

**RPA CROSS SECTOR HR FORUM MEETING
21 NOVEMBER 2007 AT 2.00PM, ROYSTON HOUSE**

Present: Jacqui Wallace (Chair)
James Hutchinson (DOE) - deputising for Ian Maye
John Adams (NILGA)
Dale Heaney (Equality)
Vivienne Walker (DHSSPS)
Maureen Taggart (NIHE)
Paul McAllister (DCAL)
Damian Prince (OFMDFM)
Jacqui McLaughlin (DE) – deputising for Mark Browne
Noel Kelly (DSO)
Philip Angus (DETI)

Apologies: Ian Maye (DOE)
Mark Browne (DE)
Michael Daly
Derek Baker

Minutes: Laura Armstrong (CPG)
Angelene Laverty (CPG)

1. Minutes of the last meeting and matters arising.

The minutes of the meeting on 19 September were agreed subject to the amendments proposed by Paul McAllister.

Action point from previous meeting

It was confirmed that DEL had advised that the request from Enterprise Ulster for NICS pension terms was rejected and that their own scheme and discretions within this were applied as a result.

2. Update on PSC Guiding Principles and Codes of Practice

Jacqui Wallace explained that work was ongoing to finalise a draft Executive paper on the PSC's 2nd, 4th and 10th Guiding Principles and that it was hoped that this would be distributed to Permanent Secretaries for comment tomorrow (Thursday 22 November).

Draft revised Second and Fourth Guiding Principles

The group discussed the change in focus in the re-issued 2nd and 4th Guiding principles in relation to "At Risk" rather than RPA Affected Group, Jacqui clarified the distinction between the RPA Affected Group and the "At Risk" group and the group discussed concerns regarding the identification of the "At Risk" group.

Noel Kelly outlined the key employment law issues to be considered in relation to the recommendations contained in these Guiding Principles.

The Meeting discussed the options for going forward with PSC.

Third Guiding Principle

Jacqui advised that the draft Code of Practice on Staff Transfers is currently with TUS for comment and that the Addendum to the 3rd Guiding Principle is now in final form and would be included in the draft Code of Practice.

Draft Fifth Guiding Principle

Jacqui outlined that TUS met with dFM regarding a guarantee of no compulsory redundancies and that they now acknowledged that this issue should be raised with the Finance Minister. Officials are continuing to work with the PSC on this draft Guiding Principle.

Seventh, Eighth and Ninth Guiding Principles

Jacqui advised that the 7th, 8th and 9th Guiding Principles had been agreed by the Executive, issued in final form by the PSC and that Codes of Practice were being developed.

Draft Tenth Guiding Principle

Jacqui stated that the draft 10th and 11th Guiding Principles had been merged and that discussions were still ongoing with the PSC in relation to final paragraph of the newly merged 10th Guiding Principle.

Jacqui stated that the draft 10th Guiding Principle is one of the issues that it was hoped to take to the Executive along with the 2nd and 4th GP in the very near future.

Jacqui thanked everyone for their input to the Guiding Principles and stated that there would be further circulations for comment as necessary.

3. Sectoral updates

Jacqui referred the group to the emerging issues brief which had been issued to them in advance of the meeting. Jacqui invited the group to provide an update in addition to the brief.

In relation to Equality, Dale Heaney updated the group stating that a response was awaited from TUS in relation to the equality database. Dale further advised that approval had been received from the National Insurance Number Board to use National Insurance numbers as unique identifiers, subject to certain caveats. The group discussed the issue of

the timing of data collection and data quality. Dale agreed to feed these comments back to OFMdfM research colleagues.

With regards Health, Vivienne Walker outlined the progress being made in relation to the PSC research and advised of the current consultation in relation to Shared Services.

Damian Prince agreed to send the group a copy of the letter that was issued to the PSC regarding Shared Services and the PSC Guiding Principles.

Action: Damian Prince

In relation to Local Government Reform, James Hutchinson stated that it was anticipated that there would be an announcement on the Local Government Review around the end of January/beginning of February, he further advised that this date would be dependant on agreement being reached on the number of councils. John Adams added that he expected the decisions to look significantly different than currently proposed, otherwise, he questioned the merit of the reform in Local Government.

In relation to the Education Sector, Jacqui McLaughlin advised that they were currently in the process of communicating the change management strategy. Jacqui further stated they were developing HR Principles and that work was ongoing regarding the Staff Transfer Scheme.

Noel Kelly outlined that talks were still continuing regarding the Libraries Bill and the application of TUPE. Jacqui Wallace stated that the group would be kept updated on this matter.

4. Any other business

No other issues were raised.

5. Date of next meeting

28 January 2008 at 2.00pm in Royston House.