

Labour Relations Agency

Minutes of a Senior Management Team Meeting held on Thursday, 10th December 2015 at 10.00 am

Present: Tom Evans
Penny Holloway
David McGrath
Gerry O'Neill

In Attendance: Alison Wolfe (Minute Secretary)

Item	Minute	Action
1.	<p>Apologies</p> <p>There were no apologies.</p>	
2.	<p>Minutes of the Meeting held on 13 October 2015</p> <p>The minutes of the meeting held on 13 October were agreed.</p>	Sec
3.	<p>Matters Arising from the Previous Minutes not listed on this Agenda</p> <p><i>Item 7 – Human Resource Issues</i> DCS to expedite recruitment process; SMT agreed to modify existing ERO JD.</p> <p><i>Item 7.1 – Cross Directorate Working Groups</i> To be discussed at an upcoming informal SMT meeting.</p> <p><i>Item 3 - 10 – Disability Action Group</i> Date for a meeting of the Health & Safety Committee to be arranged in January 2016.</p> <p><i>Item 14 – Agency Pocket Diaries</i> Diaries have been received and will be issued in due course.</p> <p><i>Item 13 – CEO/Directors Update</i> CEO met with Stephen Fey & Michael Dawson of Land & Property Services who will provide advice regarding the 2014 rent review of HQ. DCS to provide historical correspondence with the Landlord.</p>	<p>SMT</p> <p>SMT</p> <p>Sec</p> <p>Sec</p> <p>CEO/DCS</p>
4.	<p>Business Plan 2015-16</p> <p>The SMT discussed the updated Business Plan Performance Report and, following comments at the October Board meeting, it</p>	

	<p>was agreed to be more rigorous in the application of the ‘traffic light’ reporting system.</p> <p>Resources paper for early conciliation to be copied to Directors; DCS to commence work on a business case. CEO and DCA to discuss resource assessment and share their comments with DEL. CEO to look at neutral assessment.</p> <p>It was noted that DEL have made provision for Phase 2 of ICMS. Work is continuing on the spec for Phase 2 but this has been delayed due to staffing pressures.</p> <p>SMT to discuss targets for next year’s business plan.</p> <p>Link to new website to be forwarded to CEO.</p> <p>Agreed all papers prepared by individual Directors should be automatically circulated to all SMT members.</p> <p>DCA to contact OITFET President to set up a meeting to review the current MOU.</p> <p>Employment Relations Diagnostic Tools self-assessment checklists – DAS to provide copies to CEO.</p> <p>ICMS Post Project Evaluation is at an advanced stage. CEO to approve the Kelway spec for submission to DEL. Work is on-going with a view to meeting the target date.</p>	<p>SMT</p> <p>SMT</p> <p>SMT</p> <p>SMT</p> <p>DCS</p> <p>SMT</p> <p>DCA</p> <p>DAS</p> <p>CEO</p>
5.	<p>Annual Report & Accounts</p> <p>Noted that the Annual Report was presented at the Public Meeting on 26 November. An erratum is required for the hard copy reports. The pdf version has been updated and will be emailed out to stakeholders. The Report is to be forwarded to the IS Manager for publication on the Agency web. A process review of the Annual Report is to be completed managing the timing of submissions to the Annual Report & Accounts.</p> <p>It was noted that the format of the Annual Report & Accounts may be simplified next year in line with DFP guidance.</p> <p>Employment Relations model for FE Sector – await response from Belfast Met.</p> <p>The presentation by Kieran Mulvey at the AGM/Public Meeting was well received.</p>	<p>Sec/WH</p> <p>CEO/Sec/WH</p> <p>DCS</p> <p>CEO/DAS</p>

6.	<p>Board Meetings – Action Points from 29 October/26 November 2015 meetings</p> <p>Meeting of the Research Committee is scheduled for 9.30 am on Thursday, 17th December. DAS to provide brief for Gary McMichael. CEO to review TOR issued by DAS.</p> <p>Dates for Board meetings during 2016 to be agreed.</p> <p>IS Strategy – key issue is to produce a project plan by end March 2016. This will require SMT input as a Steering Group commencing January and providing time for the IS/IT Manager to prepare report.</p> <p>Intranet – issues around editorial need to be resolved.</p> <p>ISO – dependant on availability of assessor.</p> <p>Risk assessment is complete; DCS to discuss with IS/IT Manager. Business Continuity Plan also complete.</p> <p>Board away day possibly February to discuss strategic planning.</p>	<p>CEO/DAS</p> <p>Sec/Bd</p> <p>SMT/ISIT Mgr</p> <p>DCS</p> <p>DCS</p> <p>DCS/ISIT Mgr</p>
7.	<p>Human Resource Issues</p> <p>CEO confirmed that TUS content with the decisions not to use the reserve list for the regional office ERM and to continue to fill all vacancies on a temporary basis pending a review of this arrangement in early January 2016. TUS have asked for assurances that any deputising arrangements will follow agreed procedures.</p> <p>DCS to circulate the deputising rules.</p> <p>In light of concerns raised by Directors, in particular the potential implications arising from the recent introduction of the 2015 Employment Bill, the CEO agreed to explore with DEL the possibility of reverting to the policy of filling existing vacancies on a permanent basis.</p> <p>It was agreed to defer any further action re temporary vacancies until the outcome of the discussions with DEL are known.</p> <p>JNCC Absence Mgt Policy - DAS advised that he had completed some preliminary work on the review of the existing policy.</p> <p>Redundancy – DCS to issue to JNCC along with papers for the next meeting scheduled for the 18 December 2015.</p>	<p>DCS</p> <p>CEO</p> <p>DCS/Sec</p>

	It was agreed to have a pre-meeting to discuss the handling of the JNCC meeting.	SMT
8.	<p>liP</p> <p>DCS advised that the final liP report is due to issue and that a follow up meeting with the Assessor is required.</p> <p>It was noted that the Agency could become a member of Advanced Coaching; some members of staff already attend their events. Coaching training will be arranged for a number of ERMs and staff from the regional office in the new year.</p>	<p>DAS/Sec</p> <p>DCS</p>
9.	<p>Finance Issues</p> <p>Budget report circulated by DCS; Projected underspends in terms of resource but this could be lower because of some emerging priority expenditure. CEO to approve business case for capital spend on refurbishment project.</p>	SMT
10.	<p>Stakeholder Engagement</p> <p>Roundtable agreed to an away day; details to be arranged.</p> <p>December meeting – Andy Cook ERI and Michael Brookes, Newcastle University gave presentation on ERI. Issue for Roundtable was whether or not there was training in employment relations issues for non-HR managers in NI; Roundtable may prefer an NI based organisation rather than ERI.</p>	CEO
11.	<p>Risk Register</p> <p>Revised taking into account changes proposed by Audit Committee. CEO thanked the DAS for his review of the Register. To be discussed at next SMT. ASM have commenced their records management audit</p>	DAS/DCS/CEO
12.	<p>IS/IT Priorities</p> <p>ICMS bedding in; still some residual development work to be completed.</p> <p>Meeting to be arranged in January.</p> <p>The Website project progressing, there will be a need to ensure that the functionality of the old website is available on the new website and that all of the web pages have transferred across.</p>	<p>SMT/IT Mgr</p> <p>DCS</p>

	<p>Await response from Belfast Met on the placement project, the status of the student will need to be clarified.</p> <p>Paul Herink progressing mobile phones – part of contingency plan.</p>	<p>SMT</p> <p>PH</p>
13.	<p>ISO27001 Accreditation</p> <p>Formally record that we have received the assessors report against ISO 2013 that we accept and will comply with the requirements. SMT to discuss action plan.</p>	<p>SMT</p>
14.	<p>CEO/Directors Update</p> <p>IC inundated with work; staff doing their best but putting off some work until January. Exceptionally busy with Non ET1s.</p> <p>Important to identify all of the potential operational problems that could come with early conciliation.</p> <p>CEO to attend team meetings again in January to listen and talk to staff about work pressures.</p> <p>Important at Christmas ‘Celebrating Success’ event to acknowledge work of staff throughout the Agency particularly taking into account the pressures associated with the current level of vacancies and range of services being delivered.</p>	<p>DCA</p> <p>SMT</p> <p>CEO</p>
14.	<p>NI & GB Employment Relations Developments</p> <p>None</p>	
15.	<p>AOB</p> <p>None</p>	
16.	<p>Date of Next Meeting</p> <p>Meetings will be held in the CEO’s office at 10.00 am.</p>	