

**Public Service Commission
Minutes of Proceedings**

**2.15 pm, Monday 2 November 2009
Boardroom, 10 Cromac Place
The Gasworks**

Present: Mr Sid McDowell (Chairman)
Mr Brian Hanna
Professor Bernard Cullen
Mr Jim McCusker
Mr Dessie Mitchell
Dr Collim Patton

In Attendance: Miss Susan Dornan
Mrs Gillian McKeown
Mrs Patricia Stringer

Ian Maye (DoE Local Government)
Adrian Kerr (Local Government Staff Commission)
Wesley Shannon (DoE Local Government)

1. Apologies

The apology from Brenda McLaughlin was noted.

2. Minutes of Meeting of 7 October 2009

The minutes were agreed.

3. Matters Arising

To be considered under substantive agenda items

4. Delegation from DoE Local Government/Local Government Staff Commission

Ian Maye and Adrian Kerr provided an update on progress including the Minister's commitment to the reform programme in local government; progress on legislation; the introduction of phased vacancy control from 1 October 2009; local government boundaries and the draft HR framework and draft voluntary severance scheme.

Agreed: Secretariat to submit comments on the report entitled "Economic Appraisal of options for local government service delivery in its entirety".

Agreed: Delegation to be invited to provide another update at the Commission meeting on 13 January.

Agreed: Secretariat to follow up on the position of the draft Guidance Note on the Executive's Fifth Guiding Principle.

5. Education and Skills Authority - update

The Chairman advised that there had been no response to the Commission's letter sent to Gavin Boyd's office on 16 October.

Agreed: Secretariat to write again to Gavin Boyd's office requesting a response and sight of the Staff Transfer Scheme.

6. Compliance/Lessons Learned - update

The Chairman advised that he had met with the acting Chief Executive and Commissioner Mitchell prior to the start of today's meeting to discuss the content of the compliance questionnaire. A draft would now be prepared for further consideration.

Agreed: Questionnaire to be drafted and an update to be provided at the next meeting.

Commissioners discussed John Compton's letter of 23 October regarding the Assistant Director of Finance posts in the Regional Health and Social Care Board.

Agreed: Secretariat to reply to John Compton, seeking the immediate cessation of the competition, highlighting that the proposed approach does not comply with the Executive's Fourth Guiding Principle. The posts should be opened to those "at risk" staff in the RPA Affected Group as a whole, prior to going to open competition.

Agreed: Secretariat to write to John McMillen, OFMDFM, raising the need to draw the attention of employers to their obligations under the Guiding

Principles. Specific attention to be drawn to the Executive's Fourth Guiding Principle setting out the order of consideration to be followed in seeking to fill vacancies and new or substantially new posts after the establishment of a new organisation. Employers to be reminded that that the Principle applies until a minimum of 12 months after their establishment or for a minimum of 12 months after the subsequent absorption of new functions into new organisations.

Agreed: Secretariat to write to Andrew McCormick, Permanent Secretary DHSSPS, seeking statistics on the vacancies/new posts to date which have been filled in the new Health bodies which were created on 1 April 2009.

7. RPA progress reports

Commissioners briefly discussed the progress reports.

Agreed: Secretariat to speak to Irene Knox on the issue of funding of Phase 2 Voluntary Severance in NILA.

8. Chairman's Business

The Chairman advised that Susan Dornan, the acting Chief Executive, will be leaving at the end of November and will be replaced by Mrs Patricia Stringer. The Chairman and Commissioners recorded their deep appreciation for all Susan's work. In particular they expressed their appreciation for Susan's willingness to return to work for the Commission and stated that her previous experience had been of enormous value at a critical time in the implementation of the RPA. Commissioners welcomed Patricia and wished her well in her new post.

9. Northern Ireland Assembly/Executive Developments

The Minister's statement to the Assembly on 20 October was covered under item 4.

10. Any Other Business

None.

11. Date of the next meeting

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday 2 December at 10.30am.

Sid McDowell

Sid McDowell
Chairman