

CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSIONERS FOR NORTHERN IRELAND
SUMMARY RECORD OF BUSINESS MEETING 17 SEPTEMBER 2019
CONFERENCE ROOM, 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 JUNE BUSINESS MEETING

2. Commissioners agreed the Summary Record and action points of the 26 June 2019 meeting. Commissioners also noted that the June Summary Record would be published on Commissioners' website in due course.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST AND MATTERS ARISING

3. No conflicts of interest were declared in relation to the September business meeting agenda and papers. Commissioners agreed to consider four additional items under AOB.

SECRETARY'S REPORT (PAPER 21/19)

4. The Secretary presented the Secretary's Report and outlined the key outputs and activities since the last business meeting. Commissioners noted the following key points:
 - the 2018/19 Annual Progress Report was submitted to the Equality Commission in June 2019;
 - the 2018/19 Annual Report was on schedule for publication in October 2019;
 - revisions were made to Commissioners' Audit for Improvement – Audit Framework Guidance and the Protocol for Engagement;
 - the draft Data Sharing Agreement between OCSC and NICSHR is nearing finalisation;

- the DP (Audit)'s secondment will formally end 24 September 2019 and subject the security clearance, it is anticipated that the new postholder will take up post in October; and
- as part of succession planning within the Secretariat, a competition has been launched to replace the Deputy Secretary in the coming months.

BUDGET PAPER (PAPER 22/19)

5. Commissioners noted the Budget Report, including the current budget position for the second quarter.
6. The Secretary updated Commissioners that the November Monitoring exercise with NIO Finance had been launched and the Secretariat did not anticipate any easements or pressures to be declared to NIO at this stage.

AUDIT AND REVIEW UPDATE (PAPER 23/19)

7. Commissioners noted the secondment period for the current DP (Audit) would end later in the month and commended the DP (Audit) acknowledging the contribution she has made to the OCSC.
8. Commissioners noted the upcoming audit related meetings, including the dedicated audit meeting scheduled for 15 October 2019. Commissioners considered and agreed the draft agenda for the Audit and Engagement meeting with NICSHR scheduled for 22 October 2019.
9. The DP (Audit) provided an update on audit and review matters and Commissioners noted the content of the audit and review update paper setting out the current position in relation to the progression of work under the 2019/20 Audit and Review Plan and ongoing work, including the 2018/19 Review of the 4-Stage Authorisation Process Documentation and Review of Recruitment-related complaints.

REVISIONS TO COMMISSIONERS' RECRUITMENT CODE (PAPER 24/19)

10. Commissioners considered and agreed further revisions to their Recruitment Code, which included changes following revisions made to Commissioners' Audit Framework Guidance.

11. Commissioners noted that the Secretariat undertook screening of the revisions to the Recruitment Code and no potential for adverse impact was identified.
12. Commissioners considered the timing of correspondence with the NICS in relation to the revised Recruitment Code and implementation of Commissioners' requirements.

ACTION: Secretariat to make the agreed revisions to the Recruitment Code in preparation for issue to the NICS and publication on Commissioners' website.

REVIEW OF COMMISSIONERS' CODE OF PRACTICE (PAPER 25/19)

13. Commissioners noted that the Cabinet Office Guidance 'Code of Conduct for Board Members of Public Bodies' was recently replaced; and agreed a minor consequential revision to Commissioners' Code of Practice to take account of the updated Cabinet Office Guidance.
14. Commissioners noted that the Strategic Planning Day in November 2019 would provide the further opportunity for Commissioners to review their Code of Practice to ensure that the Code reflects any changes made in-year to the environment in which Commissioners' operate.

ACTION: Secretariat to make the agreed amendment to Commissioners' Code of Practice and publish the revised Code of Practice on Commissioners' website.

DRAFT STRATEGIC PLAN 2020-2025 (PAPER 26/19)

15. Commissioners considered and agreed their Strategic Plan 2020-2025, subject to an amendment with regard to the NICS Code of Ethics under the 'Statutory Functions' section.
16. Commissioners noted that they will be invited to agree their Annual Plan 2020/21 at the Strategic Planning Day in November 2019.

ACTION: Secretariat to make the agreed amendment to Commissioners' Strategic Plan 2020-2025, in preparation for publication on Commissioners' website in April 2020.

AOB

17. Commissioners agreed the draft agenda for their forthcoming meeting with the Permanent Secretaries in November 2019.

ACTION: Secretariat to seek agreement of the draft agenda with HOCS ahead of Commissioners' November meeting with Permanent Secretaries.

18. Commissioners noted correspondence from NICSHR regarding an extension to a secondment in the Department of Health.

ACTION: Secretariat to issue Commissioners' response to NICSHR.

19. Commissioners noted correspondence received in relation to an ongoing appeal under the Code of Ethics.

ACTION: Secretariat to issue Commissioners' response to the relevant Department.

20. Commissioners noted their Annual Report would be published in October 2019; and considered and agreed the draft Press Release, subject to minor amendment.

ACTION: Secretariat to make the agreed amendment to the Press Release with regard to publication of Commissioners' Annual Report.

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