

CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSIONERS FOR NORTHERN IRELAND

**SUMMARY RECORD OF BUSINESS MEETING
26 JUNE 2018
CONFERENCE ROOM, STORMONT HOUSE**

ATTENDEES:

Commissioners

Deirdre Toner, Chairperson
Jim Scholes
Sinéad Burns

Secretariat

Joanne Dowling
Janet Carnduff
Lynne O'Neill
Carmel McDowell
Christine Donnelly

WELCOME

1. The Chairperson welcomed everyone to the meeting. In introducing the meeting, the Chairperson provided a brief overview of her induction and recent introductory meetings.

SUMMARY RECORD AND ACTION MATRIX OF APRIL BUSINESS MEETING

2. Commissioners agreed both the Summary Record and Action Matrix of 24 April 2018.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST AND MATTERS ARISING

3. Commissioners confirmed that they had no conflict of interest in relation to the April Business meeting agenda and papers.

SECRETARY'S REPORT [PAPER 14/18]

4. The Secretary formally welcomed the Chairperson on behalf of the Secretariat and presented the Secretary's report outlining a summary of progress against the business planning documents and key outputs and activities since the last business meeting. The following key issues were highlighted and noted by Commissioners, that:
 - a review of the Commissioners' Disability Action Plan had been undertaken and a revised Disability Action Plan had been drafted for consideration by Commissioners;
 - the annual Section 75 Progress Report was also drafted for consideration by Commissioners;
 - the Secretariat were continuing to engage with the NIO and other ALBs to identify the most suitable way to meet the requirement of a Data Protection Officer and a potential budgetary pressure had been highlighted to NIO. It was noted that, in the meantime work was continuing to be progressed to ensure compliance with the requirements for GDPR;

- arrangements for the appointment process for the Secretary’s post was on track, with a view to make an appointment late September 2018; and
 - the Induction process and schedule of introductory meetings for new Chairperson were on track.
5. Commissioners also noted that the 2017/18 Annual Report final draft had been circulated for approval in advance of it going to the printer. In concluding the Annual Report, Commissioners reviewed and finalised the Summary Report of the Review of staff from an Arm’s Length Body working in the NICS, subject to agreed amendments.

BUDGET REPORT [PAPER 15/18]

6. Commissioners noted the Budget Report, including the current budget position for the first quarter. The Secretariat highlighted that Commissioners would be alerted, as necessary, if any pressures or easements were identified in the coming months.

AUDIT AND REVIEW UPDATE [PAPER 16/18]

7. Commissioners were invited to note progress updates attached at Annex A to the audit and review update paper. The Secretariat reported that Q1 and Q2 (2017) recruitment monitoring report had recently been received and would be reviewed, and reported as necessary, in line with the protocol agreed by Commissioners. It was also highlighted that a findings report on the NICS HR Review of Recruitment and Selection Training was anticipated imminently and would be circulated to Commissioners, along with a briefing paper, for consideration in due course.

Actions: Secretariat to consider the EDB Quarterly Recruitment Monitoring report and highlight exceptional issues to Commissioners as necessary.

Secretariat to prepare a briefing paper on the findings of the NICS HR Review of Recruitment and Selection Training for consideration by Commissioners.

Review of 4-Stage Authorisation Process - Progress Update

8. The Secretariat outlined the progress made in relation to the Review of the 4-Stage Authorisation Process to date. Commissioners initially agreed the scoping document and timetable for the Review of 4-Stage Documentation in January 2018 following conclusion of the 2017 Review of Assurances, which recommended that the documentation be reviewed and streamlined. Commissioners were reminded that they had subsequently agreed at the Dedicated Audit meeting on 1 February 2018 that the Review would be temporarily postponed in order to facilitate the earlier preparation of the CSC 2017/18 Annual Report, which was brought forward in advance of the former Chairperson’s end of tenure. Commissioners were invited to note that this Review has now re-commenced and revised timescales were highlighted in blue

in the updated Scoping Document attached at Annex B to the Audit Update Paper.

8. The Secretariat outlined the proposed approach summarised in the Audit Update paper (16/18) and invited Commissioners to consider if they were content for the proposals to be developed and presented to Commissioners for consideration at the next audit meeting. Commissioners discussed and noted that, while careful consideration would be required to ensure that the integrity of the process remained, they were content for the Review Team to proceed on the basis outlined.
9. It was noted that this Review is the second stage of the 2017 Review of Assurances, which recommended that the 4-stage documentation is reviewed and streamlined.

Action: Secretariat Audit Review Team to proceed with the review of the documentation of the 4-Stage Authorisation Process.

10. Commissioners were invited to update their diaries in respect of future audit meetings as detailed in the Audit and Review paper.

MERIT LIST EXTENSIONS [PAPER 17/18]

11. Commissioners were invited to consider a proposal from NICS HR in relation to the operation and management of merit lists. Following detailed discussion Commissioners agreed that they were content with the NICS HR proposal to revise the process to better facilitate the effective management of appointments from a merit list that is being closed. Commissioners agreed that the Chairperson would write to NICS HR on their behalf.

Action: Secretariat to draft letter to NICS HR for approval by the Chairperson on behalf of Commissioners.

ECNI 2017/18 ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT [PAPER 18/18]

12. Commissioners approved the OCSC Equality Scheme: Section 75 Progress report for 2017/18.

Action: Secretariat to submit the Section 75 Annual Progress Report to ECNI and publish the Report on the Commissioners' website.

DISABILITY ACTION PLAN REVIEW & UPDATED DISABILITY ACTION PLAN [PAPER 19/18]

13. Commissioners approved the Summary Report of the Review of Commissioners' 5-year Disability Action Plan published in 2012 and agreed to consult on the updated draft Plan. Commissioners suggested that engagement with the NICS Disability Working Group would be beneficial as part of the consultation process.

14. Commissioners agreed that the Review Action Plan should be for a 4-year period to realign it with the Commissioners' Equality Scheme, i.e so that it would be due for review in 2021/22. The Deputy Secretary and SO were commended for their considerable effort and commitment to getting the Disability Action Plan back on track following a period of unexpected competing priorities.

Actions: Secretariat to submit the Summary Report of the Review of Commissioners Disability Action Plan 2012 to ECNI and publish the Report on the Commissioners' website

Secretariat to facilitate a consultation on the Commissioners' draft updated Disability Action Plan, with a view to finalising the Disability Action Plan in Autumn 2018

As requested, Secretariat to forward the OSCS Retention and Disposal Schedule to Commissioners.

INFORMATION ASSURANCE AWARENESS SESSION [PAPER 20/18]

15. The Secretariat provided an overview of the mandatory requirements and individual responsibilities set out by the NIO with respect to the security of official information and equipment. Commissioners were provided with a summary of the key aspects and requirements of relevant NIO policies, in particular those relating to remote working, the retention and destruction of information, the 'NIO Short Guide to Information Handling' and the 'Government Security Classification Policy'.

16. The Secretariat also provided an overview of the expanded principles and rights afforded by the new Data Protection Act 2018, which enacts many of the requirements of the EU General Data Protection Regulations. Commissioners were invited to note a further GDPR training session would be provided in due course.

17. Commissioners completed their individual Annual Information Assurance Statements for OCSC and NIO records.

Action: Secretariat to organise a GDPR awareness session for Commissioners

A.O.B.

18. Commissioners considered a request from NICS HR seeking their approval for a permanent appointment to be made under Regulation 3 of the Commissioners' General Regulations 2007. Following detailed discussion of the business case, Commissioners agreed that they were content to approve the request.

Action: Secretariat to draft an approval letter to NICS HR for consideration and agreement by Commissioners.

**Office of the Civil Service Commissioners
for Northern Ireland**