

**Labour Relations Agency
Minutes of a Senior Management Team Meeting
held on Tuesday, 19 August 2014 in Room 3, Gordon Street**

Present: William Patterson
Gerry O'Neill
David McGrath
Penny Holloway

In Attendance: Alison Wolfe (Minute Secretary)

	Minute	Action
1. Apologies	There were no apologies.	
2. Minutes of Meeting held on 3 June 2014	The minutes of the meeting held on 3 June 2014 were agreed.	Secretariat
3. Matters Arising from Previous Minutes	None.	
4. Innovation in Employment Relations		
	4.1 Review of NI Employment Law It was noted that the Agency has been invited to meet the DEL Minister, Stephen Farry to discuss the DEL review of NI employment law. The meeting will take place on 15 September 2014.	CEO
	4.2 Roundtable Discussion on NI ER The next meeting of the Roundtable will take place on 27 August 2014.	
	4.3 International Agencies Meeting 2014 The Board has indicated, informally, that due to budget pressures the Agency should not be represented at the International Agencies meeting in New Zealand in October 2014. The CEO has informed Judith Scott, MBIE, New Zealand. The Board will give consideration to conference attendance i.e. TUC, CBI at the August meeting.	CEO
	4.4 Employment Relations Research The CEO has discussed the integration of the Research & Finance & Personnel Committees with the new Chair. A decision is to be taken by the respective Committees. The next meeting of the Research Committee is scheduled for 4 September 2014.	CEO
	4.5 SROI A paper on SROI was submitted to the Board for approval in June 2013. The CEO is to review the PPE for SROI.	DAS/CEO

4.6 Consultation on the LRA Code of Practice on Discipline & Grievance – proposed amendment to paragraphs 103 & 104

It was noted that the Agency awaits DEL approval of the amendments to the Code.

DAS

4.7 ECNI Project

The CEO is to follow up on information received from the DCA on the project.

CEO

5. NI & GB Employment Relations Systems

DAS to forward TUC, CAB and MoJ reports on fees to the SMT.

DAS

It was noted that the report on the independent review of workplace policies in Scotland has been published. The report is being considered by the Agency and will be forwarded to the Roundtable for consideration.

CEO

It was noted that the CEO and DCA had discussed the LRA in an Acas commercial bid for an organisation which covers the lottery. The CEO will raise this issue with the Board for discussion in October in order to make the Board aware of the situation, set out the policy options available to them and decide on a way forward. The CEO and Chair will discuss making arrangements for a meeting with Anne Sharp, Acas CEO to ascertain Acas views on the matter.

CEO

Ch/CEO

It was noted that Acas have drafted a Bereavement Policy – CEO and DAS to discuss the Agency's view on such a policy.

CEO/DAS

6. Agency Strategy and Services

6.1 Corporate Plan 2014-17

6.2 Business Plan 2014-15

The CEO is to contact DEL regarding written approval of the Corporate and Business Plans which have been verbally approved by the Department.

CEO

The Board continues to be advised of performance in relation to the Corporate and Business Plans.

CEO/Dirs

It was noted that the CEO has revised the dates for bi-monthly reporting to the Board. The next bi-monthly will be from 1 April – 31 August 2014; the reporting format will revert to the normal reporting cycle in April 2015.

CEO

7. Leadership Organisation and Performance Management

7.1 Cross Directorate Working Groups

CEO

It was noted that the IS/IT group continue to meet regularly.

The CEO will examine the feasibility of the Corporate Governance group and report to the SMT.

SMT

It was noted that it would be appropriate to group a disability action group and a sustainability group under CSR. The DCS is to draft a constitution and seek nominees from each section to form the above groups.

DCS

The DCS is to write to the IiP group to see if they wish to proceed given the current transition period within the Agency.

DCS

7.2 Performance Management

The DCS is to update the SMT on the current position with regard to appraisals.

7.3 HR Strategy

7.3.1 Stress Risk Assessment

CEO

An action plan has been agreed by the JNCC. As agreed by the SMT the DCS is to progress the 'safe haven' idea for one month (using Carecall). CEO to highlight the 'safe haven' idea at the next staff briefing sessions.

DCS

7.3.2 HR Strategy

It was noted that a paper on Staff Recognition & Reward was submitted to the Board in June 2014. An amended version of the paper will be re-submitted in August 2014 for Board approval.

DCS

An intranet training provider has been appointed and has further developed the intranet. It is anticipated that a demo intranet will be up and running for the staff conference on 17 September.

CEO

A leadership and management proposal is to be submitted to the Board in August for consideration.

DCS

It was agreed that the DCS contact the IiP office in Del with a view to delaying the re-assessment.

SMT

7.3.3 Staff Conference

Arrangements are progressing for the staff conference. It was agreed to close the Helpline on 17 September to allow staff to attend. A skeleton staff will remain at HQ.

Secretariat

7.3.4 Evaluation/self-assessment of JNCC

Remove

	<p>7.3.5 Staffing</p> <p>It was noted that a temporary ERM post will run from the beginning of September until 31 March 2015 to facilitate the testing phase of the new case management system.</p>	SMT
	<p>Recruitment for the forthcoming CEO vacancy is underway and will be discussed by the Board, in closed session, at their August meeting.</p>	
	<p>Interviews will be held later this week to fill the 2 temporary ERO vacancies. Progress was being made with the exchange of personnel in the NICO/Agency.</p>	DCS
8.	ICT	
	<p>8.1 IS Managed Services</p> <p>It was noted that Windows 8 has not yet been installed throughout the Agency. Installation is to be progressed.</p>	DCS/ERM
	<p>8.2 Security Accreditation</p> <p>Audit has been re-scheduled for November.</p>	
	<p>8.3 ICMS</p> <p>Tenders have been received.</p>	
	<p>The IS Manager will be visiting SFW.</p>	
	<p>ICMS Steering Group asked for a timetable for the project group. Project group to report to the Steering Group.</p>	
	<p>8.4 Website Security Accreditation</p> <p>Date has been set for penetration test (early September).</p>	DCS/PH
	<p>Mobile phones – procedure for phones to be written by IS Manager. SMT discussed the issue of the mobile phones at length.</p>	DCS/PH
9.	Evaluation	
	<p>9.1 PPEs</p> <p>It was noted that the DCS is to follow up the PPE on SROI from an independence point of view.</p>	DCS
	<p>9.2 Value for Money</p> <p>The Board have indicated that the Agency concentrate on effectiveness rather than efficiency re vfm. The CEO has reflected this in the Business Plan.</p>	CEO
10.	Governance and Accountability	
	<p>10.1 LRA Funding 2014/15</p> <p>It was noted that the Agency has received written indication from DEL of a possible cut to the budget. The Board will be informed at</p>	

their meeting in August of the implications of any such cut and of the need to adopt prudence until the year end.

CEO

10.2 Statutory Compliance

The Agency awaits a response from DEL to the revised MoU/SLA for the Certification Office.

CEO

10.3 Corporate Social Responsibility

No further comments had been received from TUS. The DCS will develop procedural arrangements in the Autumn.

DCS

11. JNCC

11.1 Redundancy Procedure

It was noted that the JNCC was to meet 11 September at 10.30 am.




DCS/CEO

Redundancy procedure is still with TUS.

12. Any Other Business

There was no other business to report.

13. Date of Next Meetings

-  Informal meetings: Tuesday, 26 August
-  Tuesday, 2, 9, 16, 23 September
-  Formal meeting: Tuesday, 30 September

Secretariat

All meetings will be held in Room 3 (unless otherwise indicated) commencing at 10.00 am.