

**Minutes of the Labour Relations Agency Finance and Personnel Sub-Committee held at 4.00 pm on Monday, 27th February 2017  
at the Agency's offices Gordon Street, Belfast**

**Present:**

Mr. Albert Mills (Chair) [AM]  
Mrs. Michelle McGinley [MM]  
Mrs. Jill Minne [JM]

**In attendance:**

Mr. Tom Evans (Chief Executive Officer) [TE]  
Mr. Paul Herink (Employment Relations Manager (IT)) [PH]  
Mr. Michael Riddell (Employment Relations Manager (HR)) [MR]  
Mr. Neill Wallace (Employment Relations Manager (NICO)) [NW]  
Mr. Don Leeson (Director of Corporate Services designate) [DL]

**1. Chair's opening Remarks**

AM welcomed all members of the Committee to the meeting.  
No conflicts of interest were declared.

**2. Apologies**

2.1. No apologies received.

**3. Minutes of the Meeting held on 20th June 2016**

3.1. The minutes of the previous meeting were approved.

**4. Matters Arising from the Previous Minutes not listed on this Agenda**

4.1. No matters were raised

**5. Finance Issues (Paper 1/16)**

5.1 It was confirmed that the Finance report had been tabled at the last Board Meeting highlighting the pressure for the 2017/2018 financial year on the basis of a similar allocation to 2016/17.

5.2. The SMT will review which vacancies can be filled in the current funding context.

5.3. Robust financial controls will be implemented and adhered to from Day 1 of the new financial year.

**5.4.** A provisional budget for 2017/2018 will be drawn up based on 2016/17 outturn.

**5.5.** A review of Q1 of the budget will be undertaken at the next Finance and Personnel Sub-Committee meeting.

**5.6.** In addition to reviewing the budget a full review of all existing contracts will be undertaken in terms of necessity of provision and value for money.

**5.7.** AM asked about the likely impact that the current budgetary position will have on Learning and Development within the Agency. TE made suggestions about using alternative vehicles for delivering against L&D objectives. i.e. webinars and potential partnerships with ACAS/WRC using internal resources and expertise.

**5.8.** AM raised concerns about the LRA not attending some international functions and forum as a means of reducing discretionary expenditure.

## **6. Early Conciliation Business Case**

**6.1.** TE explained that there had been no further movement in terms of approval of the Early Conciliation business case since the last meeting.

## **7. Human Resources Issues**

**7.1** MR presented the papers previously discussed at the last Board Meeting.

**7.2** MR introduced the latest version of the HR strategy which had taken account of the Committee's comments.

**7.3** The Committee were updated on the status of vacant posts within the LRA and the current approach to vacancy filling.

**7.4** MR stated that as a result of recent selection and recruitment exercises, three complaints had been received and had been formally dealt with.

**7.5** Succession planning was discussed with three areas being identified as central to the succession planning process:

- Critical Posts that impact on frontline services
- Board Posts
- Single Points of Failure

## **8. ICT Issues**

**8.1** Development of the Mobile Application: PH updated the committee on the status of the new mobile app. The updated app was uploaded onto the Apple store on Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> February 2017 following revision and testing.

Formatting issues have been corrected and a disclaimer added to the menu structure. In addition, all of the external links imported from the main web site have been checked, and where necessary updated. GM and AM complimented the look, feel and content of the app. DL is to raise options for the formal launch of the app at the next SMT.

**8.2 Case Management Record System:** PH reported that work related to the migration of historic data due in December is now being undertaken by SFW with a view to importing historic contact information during March 2017. In addition, the stand alone "Work Diary" time recording component of the new case management platform has now been demonstrated to the Conciliation ERMs. It is intended to introduce this functionality into live service from the beginning of the 2017-2018 reporting year.

**8.3 Case management Statistics:** The Sub-Committee was provided with updated statistics reflecting the number of new IC and Helpline cases created on the system during the period December 2016 to February 2017.

**8.4 Website:** PH provided a range of statistics from the main LRA website highlighting current usage and demonstrating the Agency's ability to profile the user community accessing on-line resources made available through the website. In particular, the ability to extract from Google Analytics the demographic profile of users now visiting [www.lra.org.uk](http://www.lra.org.uk). The three most visited sections of the website remained Publications, A-Z and bookings for workshops, seminars and briefings.

**8.5 Intranet:** PH provided the latest usage statistics from the organisations intranet site.

**8.6 New HR System:** PH advised that the new PAMS and ESS/MSS on-line HR System entered service during the week commencing 13<sup>th</sup> February 2017. All staff within the organisation now have access to the Employee Self Service System (ESS) and all managers have access to the Managers Self Service System (MSS). The system is now in active use across the organisation.

**8.7 IS Managed Services contract:** PH reported that the IS Managed Services Contract continues to operate normally providing a high level of ICT support to users within the Agency.

## **9. Accommodation Issues**

**9.1** NW tabled his Accommodation Review paper for discussion. The paper contains sections that highlight:

- Demand for space is increasing
- The economic impact of accommodation issues
- Benchmarking comparisons with other organisations that have had to review accommodation needs and draw up specifications for future requirements. How have others undertaken similar exercises

- i.e. the WRC undertook a similar comprehensive review, produced a detailed specification and found suitable premises
- Options open to the Agency to address and meet accommodation requirements following the end of the existing lease on Gordon Street.

**9.2** The WRC has extended an invitation to both the D of E and L&PS (D of F) to visit Dublin to see how the process of moving sites was managed and the resulting premises made available to the WRC.

**10.** This section is to be removed from future meetings.

**11. Any Other Business**

None – No AOB items

**12. Date of next meeting**

Next meeting provisionally scheduled for Monday 19<sup>th</sup> June 2017 at 4:00 pm.