

## RPA Cross Sector HR Forum meeting 17 August 2006

Present: Linda Brown (CPG)  
Michael Daly (CPG)  
Jacqui Wallace (CPG)  
Noel Kelly (DSO)  
Jim McKeown (RPA)  
David Bingham (DHSSPS)  
June Ingram (DEL)  
Wendy Johnston (DRD)  
Maura McCusker (DE)  
Carol McCabe (OFMDFM)  
Michael Henderson (OFMDFM)  
Wendy Hunter (DOE)

Apologies: Orla Murray (DSO)  
Ian Maye (DOE)  
Matthew Alford (DE)  
Billy Gamble (OFMDFM)

### 1. Minutes of last meeting and matters arising

Minutes of the meeting on 3 August 2006 were agreed.

#### Matters arising

Alternative Dispute Solution – Linda Brown confirmed that work on this had not yet commenced due to more pressing priorities.

Representation of Affected Bodies – discussed under agenda item 2.

Feedback from recent meetings – Linda Brown confirmed that a note summarising the main points from meetings with PSC and a tri-partite meeting involving PSC, NICICTU and Government had issued

Vacancy Management – Linda Brown confirmed that a response had issued to PSC.

Legislative Provisions – Linda Brown confirmed that a draft response to PSC had been circulated and had now issued to PSC.

Draft HR Framework and draft HR Principles – Linda Brown confirmed that these documents have issued to PSC.

Work Programme – discussed under agenda item 2.

Reference : JW000076

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Communication – Michael Henderson provided a copy of a Bulletin for clearance.

## **2. Membership and Terms of Reference**

Terms of reference were discussed and agreed subject to amendments to paragraph 5.

Minor amendments to the table on Bodies affected by RPA were agreed. It was further agreed that further members should be asked to join the Forum and that where gaps remained points of contact should be identified to ensure 100% coverage of the Bodies affected.

Michael Daly explained his role in relation to representing the NICS on the Forum and he outlined the position in relation to establishment of a RPA/NICS Forum. Wendy Johnston confirmed that she would be content to join the RPA/NICS Forum and withdraw from the Cross Sector Forum. June Ingram asked for DELs position on the Cross Sector Forum to be kept under review. It was agreed that CPG would contact relevant Departments to identify points of contact.

### **Action: CPG**

Linda Brown asked Forum members to provide, for the next meeting, details of arrangements/mechanisms, which they have put in place to communicate with all of the organisations they represent at the Forum.

### **Action: All**

An up-to-date version of the Work Programme was circulated. This was agreed (including target dates) the subject to some minor amendments. It was agreed that the HR Principles paper might need to be added to the programme if further refinement is required.

## **3. Update on feedback from PSC meetings**

Linda Brown explained that the wash-up meeting scheduled with Stephen Graham for that morning had been cancelled.

Jim McKeown gave some informal feedback. It was agreed that more formal feedback would be given in due course.

### **Action: CPG**

Jim McKeown highlighted that PSC had raised the issue of reciprocity. Michael Daly confirmed that in this regard he had been asked to produce an initial think piece on the boundaries of the RPA affected group. There was a brief discussion in this regard.

Reference : JW000076

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There was also a discussion on the handling of the PSCs request for information on the number of “exceptional posts”. The difficulties in providing accurate information when the structure of new organisations is not yet clear were highlighted. Jim McKeown emphasised the need to provide information on the maximum number of these posts anticipated.

#### **4. Discussion on any proposed submissions to PSC**

David Bingham informed the meeting of a draft paper being prepared in relation to appointment to 3<sup>rd</sup> level posts in Trusts. He stated that the paper would deal with all the practical difficulties associated with the use of the wider RPA pool for more junior level posts.

Jim McKeown raised the issue of Enterprise Ulster and suggested that a paper needs to go to PSC in this regard. It was agreed that DEL would prepare an initial draft for the consideration of the Forum.

**Action: DEL**

Michael Daly informed the meeting of a draft paper issued by the RPA Estates Sub-Group. He undertook to circulate this to Forum members.

**Action: CPG**

#### **5. Discussion on any emerging Cross Sector issues**

Michael Daly informed the meeting of a paper he had just received on the Lands and Property Services Agency. He outlined the proposed approach to filling senior posts. There was a brief discussion in this regard.

#### **6. Work Programme – progress reports**

David Bingham confirmed that an initial draft of a paper on salary protection had been prepared and sent to CPG.

Michael Daly informed the meeting on the position on Pay and Non pay terms and conditions, Public Service Pensions and Continuity of employment (legislation).

Maura McCusker undertook to check and report back the position on Negotiating/consultative mechanisms with trade unions at sector/employer level with Matthew Alford.

Jim McKeown undertook to discuss with John McMillan the issue of Consultative and liaison mechanisms between PSC, employers and trade unions.

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Carol McCabe undertook to follow up on the issue of Comprehensive and cross sector application of Section 75 obligations.

## **7. Tour de Table**

Michael Daly informed the group of the forthcoming meeting with DFP Supply in relation to the financial implications of RPA. He highlighted that Finance Divisions in Departments should expect contact in this regard.

Michael Henderson highlighted the draft Bulletin confirming that it would issue to Nigel Hamilton for clearance the following day.

Jim McKeown informed the meeting of the deadlines for submission of papers to the PSC meetings on 30<sup>th</sup> August and 20<sup>th</sup> September.

David Bingham confirmed the position in relation to the Director of Finance post and consultation with TUS for the Health Sector. He also informed the meeting that work is about to commence on EQIA on the HR Framework.

June Ingram confirmed that DEL has appropriate mechanisms in place and is working with DE in respect of functions transferring.

Wendy Johnston briefed the meeting on an issue, which has arisen within the Water Service in relation to the transfer of functions and redeployment of staff. She briefly outlined some of the difficulties being encountered with regard to redeployment and highlighted the possibility of redundancy. Noel Kelly explained the statutory position on this and flagged up some of the risks particularly when trying to redeploy more junior and/or non-mobile staff. Linda Brown suggested that Wendy bring some of the issues to PDG.

### **Action: Wendy Johnston**

Wendy Hunter informed the meeting that IDEA has been engaged in relation to review of the Taskforce. She confirmed that there is a review of the arrangements in place.

Carol McCabe referred to the work of the Equality Sub-Group and of the need to integrate equality in all the work strands.

Reference : JW000076

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