

COMMISSIONERS' BUSINESS MEETINGS: MINUTES

30-May-06	Attended: Commissioners: B McLaughlin (Chair), B Carlin, Mrs M Elliott, A Henry, J Steele. Apology: S McDowell. Secretariat: J McKeown (Secretary), Mrs J Dowling (Deputy), Mrs E McKnight, P Lavery.
Agenda	
1. Introduction	Attendees welcomed by the new Chairperson, who stated she looked forward to working with everyone to take forward the Commissioners' roles and responsibilities. The Chair informed the meeting that she had given notice to the Northern Ireland Office that she was standing down as a non-executive director of the NIO Departmental Board.
2. Minutes of Meeting held on 11 April 2006	Agreed as drafted.
3. Matters Arising June Induction Day/Induction Pack	Commissioners agreed arrangements for the forthcoming Induction Day for new Commissioners. An Induction Pack had been prepared for all Commissioners, to be distributed on the day.
4. Senior Appointments	Commissioners were updated on competitions which had progressed since the last meeting. Commissioners raised several matters over the general running of competitions. It was agreed these would be raised, in the first instance, at the next meeting with the Permanent Secretary Group sub-group. Commissioners agreed to continue to chair competitions on a rotational basis. The Secretariat was asked to check whether any of the new Commissioners had involvement in other bodies which could lead to a conflict of interest. Action: Secretariat
5. Thematic Audit - Feedback Processes	Draft audit report considered. Commissioners were content that it be issued to Departments and Agencies for factual accuracy check. Although part of the 2005/06 audit programme, Commissioners agreed that as the report had not been finalised before the end of 2005/06, the audit would be reported on in the 2006/07 Annual Report.
6. 2006-2007 Audit Programme	Two audits had been agreed for 2006/07. The first, on the management of merit lists in volume competitions, would commence in early June and the second, on attracting candidates to apply for NICS posts, in the autumn.
7. Section 75 Annual Progress Report 2005/06	Draft report agreed without amendment.

8. Review of the Equality Scheme Implementation Plan	Commissioners updated on progress against objectives. Action to review the Equality Scheme itself is on hold pending feedback from the Equality Commission on the 5-Year Review of the Equality Scheme. Commissioners agreed it would be helpful to meet the Chief Commissioner of the Equality Commission, Mr Bob Collins, to discuss matters of mutual interest. Action: Secretariat.
9. Annual Report 2005/06	Commissioners were requested to lodge any last minute suggested amendments with the Secretariat no later than 2 June as publication of the Annual Report was planned for the end of June. Action: Commissioners
10. Any Other Business	Commissioners updated on recent meetings. Commissioner pairings and links with departments to be reviewed in light of new Commissioner appointments, as well as format and content of such meetings.
Links Meetings with Perm Secs	Mrs Elliott declared a conflict of interest in regard to an item under this heading and withdrew from the meeting. Current budgetary position and potential pressures noted. The situation will be kept under review.
Budget Update	A paper from the Institute for Independent Public Policy Research (IPPR) was noted, highlighting recommendations in a forthcoming IPPR report on civil service reform.
Information Papers	Next Business Meeting: September 2006.
11. Dates of future meetings	