whom will Chair the Committee to provide independent advice. The Wilton Park Chief Executive, other members of the SMT, and representatives from the FCO, FCO Internal Audit and the NAO will be invited to attend as appropriate in accordance with best

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practice. The Committee should be run in accordance with the Code of Good Practice for Corporate Governance and the *Audit and Risk Assurance Committee Handbook*.

6.8 The ARAC will meet at least three times a year. The Chair may convene additional meetings as necessary. Full terms of reference are available at: www.wiltonpark.org.uk.

6.9 The role of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee is to:

- Review the comprehensiveness of assurances in meeting the Board / AO's assurance needs;
- Review the reliability and integrity of these assurances, including reports from the NAO, FCO Internal Audit Department and Wilton Park's business continuity plans;
- Provide an opinion on how well the Board and AO are supported in decision making, and in discharging their accountability obligations (particularly in respect of Financial Reporting); and
- Scrutinise Wilton Park financial reporting and delivery plans.

The Chair of the ARAC can be remunerated with a proportionate honorarium agreed by the Chair of the Board and the SDO. This honorarium should be reviewed on new appointments, extension of appointments or any wider reviews of Wilton Park.

Wilton Park Advisory Council (WPAC)

6.10 The [WPAC](#) is led by the Chair of the main Wilton Park Board. Its task is to ensure that Wilton Park meets the highest intellectual standards and maintains its reputation as a global centre of excellence. The WPAC checks that the programmes are relevant to global issues and situations, and monitors the quality of delivery.

6.11 The WPAC consists of a wide range of experienced individuals drawn from members of parliament, the academic world, the media, trade unions, business, non-governmental organisations and institutions concerned with international relations. Members are appointed for three years with the possibility of a second three year term. Open advertisements are placed in appropriate media to attract a diverse range of new Council members. The appointments and term extensions are made by the Chair on the agreement of the FCO and the Wilton Park Board. Membership is not remunerated, but reasonable travel and other expenses are reimbursed.

6.12 The WPAC meets formally twice a year and additionally as sub groups focused on specific issues or topics. Members are also expected to be available for individual discussions, and may attend relevant conferences.

6.13 The collective role of the WPAC is to:

- Advise the Chief Executive and his/her senior staff on the selection of themes, speakers, participants, and ensure that a proper balance is maintained in the programme;
- Monitor the follow-up and delivery of longer term objectives that might flow from Wilton Park programmes;
- Provide practical experience and advice on partnerships with other organisations and on fundraising; and
- Provide advice and challenge to the FCO as necessary.

6.14 The role of individual members is to:

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- Advise the Chief Executive and the programme directors on issues relevant to the Advisory Council member's experience and expertise;
- Participate in appropriate conferences; and
- Promote awareness and support for Wilton Park within their professional networks; assisting in the identification of speakers and participants for individual events.

Responsibility to Parliament

6.15 The Secretary of State accounts for Wilton Park's business in Parliament. The PUS / PAO is accountable to Parliament for general oversight of Wilton Park, for ensuring Wilton Park is meeting its objectives and has appropriate systems in place for the proper management of the resources under Wilton Park's control. Both the PAO and the AO may be required to give evidence before the Public Accounts Committee.

6.16 The Secretary of State decides who should appear at hearings of Departmental Select Committees. In practice, where a Committee's interest is confined to Wilton Park's day-to-day operations, the Secretary of State will normally regard the FCO PUS, the SDO and the Chief Executive as the people best placed to appear on his / her behalf.

6.17 Members of Parliament are encouraged to write directly to the Chief Executive on individual cases or operational issues. They may also raise matters of concern with FCO Ministers if they so wish. The Secretary of State will usually ask the Chief Executive to write to MPs in response to written Parliamentary Questions and individual letters about matters delegated to him. The Chief Executive's letters in reply to Parliamentary Questions will be published in the Official Report.

6.18 The Chief Executive also needs to ensure that effective procedures for handling complaints about Wilton Park are established and made widely known within Wilton Park.

7 Annual Report and Accounts

7.1 Wilton Park must publish an annual report of its activities together with its audited accounts after the end of the financial year.

7.2 The annual report and accounts must:

- Comply with the Treasury's Financial Reporting Manual (FreM);
- Outline main activities and performance during the previous financial year and set out in summary form forward plans; and
- Include information on performance against key financial targets within the scope of the audit should be included in the notes to the accounts.

7.3 The Chief Executive must prepare the annual report and accounts in accordance with the FCO consolidated accounts production timetable, and sign on a date which precedes that on which the FCO PUS signs the consolidated FCO accounts. The Chief Executive is responsible for ensuring proper records are kept relating to the accounts.

7.4 The Chief Executive is responsible for ensuring that the annual report and accounts is laid before Parliament, in accordance with the relevant guidelines, before the summer recess. The draft report and accounts should be submitted to the Comptroller & Auditor General within a timetable agreed with the FCO for the purposes of external audit.

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7.5 A copy of the annual report and accounts must be made available on the Wilton Park website as soon as possible after laying before Parliament.

8 Internal Audit and Counter Fraud

Internal Audit and Counter Fraud services will be provided by the FCO, in accordance with the Treasury's Public Sector Internal Audit Standards (PSIAS) <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/public-sector-internal-audit-standards>. The Head of FCO Internal Audit will produce an annual plan of proposed audit areas for agreement by the Wilton Park Audit and Risk Assurance Committee. Wilton Park shall keep records of, and prepare and forward to the Department an annual report on fraud and theft suffered by Wilton Park and notify the sponsor Department of any unusual or major incidents as soon as possible. Wilton Park will ensure that FCO Internal Audit and Counter Fraud has complete access to all relevant records.

9 External Audit

9.1 The Comptroller & Auditor General (C&AG) audits Wilton Park's annual accounts and passes them to the Chief Executive, for consolidation into the FCO's annual accounts.

9.2 The C&AG:

- Will consult the Department and Wilton Park on whom – the NAO or a commercial auditor - shall undertake the audit on his behalf, through the final decision rests with the C&AG;
- Has a statutory right of access to relevant documents, including by virtue of section 25(8) of the Government Resources and Accounts Act 2000, held by another party in receipt of payments from Wilton Park;
- Will share with the sponsor Department information identified during the audit process and the audit report (together with any other outputs) at the end of the audit, in particular on issues impacting on the Department's responsibilities in relation to financial systems within Wilton Park; and
- Will, where asked, provide Departments and other relevant bodies with Regulatory Compliance reports and other similar reports which departments may request at the commencement of the audit and which are compatible with the independent auditor's role.

9.3 The C&AG may carry out examinations into the economy, efficiency and effectiveness with which Wilton Park has used its resources in discharging its functions. For the purpose of these examinations the C&AG has statutory access to documents as provided for under section 8 of the National Audit Act 1983. In addition, Wilton Park shall provide, in conditions to contracts, for the C&AG to exercise such access to documents held by contractors and sub-contractors as may be required for these examinations; and shall use its best endeavours to secure access for the C&AG to any other documents required by the C&AG which are held by other bodies.

Right of access

9.4 The FCO has the right of access to all Wilton Park records and personnel for any purpose including, for example, sponsorship audits and operational investigations.

Management and financial responsibilities

10 Managing Public Money and other government-wide corporate guidance and instructions

10.1 Unless agreed by the Department and, as necessary, HM Treasury, Wilton Park shall follow the principles, rules, guidance and advice in *Managing Public Money*, referring any difficulties or potential bids for exemptions to Campaigns and Engagement Department in the FCO in the first instance. A list of guidance and instructions with which the ALB should comply is in Annex A. Furthermore, Wilton Park should comply with FCO HR procedures including conduct and discipline, attendance management, equal opportunities, and health and safety policies; and observe any general guidance issued by HM Treasury and Cabinet Office e.g. requirements on data handling.

10.2 In all other areas not covered by the above the Chief Executive should ensure the Agency either follows FCO Guidance or puts in place suitable alternative procedures, agreed with the FCO.

10.3 Once the budget has been approved by the FCO, and subject to any restrictions imposed by the responsible Minister's instructions and this document, Wilton Park shall have the authority to incur expenditure approved in the budget without further reference to the FCO, on the following conditions:

- Wilton Park shall comply with *Managing Public Money* regarding novel, contentious, repercussive proposals;
- Inclusion of any planned and approved expenditure in the budget shall not remove the need to seek formal Departmental approval where any proposed expenditure is outside the delegated limits or is for new schemes not previously agreed;
- Wilton Park shall provide Campaigns and Engagement Department with such information about its operations, performance individual projects or other expenditure as the FCO may reasonably require; and
- Wilton Park does not make any change of policy or practice which has wider financial implications that might prove repercussive or which might significantly affect the future level of resource required.

10.4 Wilton Park shall comply with the following delegations, whereby the Chief Executive will seek approval from the Wilton Park Board:

- Any single item of administration cost expenditure in excess of £50,000 which is not included the annual budget; Any capital expenditure project in excess of £10,000 which is not included in the agreed annual budget;
- Any single asset disposal in excess of £10,000; Any costs associated with initiatives outside business as usual in excess of £20,000;
- Making any significant change in the scale of the operation or funding or any initiative or particular scheme previously approved by the WP Board; and
- Carrying out policies that go against the principles, rules, guidance and advice in *Managing Public Money*.

11 Corporate governance

Board appointments – the Chair and Board members

11.1 The Non-Executive Chair is appointed by the Secretary of State for an extendable five year term and heads both the Wilton Park Board and the Wilton Park Advisory Council, and ensures that together they set, implement and monitor Wilton Park's delivery against its purpose and specific targets. The Chair is paid by the FCO as a fee paid officer the equivalent to 0.2 FTE of an SMS 1 officer.

11.2 The Wilton Park Board is appointed by the Secretary of State to advise the FCO and Ministers on the management and finances of Wilton Park Executive Agency. The Board will meet five times per year. The Chair may convene additional meetings as necessary. In line with the government's *Code of Good Practice*, <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/corporate-governance-code-for-central-government-departments>, the Board will comprise:

- The Non-Executive Chair;
- The Chief Executive;
- Up to three additional Non-Executives:
 - ❖ who have a balance of skills and experience appropriate to directing Wilton Park's business;
 - ❖ who ensure that executive members are supported and constructively challenged in their role;
 - ❖ one of whom chairs the Audit & Risk Committee; and
- A maximum of three senior FCO officials, one of whom is the SDO.

11.3 The Chief Executive will represent Wilton Park Executive Agency, with other members of the SMT attending. Additional members of the FCO may be appointed as observers.

11.4 At the invitation of the Chair, the Wilton Park Board may also be attended by Senior Civil Servants from other Government Departments involved in Wilton Park's work.

11.5 Through open competition, on the advice of Ministers, the Secretary of State appoints Non-Executive members of the Board for three years, renewable for a further three years.

11.6 The Chair and Non-Executive members of the Board appointments will comply with the Commissioner for Public Appointments *Code of Practice for Ministerial Appointments to Public Bodies*.

11.7 Non Executive Director positions are unpaid, other than the Chair of the ARAC. Reasonable costs of travel within the UK to attend Board meetings are reimbursed.

12 Risk management

12.1 Wilton Park shall ensure that the risks that it faces are dealt with in an appropriate manner, in accordance with relevant aspects of best practice in corporate governance, and develop a risk management strategy, in accordance with the Treasury guidance Management of Risk: Principles and Concepts (http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/orange_book.htm). It should adopt and implement policies and practices to safeguard itself against fraud and theft, in line with the Treasury's guidance on tackling fraud:

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http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20130129110402/http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/d/managing_the_risk_fraud_guide_for_managers.pdf.pdf It should also take all reasonable steps to appraise the financial standing of any firm or other body with which it intends to enter into a contract.

13 Corporate and business plans

13.1 The SMT will draw up a corporate plan covering three years ahead to be agreed by the Wilton Park Board and submit this plan to the FCO by the end of February each year. Wilton Park shall agree with the Department the issues to be addressed in the plan and the timetable for its preparation. The plan shall reflect Wilton Park's duties and, within those duties, the priorities set from time to time by the responsible Minister (including decisions taken on policy and resources in the light of wider public expenditure decisions). The plan shall demonstrate how Wilton Park contributes to the achievement of the FCO's priorities.

13.2 The first year of the corporate plan, amplified as necessary, shall form the business plan. The business plan shall be updated to include key targets and milestones, including financial, for the year immediately ahead and shall be linked to budgeting information so that resources allocated to achieve specific objectives can readily be identified by the Department. The Wilton Park Business Plan will not be published, as it contains commercially sensitive information. Targets agreed in the Business Plan will be included in the Annual Report and Accounts and separately be made available to staff. Measurement of performance against these targets will be undertaken using a robust monitoring and evaluation system.

13.3 The Business Plan will include:

- Key objectives and associated key performance targets for the forward years, and the strategy for achieving those objectives;
- Key non-financial performance targets;
- Detailed income and expenditure budgets;
- staffing levels;
- A review of performance in the preceding financial year, together with comparable outturns for the previous 3 years, and an estimate of performance in the current year;
- Alternative scenarios and an assessment of the risk factors that may significantly affect the execution of the plan but that cannot be accurately forecast; and
- Other matters as agreed between the FCO and Wilton Park.

13.4 Wilton Park will establish a business continuity/contingency plan, which will include details of the FCO's role.

Pricing Policy

13.5 Wilton Park's pricing policy, as determined by the Chief Executive, will reflect the need for the Agency to achieve its financial targets set out in the annual Business Plan as well as longer-term business strategy.

13.6 Prices, including appropriate discount structures, will be determined for conferences and commercial events to reflect competitive forces in these market places.

14 Budgeting Procedures

14.1 Each year, in the light of decisions by the Department on the updated draft corporate plan, the FCO will send to the Wilton Park by end March:

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- A formal statement of the annual budgetary provision allocated by the Department in the light of competing priorities across the FCO. Wilton Park will be free to conduct its affairs within the terms of this Framework Document and the strategy set out in its Business Plan; and
- A statement of any planned change in policies affecting Wilton Park.

14.2 The approved annual business plan will take account both of approved funding provision and any forecast receipts, and will include a budget of estimated payments and receipts together with a profile of expected expenditure and of draw-down of FCO core funding and use of the Accountable ODA grant. These elements form part of the approved business plan for the year in question.

15 Reporting performance to the Department

15.1 Wilton Park shall operate management, information and accounting systems that enable it to review in a timely and effective manner its financial and non-financial performance against the budgets and targets set out in the corporate and business plans. Wilton Park shall inform the FCO of any changes that make achievement of objectives more or less difficult. It shall report financial and non-financial performance, including performance in helping to deliver Ministers' policies, and the achievement of key objectives at Wilton Park Board meetings. Wilton Park's performance shall be formally reviewed by the FCO twice a year. The responsible Minister will meet the Chief Executive once a year.

Providing monitoring information to the FCO

15.2 As a minimum, Wilton Park shall provide the FCO with monthly progress reports including management accounts, balanced scorecard and projected financial performance for the relevant financial year that will enable the Department satisfactorily to monitor:

- Progress against agreed targets;
- Its draw-down of the core FCO grant and use (and forecast) of any Accountable ODA grant;
- Forecast outturn by resource headings; and
- Other data required by Finance Directorate.

Wilton Park/FCO working level liaison arrangements

15.3 Officials of Campaigns and Engagement Department (CED) in the FCO will liaise regularly with Wilton Park officials to review financial performance against plans, achievement against targets and expenditure. CED will also take the opportunity to explain wider policy developments that might have an impact on Wilton Park.

15.4 The financial targets for Wilton Park Executive Agency are included within the financial settlement for Communication Directorate within the FCO. Wilton Park's financial performance, and forecast results, is included within the monthly Communication Directorate contribution to the FCO Key Performance Report.

15.5 FCO Communication Directorate and Wilton Park will agree a Financial Memorandum of Understanding, which will specify arrangements for intercompany accounting arrangements. This Memorandum will include cash management, financial reporting and management accounting information. The Memorandum, modified for publication, is shown at Annex B.

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15.6 Wilton Park will maintain such internal financial controls and management accounting systems as will enable its management readily to review performance (including sales, costs, profitability, cash flow and staffing) against agreed budgets.

15.7 Wilton Park will distinguish between costs and revenues of Wilton Park conferences, and those incurred and received in respect of general commercial business.

15.8 The SMT will carry out appropriate investment appraisal of all major projects, normally in the process of preparing its Business Plan, and submit proposals to the Wilton Park Board on significant investments as required.

16 Delegated Authorities

16.1 Wilton Park's delegated authorities are set out in 11.4. Wilton Park shall obtain the FCO's prior written approval before incurring expenditure outside the conditions set out in 11.3.

17 Wilton Park Staff

17.1 All Staff at Wilton Park are Civil Servants with Civil Service terms and conditions of employment. The Chief Executive is responsible for all human resource matters in respect of Wilton Park staff, including the pay and grading of posts and the recruitment and promotion of staff. The Chief Executive in exercising these responsibilities will have regard to guidance and regulations issued by the FCO, Cabinet Office, HM Treasury and the Civil Service Commissioners. This function may be delegated to a Human Resource Officer, but the overall responsibility remains with the Chief Executive.

Broad responsibilities for staff

17.2 Within the arrangements approved by the responsible Minister and the Treasury, Wilton Park will have responsibility for the recruitment, retention and motivation of its staff. The broad responsibilities towards its staff are to ensure that:

- The rules for recruitment and management of staff create an inclusive culture in which diversity is fully valued; appointment and advancement is based on merit: there is no discrimination on grounds of gender, age; being or becoming a transsexual person; being married or in a civil partnership; being pregnant or on maternity leave; race, including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin; religion, belief or lack of religion or belief; sex; and sexual orientation;
- The level and structure of its staffing, including grading and staff numbers, are appropriate to its functions and the requirements of economy, efficiency and effectiveness;
- The performance of its staff at all levels is satisfactorily appraised and Wilton Park performance management systems are reviewed from time to time;
- Its staff are encouraged to acquire the appropriate professional, management and other expertise necessary to achieve Wilton Park's objectives;
- Proper consultation with staff takes place on key issues affecting them;
- Adequate grievance and disciplinary procedures are in place;
- Whistle-blowing procedures consistent with the Public Disclosure act are in place; and
- A code of conduct for staff is in place based on the Cabinet Office's *Model Code for Staff of Executive Non-departmental Public Bodies*:

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Staff costs

17.3 Subject to its delegated authorities, Wilton Park shall ensure that the creation of any additional posts does not incur forward commitments that will exceed its ability to pay for them.

Pay and conditions of service

17.4 The Chief Executive may, subject to the agreement of the Wilton Park Board, introduce local pay and grading arrangements best suited to Wilton Park activities.

17.5 Payment in respect of travel expenses or other allowances, should be made in accordance with the *Civil Service Management Code*:

(<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/civil-servants-terms-and-conditions>) except where prior approval has been given by the FCO to vary such rates.

17.6 Staff terms and conditions should be set out in an Employee Handbook, which should be provided to the FCO together with subsequent amendments.

17.7 Wilton Park shall operate a performance-related pay scheme that shall form part of the annual aggregate pay budget approved by the FCO or the general pay structure approved by the FCO.

17.8 The travel expenses of Board members shall be tied to the rates allowed to senior staff of Wilton Park. Reasonable actual costs shall be reimbursed.

17.9 Wilton Park shall comply with the EU Directive on contract workers – the Fixed-Term Employees (Prevention of Less Favourable Treatment) Regulations.

Pensions, redundancy and compensation

17.10 Wilton Park staff are eligible to join the Principal Civil Service Pension Scheme (PCSPS). Staff may opt out of the occupational pension scheme provided by Wilton Park, but that employers' contribution to any personal pension arrangement, including stakeholder pension shall normally be limited to the national insurance rebate level.

17.11 Any proposal by Wilton Park to move from the existing pension arrangements, or to pay any redundancy or compensation for loss of office, requires the prior approval of the FCO. FCO Human Resources Directorate will be consulted on any proposals, and for each staff case, concerning dismissal, early retirement or redundancy. The Diplomatic Service Trade Union Side will be consulted on any proposals concerning redundancy. Proposals on severance must comply with the rules in chapter 4 of Managing Public money.

Recruitment

17.12 Recruitment of staff will be carried out by fair and open competition by Wilton Park in accordance with the recruitment principles specified by the Civil Service Commissioners. For recruitment at D6 level and above, selection boards are required to include an FCO representative.

Training and Career Development

17.13 Wilton Park has been accredited as an Investor in People and it is committed to maintaining this status. Arrangements will be made to ensure that staff has the training to ensure their personal development and professional expertise to enable Wilton Park to

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achieve its objectives and annual targets. Staff will have the option of participating in any career development training by attending courses, shadowing or on the job training within the FCO, on the Civil Service Learning Platform or elsewhere. Such FCO training may be funded jointly or by agreement.

Promotion

17.14 Staff may, where appropriate, be considered for progression, promotion or posting to other jobs within the FCO or at Wilton Park.

Appeals

17.15 Wilton Park staff have a right to the standard appeal process if security clearance is withdrawn.

Employee Records

17.16 The Chief Executive will make available to FCO Human Resources Directorate such employee information as is reasonably required, taking account of the provisions of the Data Protection Act 1998, which are the subject of a supplementary note.

Employee Relations

17.17 The Chief Executive is responsible for good employee relations and will ensure there are suitable and lawful procedures for regular communication with employees and meetings with their representatives, including the Diplomatic Service Trade Union Side.

18 Advice and Services provided by the FCO to Wilton Park

Estates

18.1 Wilton Park will seek the advice of FCO Estates and Security Department on significant estate matters. Wilton Park will manage the leasehold estate in compliance with arrangements and obligations within the lease on Wiston House. Maintenance work will comply with relevant building rules and regulations.

Legal Services

18.2 Wilton Park may use the FCO's legal services as required.

Payroll Services

18.3 Wilton Park payroll services will be provided by the FCO.

Dealing with the Media

18.4 The Chief Executive may deal directly with the media on subjects relating to Wilton Park activities. Where media enquiries may raise issues concerning the FCO, the Chief Executive will consult with the FCO Head of Media Office and Digital Transformation Unit.

19 Review of the role of the Agency

19.1 In line with Cabinet Office guidance, a tailored review [of the role of the Agency] will be undertaken every three years, with the next due in 2018.

19.2 Should a decision be made to dissolve the Agency following any such review, FCO Ministers will seek formal approval from the Chief Secretary to the Treasury and the Minister for the Cabinet Office. Such a request would be accompanied by:

- Details of the processes and outcomes considered in reaching this decision;
- Proposals detailing how the FCO would take this forward e.g. what will happen to staff, the work of the Agency etc; and
- Details of any presentational issues of which they should be aware.

20 Arrangements in the event that Wilton Park is wound up

20.1 In the event of the decision being made to wind up Wilton Park, Wilton Park will be required to wind-up its affairs in accordance with the timetable agreed with the FCO and to put in place a plan for its closure. This will include arrangements for the handover of its residual business and assets and liabilities.

20.2 The draft wind-up plan should be forwarded to the FCO in accordance with the agreed timetable.

20.3 The FCO shall put in place arrangements to ensure that, when Wilton Park is wound up, this shall be done in an orderly manner. In particular the FCO should ensure that where Wilton Park is wound up, the assets and liabilities of the body are passed to any successor organisation and accounted for properly. (In the event that there is no successor organisation, the assets and liabilities should revert to the FCO.) To this end, the FCO, in conjunction with Wilton Park, shall:

- Ensure that procedures are in place in Wilton Park to gain independent assurance on key transactions, financial commitments, cash flows and other information needed to handle the wind-up effectively and to maintain the momentum of work inherited by any residual body;
- Specify the basis for the valuation and accounting treatment of Wilton Park's assets and liabilities;
- Where Wilton Park is audited by the National Audit Office; ensure that arrangements are in place to prepare closing accounts and pass to the C&AG for external audit and that funds are in place to pay for such audits. It shall be for the C&AG to lay the final accounts in Parliament, together with his report on the accounts; and
- Arrange for the most appropriate person to sign the closing accounts. In the event that another ALB takes on the role, responsibilities, assets and liabilities, the succeeding ALB AO should sign the closing accounts. In the event that the FCO inherits the role, responsibilities, assets and liabilities, the PUS should sign.

20.4 Wilton Park shall provide the Department with full details of all agreements where Wilton Park or its successors have a right to share in the financial gains of developers. It should also pass to the FCO details of any other forms of claw-back due to the FCO.

21 Framework Document

Amendments and Frequency of Review

21.1 The Framework Document and its operation will be reviewed by the FCO, in consultation with Wilton Park, as a minimum at least every three years. The review should include an assessment of Wilton Park's track record in achieving its objectives.

21.2 The FCO or Wilton Park may propose changes to this Framework Document at any time. Changes will need to be approved by the Wilton Park Board. The FCO will be responsible for consulting all those concerned with proposals for amendments, including Cabinet Office and HM Treasury.

Publication

21.3 The FCO will place copies of this Framework Document and any subsequent amendment in the Libraries of both Houses of Parliament.

21.4 Printed copies can be obtained from Wilton Park, Wiston House, Steyning, West Sussex, BN44 3DZ.

The Framework Document will be published on the Wilton Park website: www.wiltonpark.org.uk.

LIST OF APPENDICES TO THE SPECIMEN DOCUMENT

Annex 1 List of government-wide corporate guidance instructions (attached)

Annex 2 Financial Memorandum of Understanding



Signed

Hugh Elliott
Director of Communication
Foreign and Commonwealth Office

Date 3 April 2017



Signed

Richard Burge
Chief Executive
Wilton Park

Date 31 March 2017

ANNEX A – Compliance with government-wide corporate guidance and instructions

Wilton Park Executive Agency complies with the following general guidance documents and instructions:

- This **Framework Document**;
- The government financial reporting manual (FReM):
<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/government-financial-reporting-manual-frem>
- **Managing Public Money** (MPM), including *Chapter 6: Fees, Charges Guide*;
- Relevant “**Dear Accounting Officer**” letters:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/dao-letters>;
- Appropriate adaptations of sections of **Corporate Governance in Central Government Departments: Code of Good Practice**:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/corporate-governance-code-for-central-government-departments>;
- **Code of Conduct for Board members of Public Bodies**:
http://www.civilservice.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2011/09/code-of-conduct_tcm6-38901.pdf
- **Public Sector Internal Audit Standards**
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/public-sector-internal-audit-standards>;
- **Management of Risk - Principles and Concepts**:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/orange-book>;
- **HM Treasury Guidance on Tackling Fraud**:
http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20130129110402/http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/d/managing_the_risk_fraud_guide_for_managers.pdf.pdf
- **Regularity, Propriety and Value for Money**:
http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20130129110402/http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/psr_governance-valueformoney.htm
- **The Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman’s Principles of Good Administration**
<http://www.ombudsman.org.uk/improving-public-service/ombudsmansprinciples>;
- Relevant **Freedom of Information Act** guidance and instructions (Ministry of Justice);
- Departmental Banking: A Manual for Government Departments, annex 5.6 of *Managing Public Money*;
- Other relevant instructions and instructions issued by the Treasury in respect of Whole of Government Accounts;

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- Other relevant instructions and guidance issued by the central Departments;
- Specific instructions and guidance issued by **FCO**; and
- Recommendations made by the **Public Accounts Committee**, or by other Parliamentary authority, that have been accepted by the Government and relevant to the ALB.

ANNEX B – FINANCE: MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

This Memorandum sets out the way in which Intercompany accounting arrangements are intended to work and formalises the way in which Wilton Park (WP) handles and agrees specified transactions and balances with the FCO, including cash.

Agreement of the Memorandum

This Memorandum is intended to support the governance and control arrangements within the Wilton Park Framework Document.

This Memorandum is for the Finance Director of Wilton Park and the Finance Manager of FCO Communication Directorate to agree amendments or variations.

The Memorandum applies to the financial year 2016-17 and thereafter, as amended.

Intercompany accounting arrangements

1. Accounts Consolidation:

The assets and liabilities, and operating results of WP are consolidated into the FCO accounts in full. The consolidated WP surplus/deficit (excluding non-cash) is reflected against the FCO Communication Directorate budget, as is core sponsorship provided by the FCO to WP. Financial reporting arrangements are described below.

2. Net Parliamentary Funding:

WP elects to use the payroll services of the FCO for its permanent staff in line with the WP Framework Document. In order to minimise transfer of cash funding between WP and the FCO, the FCO does not require WP to reimburse the FCO monthly for pay disbursements made on behalf of WP. Conversely, the FCO does not transfer cash to WP for the value of agreed core sponsorship of the WP conference programme or for the agreed capital funding. Instead the FCO will record the payroll charges attributable to WP as a receivable balance and the core sponsorship and capital funding as a payable balance within its accounts. WP, in effect mirroring the FCO position, will record these as a payable and receivable balance respectively. WP is required to transfer excess cash balances held to the FCO on a regular basis and these receipts will be received against the pre-existing receivable balance, thereby reducing the amount owed by WP to the FCO. At the end of the financial year the FCO will net the remaining receivable and payable balances and then initiate a transfer of cash to reconcile the outstanding balance in the new financial year.

3. Intercompany account controls:

The WP accounting system shows Net Parliamentary Funding (i.e. core sponsorship and capital funding) as a movement in Reserves, with separate account codes to show: FCO Payables and FCO Receivables Corresponding balances are reflected in the FCO accounting system as WP Receivables and WP Payables.

These balances will be eliminated in the FCO Group when the WP financial statements and notes are fully consolidated within the FCO Accounts.

4. Agreement of Intercompany balances:

The FCO Corporate Service Centre reconciles the balances held between the FCO and WP on a quarterly basis, liaising with WP directly to resolve any queries.

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5. Quarterly reporting:

The WP Finance Director should provide management accounting information to the FCO Communication Directorate on a quarterly basis to a pre-agreed timescale and format. The information provided should enable the FCO Communication Directorate to appreciate the actual and forecast financial position and performance of WP and to make effective decisions concerning budget cover and funding etc based on the relevant figures.

Deadlines to complete the FCO Consolidation template and provide WP near final draft accounts for Q3 and Q4 will be communicated as per the relevant plan produced by the FCO Corporate Accounting Team.

Specified transactions and balances

6. Provisions:

Any provisions created in the WP accounts relating to transactions or balances with the FCO should be agreed between WP and the FCO before being recognised in the WP accounts. Agreements on any such provisions should specify how the provision will be cleared through respective accounts.

7. FCO Intercompany Accruals:

Any exceptional and/or unforeseen circumstances that require intercompany accruals must be agreed between WP and the FCO prior to being recognised in the WP accounts.

8. Other Intercompany Debtor and Creditor balances:

WP will agree the process for completion of VAT returns, and the payment of VAT balances, with the FCO Corporate Service Centre.

For all other transactions with the FCO, the presumption is that WP will invoice relevant FCO Directorates for the agreed value of conference, venue hire or other services provided. Equally, any services provided by the FCO to WP should be invoiced to WP, with the exception of non-cash charges reflected in the WP accounts as notional charges, covering for example, payroll and internal audit services.

9. Capital funding

As part of its budget setting process, the FCO provides WP with capital investment funding. This capital funding is included within the FCO Communication Directorate budget baseline. The FCO will advise WP of the amount of capital funding approved, and which WP will include in its Corporate Plan.

WP will pay for capital investments from its overall cash balances. Capital investment spending will feature in the FCO accounts through the value of PPE additions in year.

Cash Balances

10. Cash management:

WP operates its own banking and cash management arrangements. It is for WP to manage those arrangements, and the associated cash and bank balances, effectively and efficiently in line with the guidance provided within *Managing Public Money*. Cash balances accumulated during the course of the year from FCO funding shall be kept at the minimum level consistent with the efficient operation of Wilton Park. The balances held should be in line with their expected cash flows from operations. Any excess of cash held should be surrendered to the FCO