

COMMISSIONERS' BUSINESS MEETINGS: SUMMARY MINUTES

06-Feb-07	Attended: Commissioners: Brenda McLaughlin (Chair), B Carlin, A Henry, Ruth Laird, Alan Lennon, S McDowell. Apology: Dame Joan Harbison. Secretariat: Joanne Dowling (Deputy Secretary), Ena McKnight, Paul Lavery.
Agenda	
1. Introduction	The Chairperson advised that Dame Joan Harbison had been injured in a car accident and would be unable to attend. Commissioners sent their best wishes for a speedy recovery to both Dame Joan and her husband who had also been involved in the accident. The Chairperson noted that Karamjit Singh, NI Judicial Appointments Ombudsman, would be joining the Commissioners for a working lunch.
2. Minutes of Meeting held on 14 November 2006	Agreed as drafted.
3. Matters Arising	Matrix detailing action on points arising from the previous meeting Position noted
4. Restricted eligibility of current and former NICS employees	Current position noted.
5. Disability Action Plan: application for exemption	Letter being prepared for issue to the Equality Commission seeking exemption. Action: Secretariat.
6. Draft Article 55 Report	Commissioners were concerned that the report stated it had been 'discussed with the Civil Service Commissioners' when they had not in fact been formally consulted. Agreed this could only be included after a meeting with CPG to discuss the report. Action: Secretariat/Commissioners.
7. Budget Update	Commissioners were advised that in-year pressures would be met by OCSC's sponsor division. An application for an uplift to the Office's Budget baseline for 2007/08 and onwards is proceeding. Action: Secretariat.
8. Senior Appointment competitions	Status of current competitions noted.
9. Appeal to Industrial and Fair Employment Tribunals	Commissioners were advised that a candidate for a SCS post has lodged appeals with both the Industrial and Fair Employment Tribunals against his failure to be selected for appointment.
10. Tied Scores	Commissioners agreed that further guidance and distinguishing mechanisms should be in place to deal with tied score situations. Issue to be explored in more depth at a later date. Action: Commissioners/Secretariat.

10. Business Planning		Commissioners commented on, and commended, drafts of the Business Plan, Communications Strategy and Training & Development Strategy for 2007/08 prepared by the Secretariat. They were satisfied that all actions arising from their Business Planning day in December 2006 had been incorporated into the documents. It was agreed that further drafts of the documents would be cleared by email with a view to final endorsement at the next Business Meeting. Action: Commissioners/Secretariat.
11. Audits	Attracting Candidates	Preliminary report discussed. Agreed to set up a sub-group to analyse the findings and also pick up issues raised in the earlier Article 55 report. The sub-group's views will be considered at the next Business Meeting. Action: Sub-group.
	6 month review of completed audits	Progress reports noted. Commissioners agreed to quality assure progress through a future audit. Action: Secretariat to note.
12. Any Other Business	Commissioner's annual audit of OCSC approvals of senior competitions	Alan Lennon to undertake. Action: A Lennon/Secretariat.
	Information Papers	Noted.
13. Dates of future meetings		Meeting with PSG sub group; meeting with the Public Appointments Service, RoI; Commissioners' next Business Meeting; and meeting with CPG (DFP) - all March 2007.
14. Working lunch with Karamjit Singh, NI Judicial Appointments Ombudsman		Useful exchange of views. Both parties agreed it would be valuable to have further discussions to share experiences and challenges.