

RPA Cross Sector HR Forum meeting 6 July 2006

Present: Linda Brown (CPG)
Michael Daly (CPG)
Jacqui Wallace (CPG)
Noel Kelly (DSO)
Jim McKeown (RPA)
Wendy Johnston (DRD)
Ian Maye (DOE)
Maura McCusker (DE)
Matthew Alford (DE)
Vivien Walker (HPSS)
Billy Gamble (OFMDFM)
Michael Henderson (OFMDFM)

Apologies: Orla Murray
David Bingham
June Ingram

1. Minutes of last meeting and matters arising

Minutes of the last meeting were agreed. In the main matters arising are covered under agenda item.

In relation to papers on NICS HR Framework and Filling of posts Linda Brown reported that due to more pressing priorities work on these has not commenced.

On the information required in relation to Bodies affected by RPA Linda asked Forum members to have returns with Jacqui Wallace for the beginning of next week.

Action point: Information on Bodies affected by RPA to be sent to Jacqui Wallace by 10 July – Forum Members

2. Discussions on proposed submissions to PSC

a. Draft comments to PSC draft on Managing Vacancies

The draft comments paper was discussed and agreed with a few amendments. Jacqui Wallace undertook to make the changes and forward the final document to Jim McKeown.

Action point: Final version of paper on comments on PSC draft Managing Vacancies recommendation to issue to Jim McKeown 7 July – Jacqui Wallace

b. Paper on Legislation – staffing clauses

This paper was discussed and agreed with a few amendments. Jim McKeown undertook to make these amendments prior to submission to PSC.

A discussion on the practical application of TUPE followed. Michael Daly indicated that a contact with expertise in this regard had been identified within Treasury Solicitors and he confirmed that he hoped to meet with this individual in the near future.

Linda Brown stated that discussions highlighted the importance of the paper being prepared by David Bingham on Salary Protection in terms of debating what TUPE will mean in practise.

Action point: Amendments to paper on Legislation and staffing clauses – Jim McKeown

c. Submission to PSC on the filling of Director level posts in the five new HPSS Trusts

Vivien Walker detailed the background to this submission.

Both Wendy Johnston and Ian Maye expressed their concerns on the potential impact of closed competition to staff within their sectors. They explained that because of the timing of change it was likely that there would be less opportunities for their staff.

Vivien Walker explained the position within Health in terms of numbers of existing staff and numbers required in new structures.

Noel Kelly advised on the differing positions on new and transferring posts.

Linda Brown proposed that the way forward may be to reflect in the document that this is the proposal for Health but that other sectors should be considered separately. This approach was agreed and Vivien undertook to amend the submission accordingly.

Action point: Amendments to submission on filling Director level posts – Vivien Walker

3. Discussion on any emerging Cross Sector issues

Linda Brown referred to the Process Map for progressing HR Policies and Procedures which Matthew Alford had provided. She asked Jim McKeown whether the proposed process fitted with the protocols paper. Jim conformed that there was no problem in this regard.

Maura McCusker explained that she had some concerns about the process detailed for PSC/NICICTU/Cross Sector Forum. Vivien Walker described the processes being followed in Health.

Linda Brown proposed that the way forward was for members to work-out road-maps for their sector and consult colleague. She asked for a copy to the protocols paper to circulate as soon as possible. Jim McKeown undertook to provide a copy of the draft protocols document.

4. Future Work Programme – agreement on leads

Linda Brown referred to the document table on the Future Work Programme which had issued. This was discussed and it was agreed that Health would lead on “General principles of filling posts in new organisation” by reviewing the document previously submitted to PSC. Matthew Alford agreed to lead on “Negotiating/consultative mechanisms with trade unions at sector/employer level”. On “Alternative Dispute Resolution” Linda Brown agreed to speak to John Hunter on where this was left with the Labour Relations Agency.

Action point: Issue of Alternative Dispute Resolution and LRA to be raised with John Hunter – Linda Brown

5. Tour de Table

Ian Maye confirmed that within Local Government Sub Groups were just reporting. He undertook to share reports on Shared Service, HR and Capacity Building.

Jim McKeown informed the group of the forthcoming event on Capacity Building. He also explained the position in relation to the Communication Strategy and papers going to PSC for the meeting on 18 July.

Vivien Walker informed the group of the work underway in Health in relation to development of a Early Retirement/Redundancy Scheme.

Michael Daly updated the meeting of the ongoing work on pensions. He explained that Catherine Gilchrist may be in touch in relation to details of pension schemes for some of the bodies.

Michael Henderson explained his new role to the group and referred to the work to date on Communication.

Mathew Alford informed the meeting of the ongoing work within the Education Sector specifically in relation to the HR Practitioners Group. He offered to circulate the Terms of Reference of this group shortly. He said that a number of draft papers are being prepared on issues such as Vacancies, Re-deployment/Retirement, Equality Plan and Training and Development.

Billy Gamble said that he would be attending future Cross Sector meetings instead of Mary Bunting. He confirmed that he would share papers from the Equality Group.