



**Public Service Commission
Minutes of Proceedings**

**2pm, Wednesday 17 December 2008
Boardroom 10 Cromac Place
The Gasworks**

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

Delegation: Paul Simpson (Department of the Environment)
Ian Maye (Department of the Environment)

In Attendance: Miss Susan Dornan

1. Apologies

None.

2. Delegation from Department of the Environment

The Chairman welcomed Paul Simpson and Ian Maye (DOE) who gave a comprehensive briefing on local government reform. The discussion which ensued included progress made by the policy panels; composition of the transition committees; the need to learn from the research conducted in the Health sector; proposed Chief Executive, HR and Finance Director term appointments; negotiating machinery; pensions and secondments arrangements; vacancy management scheme and communication strategy.

Commissioners agreed the update had been useful and that a further meeting should be arranged in March 2009.

Agreed: Commission to invite Paul Simpson and Ian Maye to a March meeting to provide a further update on Local Government Reform.

Agreed: Commission to write to Paul Simpson on the Commission's concerns regarding proposed term appointments for the new local Government Chief Executive, HR and Finance Director posts.

3. Minutes of Meeting of 25 November 2008

The minutes were agreed.

4. Matters Arising

Codes of Practice/Guidance Notes Update

The progress report from Jacqui Wallace, Central Personnel Group (CPG, dated 15 December 2008) was tabled. Commissioners noted its content.

Compliance with PSC Guiding Principles/draft 5th Guiding Principle Voluntary Severance Arrangement - Update

The Chairman advised that the draft 5th Guiding Principle had still not been presented to the Executive.

Commissioners noted that a CPG response is awaited to the Acting Chief Executive's interim letter to Derek Baker regarding the draft compliance paper.

Agreed: 5th Guiding Principle to be an agenda item at the next Commission meeting.

Communication Event 9 December 2008 - Update

The Chairman stated this has been a very successful event. In the ensuing discussion, Commissioners concluded that there was clearly a need for a follow-up event(s) aimed at Chief Executive level and separately for HR personnel, which could provide opportunities for more in depth discussion.

Agreed: Commission to investigate the possibility of follow-up event(s) with staff commissions for Local Government and Education.

Agreed: Presentations to be placed on PSC website.

Health and Social Care Reform – Update

Commissioners briefly discussed the meeting on 16 December 2008 with David Bingham, the Director of HR, Health and Personal Social Services (HPSS).

Agreed: Commission to seek written confirmation from David Bingham of the Commission's understanding that PSC Guiding principles would apply to shared services in the health sector, even if these functions did not transfer until a number of years after the establishment of the new health bodies in April 2009.

Role of PSC in Shared Services/Status of PSC Guiding Principles – Update
The Chairman advised this work was ongoing.

5. RPA Progress Reports

Commissioners briefly discussed the progress reports supplied on Local Government, Education, NILA and Health.

Agreed: Commission to invite Gavin Boyd to the Commission meeting in February.

6. Chairman's Business

The Chairman advised Commissioners that the Commission would continue to operate out of the Gasworks for the foreseeable future. Alternative options for administrative support are being explored.

7. Northern Ireland Assembly/Executive Developments

The Education Bill passed its second reading on 8 December 2008. The Minister's statement to the Assembly referred to the contained provisions being consistent with PSC Guiding Principles.

8. Any Other Business

Commissioners agreed dates for future Commission meetings as follows:

Monday 23 February 2pm start (lunch from 1pm)
Thursday 26 March 2pm start (lunch from 1pm)
Thursday 23 April 10am start

9. Date of Next Meeting

The next commission meeting is due to take place at 2pm on Monday 26 January 2009.


