

## Labour Relations Agency

### Minutes of a Senior Management Team Meeting held on Tuesday, 22 March 2016 at 11.00 am

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

**In Attendance:** Wendy Halligan (deputising for Alison Wolfe - Minute Secretary)

Item	Minute	Action
1.	<b>Apologies</b>  There were no apologies.	
2.	<b>Minutes of the Meeting held on 23 February 2016</b>  The minutes of the meeting held on 23 February were agreed.	
3.	<b>Matters Arising from the Previous Minutes not listed on this Agenda</b>  <b>CEO/Directors Update</b> The CEO agreed to write to Land and Property Services (LPS) to formally ask for a rent review.  <b>Item 4 – OITFET MoU</b> DCA to work on this week beginning 28 March.  <b>Finance &amp; Personnel Sub-Committee</b> The CEO reported that this had been a very positive meeting.  <b>ICMS</b> The DCS reported that the business case for Phase 2 was progressing well and should be complete soon.  <b>Certification Office</b> The CEO had arranged to meet with Sarah Havlin today (22 March) but unfortunately this has had to be rearranged and will now be taking place on Monday 4 April.  <b>Acas</b> The CEO reported that initial contact regarding arrangements for representatives from Acas to visit the Agency in October had been made. Unfortunately, Brendan Barber is unavailable but Anne Sharp will be attending.	    CEO  DCA    DCS    CEO

4.	<p><b>Business Plan 2015-16</b></p> <p>The final mop up of the Business Plan for 2015-16 is under way. It was noted that final figures from the DCA and DAS will not be available until the end of March/first week in April. The CEO asked that these are forwarded as soon as possible after the end of March.</p> <p>Regarding the Business Plan for 2016-17 the CEO commented on a very informative meeting with the Advisory Services ERMs where there was some discussion about targets. The CEO welcomed their input and expressed a wish to have ideas for targets from the SMT as well as their teams as this would generate more realistic targets.</p>	
5.	<p><b>Annual Report &amp; Accounts</b></p> <p>The DCS had forwarded the NIO FREM document which is the basis of how the Auditors will conduct the audit. The CEO would like to know how close the current format of our Annual Report and Accounts is to the FREM format. After brief discussion it was decided the CEO would contact Brian O'Neill, NIO for guidance.</p>	CEO
6.	<p><b>Board Meetings – next meeting 28 April</b></p> <p>The agenda and papers for the next Board meeting need to be issued by 21 April.</p> <p>The Directors were also reminded that the Business Plan for 2016-17 needed to go to the Board at their next meeting on 28 April.</p>	CEO/Dirs /Sec
7.	<p><b>Human Resource Issues</b></p> <p>Advertisements for both the ERM and ERO posts will appear in the relevant newspapers this week and also on the Agency Internet and Intranet sites.</p> <p>The DCS advised that there had been no expressions of interest for the temporary EOII position and that the internal recruitment process will now be initiated. As yet expressions of interest regarding the permanent EOII position have not been sought.</p> <p>It was noted that the request for the IS Manager to attend for Jury Service had been changed to June. The CEO said that if necessary he would seek DEL support in applying for an exemption.</p> <p>Advisory Services to vet HR Absence Policy. A meeting to discuss the Working from Home policy is required.</p>	
8.	<p><b>Finance Issues</b></p> <p>It was also noted that the pay remit had been completed and processed for payment in the March salaries.</p>	

	<p>A final underspend of between £60k and £80k was predicted but the DCS was confident that this could be carried into the new financial year.</p> <p>A projected monthly profile for the next 12 months had been completed. A meeting to be arranged with TUS to discuss budget issues.</p>	
9.	<p><b>Early Conciliation Implementation</b></p> <p>A project plan needs to be established. DCA will be meeting with the Conciliation and Arbitration ERMs on 24 March to discuss this further. The EC Business Case needs to be finalised for submission to DEL.</p>	DCA/DCS
10.	<p><b>Stakeholder Engagement</b></p> <p>Nothing more to report. The main priority was promotion of the new EC service with very specific targeting of the end users. The CEO will discuss with the sponsor department to help take this forward.</p>	CEO
11.	<p><b>Risk Register</b></p> <p><i><b>Risk 1:</b> The Agency loses credibility and does not adequately influence changes in the NI employment relations environment. CEO to lead.</i></p> <p><i><b>Risk 2:</b> The loss of the Agency's reputation for the provision of high quality, independent and impartial employment relations services. DCA and DAS to jointly assess if it is fit for purpose.</i></p> <p><i><b>Risk 3:</b> Failure to deliver key corporate 2014-17 and business objectives due to budget pressures. CEO to lead.</i></p> <p><i><b>Risk 4:</b> The Agency's information systems do not adequately support business-critical operations. DCA and DCS to look at IS/IT and DCS to look at records management.</i></p> <p><i><b>Risk 5:</b> Failure to demonstrate value for money (VFM). DCS to lead.</i></p> <p><i><b>Risk 6:</b> The Agency fails to meet its statutory equality duties and equality best practice standards. DAS to lead.</i></p> <p><i><b>Risk 7:</b> The Agency may encounter significant skills deficits following the retirement/departure of Board members/senior staff. DCS to lead with input from the DAS, DCA and the HR ERM.</i></p> <p>The 3 audit reports to be substantial items on the next formal SMT agenda. The DCS to drive the Records Retention policy with input from the Compliance Officer. Comments on the current draft policy should be in writing for discussion at next</p>	CEO/SMT/HR ERM

	<p>formal meeting.</p> <p>The DCA advised that further consideration needs to be given to the 'Handling emails' section of the draft policy.</p> <p>The CEO reiterated the need to have an agreed records management policy in place as a matter of urgency in line with the commitment in our response to the Internal Audit report. The CEO also emphasised the need to agree a retention and disposal schedule.</p> <p>SMT noted the positive outcome from the recent Conciliation and Arbitration Audit.</p>	CEO/SMT
	<p>The DCS to draft the response to the Corporate Governance Audit this week.</p> <p>The Certification Office MoU to be sent to DEL by the CEO having been agreed with the Certification Officer (CO). The CEO to discuss with the Certification Officer the filling of the ERM vacancy arising from the retirement of Patricia McQuillan.</p>	DCS CEO/CO
12.	<p><b>IS/IT Priorities</b></p> <p>The placement students from Belfast Met have been here for one week and seem to be fitting in well. The CEO is to meet with the students in his office.</p> <p>The DCA reported that the SFW updates had been installed with just a few niggles which have since been sorted out. A few additional options are still required but the IS Manager and SFW are dealing with these.</p> <p>DCS to report on PPE.</p> <p>It was agreed to invite the IS Manager to the next SMT meeting on 5 April.</p>	Sec IS Manager DCS SEC
13.	<p><b>ISO27001 Accreditation</b></p> <p>Nothing to report.</p>	
14.	<p><b>CEO/Directors Update</b></p> <p>The DCA commented that the scanning project had commenced and was going well.</p> <p>The DAS commented on the reduction of staffing levels in Advisory with a further 2 EOIs going off on different types of leave.</p> <p>The CEO commented that for a small organisation there have been a lot of recent moves which have created significant challenges. The HR ERM is to report on a monthly basis on the moves undertaken within the Agency.</p>	HR ERM
15.	<p><b>NI &amp; GB Employment Relations Developments</b></p> <p>None to report.</p>	DAS

16.	<b>AOB</b>  None	
17.	<b>Date of Next Meetings</b>  Informal – Tuesday, 5, 12, 19 April Formal – Tuesday, 26 April 2016  Meetings will be held in the CEO's office at 10.00 am.	