


**Labour Relations Agency
Minutes of a Senior Management Team Meeting
held on Tuesday, 12 February 2013 in Room 2, Gordon Street**

Present: William Patterson
Gerry O'Neill
David McGrath
Karen Tarr

In Attendance: Alison Wolfe (Minute Secretary)

- | Minute | Action |
|---|--------------------|
| <p>1. Apologies
An apology was received from Penny Holloway. The CEO welcomed Karen Tarr (Acting DCA) to the meeting.</p> | |
| <p>2. Minutes of Meeting held on 17 December 2012
The minutes of the meeting held on 17 December 2012 were agreed.</p> | Secretariat |
| <p>3. Matters Arising from Previous Minutes
There were no matters arising from the previous minutes.</p> | |
| <p>4. Innovation in Employment Relations</p> <p>4.1 Generic Arbitration Scheme
It was noted that the Agency continues to promote both the generic arbitration scheme and pre-claim conciliation with Board monitoring via the bi-monthly management reports.</p> | DCA |
| <p>4.2 Review of NI Employment Law
It was noted that the Agency has received the Department's response on the extension to parental leave entitlement.</p> <p>It was noted that the Minister has asked the Agency to examine:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a) the promotion of arbitration and PCC;b) the routing of claims to LRA;c) early neutral evaluation: <p>It was noted that the Board will be considering the re-routing of tribunal claims 28 February and neutral assessment 7 March 2013.</p> | CEO |
| <p>4.3 Roundtable Discussion on NI ER
It was noted that the Roundtable workshop 8 February discussed (1) tribunal reform and (2) the routing of tribunal claims to the Agency. A further meeting has been arranged for 28 February when the Roundtable will discuss the qualifying period for unfair dismissal.</p> | Chair/CEO |
| <p>4.4 International Agencies Meeting 2013
It was noted that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the DEL Minister has agreed to open the LRA conference | |

- 2 August subject to diary commitments;
- ✚ the CEO has followed up in relation to speakers at the plenary session of the LRA conference;
- ✚ the CEO will be meeting with Kieran Mulvey, LRC on 18 February to discuss arrangements for the conference. **CEO**

4.5 Employment Relations Research

It was noted that the McClure Watters report is in the final draft stage and when formally published will be considered by the SMT, the Research Committee and the Board. **CEO**

5. Agency Strategy and Services

5.1 Corporate Plan 2011-14

5.2 Business Plan 2012-13 – Performance Review Report

5.3 Corporate Planning Process 2014-17 Business Plan 2014-15

It was noted that the Board, 31 January approved the draft Business Plan 2013-14 for submission to DEL. It was noted that the Board have requested a 3 year map of performance against the Corporate Plan 2011-14 objectives. **CEO**

6. Leadership Organisation and Performance Management

6.1 SMT Development Programme

It was noted that the CEO will be reviewing April 2013 SMT development 2012-13 with a view to reporting to the Board following the completion of SMT performance appraisals. **CEO**

6.2 Cross Directorate Working Groups

It was noted that the CEO has received a synopsis of work to date from each group. **CEO**

6.3 Performance Management

On foot of the SMT decision December 2012 it was noted that the revised documentation had been forwarded to TUS for consultation; a response is awaited. **DCS**

6.4 iIP – Staff Conference/Christmas event

It was noted that the staff conference will take place on Wednesday, 20 February at Assembly Buildings (Spires). The CEO will provide an overview report on the Agency performance; the DCS will report on trends in the staff survey. Progress reports will also be provided by the 4 Cross Directorate groups on their function within the Agency. **CEO**

DCS
CG Groups

It was noted that the Agency hopes to progress staff recognition/rewards in the coming year. **DCS**

It was noted that the second staff survey was complete and results analysed. Changes in responses are now measurable between 2011 and 2012. Changes/trends will be discussed at SMT and reported to the **DCS/SMT**

Board and staff.

6.5 Flexible Working Policy (inc. Partial Retirement)

The policy is currently with the HR section for review and issue to Directors. It was noted that this is a key deliverable under the Equality Scheme action plan.

DCS

6.6 Redundancy Policy

The Redundancy Policy is currently with TUS. JNCC has agreed that joint discussions regarding the Agency budget position and related staffing issues will be the subject of monthly informal meetings between representatives of the JNCC Management Side and Trade Union Side.

**JNCC MS and
TUS**

6.7 Recruitment Policy

The proposal to have a CEO, Director, Board Member selection panel for ERM (DP Grade) vacancies panel was confirmed as the TUS position and is now with MS for a response. TUS has asked for a meeting with the Board should the TUS position not be acceptable.

MS

6.8 Changes to 2012/13 Annual Report

It was noted that the review of the text and presentation of the Annual Report 2012/13, other than the financial section, is on-going in preparation for the publication of the Annual Report and Accounts 2012-13.

DCS/ERM

6.9 Feedback on Learning & Development Plan

It was noted that the Learning & Development Plan has been constricted due to funding restrictions at the year end. It was noted that the format of reporting on progress is to be reviewed.

DCS

6.10 Equal Pay Audit

It was noted that data has been forwarded to NISRA for analysis.

DCS

7. ICT

7.1 IS Managed Services

It was noted that the IS Managed Services tender was published on 4 February 2013.

DCS

7.2 Security Accreditation

It was noted that while Internal Audit was satisfied with the ISIT accountability arrangements it is recommended that more formal systems for auditing security accreditation standards are established.

DCS

8. Evaluation

8.1 PPEs

The DCS is re-issuing the PPE schedule to the SMT.

DCS

8.2 SROI	It was noted that the final draft SROI report has been received by the Agency. Arrangements are being made for Eilis Lawlor, Just Economics to attend the next meeting of the Research Committee. The DAS is to circulate the draft SROI report to the SMT for information and comment.	DAS/ERM
8.3 Value for Money	It was noted that the DCS will be preparing a business case on an outstanding issue from the DEL Review of the LRA in relation to vfm.	DCS
	It was noted that the evaluation report on Mediation has been received. Directors are progressing customer service reports. It was agreed that the SMT should examine efficiencies in more detail.	SMT
9. Governance and Accountability		
9.1 LRA Funding 2012/13	It was noted that the Agency will encounter increasing difficulties with the fixed budget allocation but hopes to break even at the year end.	SMT
9.2 Statutory Compliance	It was noted that there is a need to review operational guidelines to take account of equality issues.	SMT/DCS
9.3 Environmental Review	Action in relation to the Environmental Review is on-going. The report is to be discussed in more detail by the SMT.	SMT
9.4 Corporate Social Responsibility (inc: Charity Events)	The DCS awaits a response from the SMT on the draft CSR policy.	SMT
9.5 MSFM	It was noted that the Chairman was progressing discussions with DEL.	Chair/CEO
9.5 'Black Book'	It was noted that TUS are reviewing the 'Black Book' proposals put forward by MS with particular reference to policies and procedures which are still 'live'. MS awaits a response from TUS.	TUS
10. Any Other Business		
10.1 JNCC	It was noted that the next meeting of the JNCC will take place on Wednesday, 27 March at 10.30 am in Room 2.	SMT/Sec
10.2 Staffing	It was noted that:	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✚ An ERO (part-time) commenced employment with the Agency on 8 January; 	

✚ The ERM deputising for DCA role commenced February 2013. **DCS**

10.3 Promotion of Agency services

It was noted that promotion of Agency services is reported to the Board by way of the bi-monthly report.

SMT

10.4 Board visit to Eurofound

It was noted that the Board will be visiting Eurofound and the LRC on Thursday, 21 February 2013.

CEO/Ch

11. Date of Next Meetings

✚
2013

Informal Meetings: - Thursday 3 January
Tuesday 8, 15, 22, 29 January 2013
Tuesday 5, February 2013

Formal Meeting: - Tuesday 12 February 2013

STATUS OF PROCEDURES IN CONSULTATION @ 11 FEB 2013

PROCEDURE	WITH MS	WITH TUS	STATUS
Redundancy		√	Vd0.9 sent to TUS wc 14 Jan 2013 – extensively revised by MS. Series of review meetings established to link in budget action plans.
Whistleblowing			Issued to staff Feb 2013.
Grievance		√	Was sent to the TUS in June 2011. Most likely parked by them because Redundancy and Recruitment became priorities. At the time, consultation was considered to be at final stages.
Gifts and Hospitality			Issued to staff Feb 2013.
Recruitment - DPs	√		A proposal to have a CEO, Director, Board Member panel is accepted by the union and now with management to obtain response.
Recruitment – temp vs perm		√	Management proposed form of words with union for comment.
Equal Opportunities Policy	√		Was ready for re-issue to TUS in August 2010 but was deferred due to changes in priorities and personnel at the time. Needs a quick scan by the SMT before a return to TUS.
Recognition and Procedural Agreement	√		Consultation had been extensively progressed between CEO and MMH. Version was near ready for return to TUS. Needs a quick scan by the SMT before a return to TUS.