

CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSIONERS FOR NORTHERN IRELAND
SUMMARY RECORD OF BUSINESS MEETING 26 JUNE 2019
ROOM 105, STORMONT HOUSE

ATTENDEES

Commissioners

Deirdre Toner, Chairperson
Sinéad Burns
Jim Scholes

Secretariat

Sarah Teer, Secretary
Janet Carnduff
Lynne O'Neill
John Murphy

WELCOME

1. The Chairperson welcomed everyone to the meeting.

SUMMARY RECORD AND ACTION MATRIX OF APRIL BUSINESS MEETING

2. Commissioners agreed the Summary Record and action points of the 16 April 2019 meeting. Commissioners noted that the Summary Records of their Business meetings were published on the OCSC website.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST AND MATTERS ARISING

3. No conflicts of interest were declared in relation to the June business meeting agenda and papers. Commissioners agreed to discuss correspondence regarding Code of Ethics casework and appointments by way of exception to the Merit Principle under AOB.

SECRETARY'S REPORT (PAPER 14/19)

4. The Secretary presented the Secretary's Report and outlined the key outputs and activities since the last business meeting, which included:
 - management of the corporate year-end business requirements;
 - supporting Commissioners in their strategic planning activities looking forward;
 - drafting of the annual review of Commissioners' Section 75 Progress Report; and
 - ongoing engagement by the Secretariat with the NIO to progress the OCSC Data Protection policy and with NICS HR to progress the Data Sharing Agreement.

BUDGET PAPER (PAPER 15/19)

5. Commissioners noted the Budget Report, including the current budget position for the first quarter.
6. The Secretary updated Commissioners that the June Monitoring exercise with NIO Finance had recently been completed, which included a potential pressure regarding the necessary transfer of the OCSC website to a new server later in the year. The Secretary highlighted that Commissioners would be updated on the potential cost pressure at the next Business meeting.
7. The Secretary informed Commissioners that the next Spending Review had not yet been commissioned but was expected imminently.

ACTION: Secretary to update Commissioners on NIO Spending Review once commissioned.

AUDIT AND REVIEW UPDATE (PAPER 16/19)

8. The Chairperson invited the DP (Audit) to present the audit and review paper. The DP (Audit) provided an update on the annual audit plan and related matters, highlighting that they met with NICS HR on 18 June 2019 seeking to progress audit related work.
9. Commissioners noted:
 - NICS Quarterly Equality Monitoring Report for quarters 3 and 4 of 2017 have been received and circulated to Commissioners. NICS HR are to confirm when the outstanding reports to date will be available.
 - Secretariat's operational observations on the NICS HR Review of Recruitment and Selection Training, have been sent to NICS HR as agreed.
 - the response from NICS HR on the 2018/19 Review of the 4-Stage Authorisation Process Documentation confirming that NICS HR are content in principle with the recommendations made, subject to further engagement on the detail, which subsequently took place in June. NICS HR have been invited to consider the detailed proposals and revert to OCSC in July.
 - the response from NICS HR on the Review of Recruitment Related Complaints and agreed to revise the timetable of this review;
 - the 2018 NICS Annual Report on Recruitment is awaited. Commissioners agreed that Secretary should follow this up with

NICSHR and that an expected publication date of 30 April should be specified in future Appendix C data requests;

- it is anticipated the 2018 NICS Permanent Secretary Recruitment Related Assurance Statement will be received along with the annual report or shortly thereafter;
- preparation of the audit and monitoring sections of Commissioners' Annual Report will commence on receipt and analysis of the NICS Annual Report;
- the 2018 Annual Internal Audit of the 4-Stage Authorisation Process has been completed and the report circulated. Commissioners agreed to accept the findings and recommendations and agreed the interim revisions to the suite of Audit Guidance Documents, pending the full review in the next strategic audit plan and the expansion of the section on audit follow up arrangements. The DP (Audit) will prepare draft text for review by Commissioners.

10. Commissioners agreed revisions to the audit guidance documents.

ACTIONS: DP (Audit) to revise the Complaints Review Timetable.

Secretary to follow up with NICSHR on their annual report.

DP (Audit) to draft additional wording for the audit guidance documents for review by Commissioners.

REVISED NICS HR SECONDMENT POLICY (PAPER 17/19)

11. Commissioners were invited to consider further revisions made by NICS HR to the updated NICS draft secondment policy; Commissioners' draft reply to the NICS Strategic HR Director regarding the NICS HR proposed policy revisions, including Commissioners' views regarding matters in relation to secondments; and the recent query received with regard to the definition of secondment under Regulation 3(a). Following detailed discussion Commissioners agreed that they were content with the draft reply to issue to NICS HR; and requested the Secretariat to draft a reply to issue from the Secretariat on their behalf regarding terminology used in the definition of secondment.

ACTIONS: Secretariat to issue Commissioners' reply to the NICS Strategic HR Director.

Secretariat to draft a response to clarify the position regarding the definition of secondment, for Commissioners' consideration.

ECNI 2018/19 ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT (PAPER 18/19)

12. The Secretary presented the final draft of the 2018/19 Section 75 Annual Progress Report. Commissioners agreed that they were content for the Report to be finalised, submitted to ECNI and published on the Commissioners' website.

ACTION: Secretariat to issue the Annual Progress Report to ECNI and publish the report on the website.

INFORMATION ASSURANCE AWARENESS SESSION & UPDATE (PAPER 19/19)

13. The Chairperson invited John to provide Commissioners with an annual update on the information assurance responsibilities and requirements set by NIO. Following an overview of the key points relating to NIO policy and guidance, Commissioners completed and signed their individual Information Assurance Statements, for OCSC and NIO records.
14. Commissioners considered and agreed the revisions to the OCSC Data Protection Policy.

ACTIONS: Secretariat to circulate PDF copies of the NIO policies and guidance documents on information security/ information assurance to Commissioners.

Secretariat to publish the OCSC Data Protection Policy on the website.

DRAFT COMMISSIONERS' 2018/19 ANNUAL REPORT (PAPER 20/19)

15. Commissioners considered the draft outline of the 2018/19 Annual Report and noted that the anticipated publication of the report was subject to the receipt of information from the NICS.

AOB

16. Commissioners considered recent correspondence received in relation to Code of Ethics casework.

ACTION: Secretariat to draft a response for consideration and agreement by Commissioners.

17. Commissioners considered correspondence from DoF regarding appointments by way of exception to the Merit Principle.

ACTION: Secretariat to draft a response to the Permanent Secretary, DoF, for Commissioners' consideration.

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