

## COMMISSIONERS' BUSINESS MEETINGS: MINUTES

19-Apr-05

Attended: Commissioners Mrs J Eve (Chair), B Carlin, Mrs M Elliott, A Henry, S McDowell, J Steele. Secretariat: J McKeown (Secretary), Mrs J Dowling, Mrs E McKnight, P Lavery.

### Agenda

1. Introduction		Greg McConnell, OFMDFM, to provide an overview over lunch of the consultation document on Review of Public Administration.
2. Minutes of Meeting held on 15 February 2005		Agreed as drafted.
3. Matters Arising	Nationality issue update	Noted Girvan J's Judgement that the General Regulations made by DFP under Article 4(2) of the Civil Service (NI) Order 1996, are NOT ultra vires.
	Chairing of SCS competitions update	Commissioners content with the Aide Memoire produced by the Secretariat. A proposal to increase Commissioners' fees to be put to the Secretary of State after the General Election.
	Business Planning	Commissioners appreciative of the work which had gone into the very detailed Business Plan 2005/06. They agreed a proposal to arrange a workshop on Risk Management with a view to development of a Risks Register.
	Succession Planning	Proposals regarding competition for new Commissioners endorsed for submission to NIO.
4. Revised Recruitment Code and EQIA		Key comments/outcomes from the EQIA exercise noted. Required revisions to the draft Code agreed; these to be shared with DFP. The final report on the EQIA to issue simultaneously with the revised Code.
5. Revised General Regulations prescribing exceptions to the merit principle		Noted the amendments made following legal advice. The draft Regulations to be forwarded now to the Secretary of State for approval.
6. Audit Programme 2004/05		(1) Exceptions Audit: Final report issued to departments; to be discussed at Permanent Secretaries (PSG) sub-group meeting on 21 April. Statistical information on Exceptions to be sought quarterly from departments, upon implementation of the new Recruitment Code. (2) Compliance audit of DFP: Report currently with DFP for factual accuracy check. To be brought to the next Commissioners' meeting. (3) Audit on appointment of disabled candidates: audit just commenced. A draft report expected mid-May 2005.
7. Audit Programme 2005/06		Proposed programme agreed with DFP. Decided the audit on implementation of the revised Recruitment Code currently in the 2004/05 programme should be held back to 2005/06 in view of revised implementation date. June meeting to discuss a replacement audit.
8. Links with Departments: update		Updates given by A Henry and J Steele (on meetings with Chief Executives of SSA and CSA); and J Eve and S McDowell (meeting with Permanent Secretary, OFMDFM).

9. Equality Scheme Implementation Plan and Review of Equality Scheme	Implementation Plan considered. Commissioners content with progress against objectives. Secretary to undertake a screening exercise on Commissioners' functions under the Code of Ethics to determine the need for an EQIA of this function; result to be brought to the next meeting in June 2005. Formal review of the Equality Scheme will commence in Autumn 2005 by which time guidance should be available from the Equality Commission.
10. Review of the Senior Civil Service (SCS) Generic Competition	Commissioners considered and noted initial evaluation comments.
11. Annual Report 2004/05	Proposed approach to the next Annual Report agreed. A draft AR will be considered at the June meeting.
12. Any Other Business	Meetings with PSG sub-group and full PSG Agenda for PSG sub-group noted, responsibilities allocated. Agenda items discussed for full PSG meeting on 27 May 05.
	Information Papers Content noted.
	Date of next meetings Next meeting 20 June 2005 in Stormont House. Secretariat to liaise with Commissioners to agree suitable dates for meetings in September and December.
	Review of Public Administration Overview given to Commissioners by Mr McConnell, OFMDFM, of the recently published document 'Review of Public Administration'.
