

**Minutes of the Labour Relations Agency Finance and Personnel Sub-Committee  
held at 16:00 on Monday, 20 June 2016  
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. Gerry O'Neill (Director of Corporate Services) [GON]  
Mr. Paul Herink (Employment Relations Manager (IT)) [PH]  
Mr. Michael Riddell (Employment Relations Manager (HR)) [MR]

**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 14 March 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. It was agreed that the Committee should not complete a self-assessment process until after the next meeting.

4.2. A copy of the self-assessment form to be tabled for discussion at the next meeting.

**5. ICT Issues**

5.1 **Development of the Mobile Application;** the Belfast Met Students made a presentation on the new Mobile App. The Committee were very pleased with the product and see this as a very positive start in terms of utilising more effectively social media to promote and deliver our services. The Committee agreed that the students should present to the full Board and that there should be a media type launch of the product once it has been fully tested.

**5.2 Case Management Record System;** PH reported good progress in terms of implementing the second major update and final stage of data cleansing and migration for the Phase 1 project. Work still to be completed regarding Phase 2 specification. The Committee agreed that once the system is operational for all frontline services there will be a significant bank of data available for future research.

**5.3 Intranet and Website;** PH reported that data now being collected on the numbers of site users by jurisdiction and that there are also significant numbers accessing website by mobile.

**5.4 IS Managed Services contract;** PH reported that the contract now working well; the Regional Office IT Infrastructure has been enhanced which strengthens the Agency's Business Continuity capability, means that if the HQ system goes down we can use the Regional Office facility.

## **6. Finance Issues (Paper 1/16)**

**6.1.** GON presented the finance paper highlighting the 2015/16 year end position. The Committee acknowledged that a 1.3% underspend represented a very good performance and agreed that there needed to be a very close monitoring of the budget in 2016/17 given that the Agency will have recruited up to its full complement.

**6.2.** The Committee in noting the content of the Early Conciliation business case acknowledged the very significant time invested by management and that the task of securing the additional resources is both complex and challenging.

**6.3.** MM raised the issue of fees and referred to the House of Commons report regarding fees and ACAS. TE suggested that the introduction of fees has made it difficult to measure the impact on Early Conciliation.

## **7. Human Resources Issues (Paper 2/16)**

**7.1** MR presented an outline plan of the HR Metrics/Dashboard. The Committee felt that this was a good start and that a refined version should be presented for the next meeting to include the number of sickness absence days per employee.

**7.2** MR also confirmed that further refinement of the HR People Strategy was being carried to reflect the commitments in the current Business Plan. The Committee agreed that the Strategy and Plan should be reviewed on a regular basis to reflect the changing operating context and the content of the new Corporate Plan once it has been developed.

**7.3** It was agreed that it may be prudent to agree only 4-5 actions for year 1 of the implementation plan.

**7.4** MR confirmed that the total number of sick absence days per employee for 2015/2016 was 12.5. It was commented that this was on the high side for a Public Sector organisation when compared with industry benchmarks. MR provided an update on the current actions being taken to manage down absence levels. It was agreed that further updates should be provided at the next meeting.

## **8. Accommodation Issues**

**8.1** GON presented the terms of reference for the accommodation review. It was agreed that the two immediate objectives should be to develop the Agency's accommodation/facilities requirements and to identify the range of options that should be considered as part of the Options Appraisal.

**8.2** The Committee highlighted the importance of the Agency operating from an accessible neutral location. JM offered to provide the contact details of the Director of City Centre development who could assist in this regard.

## **9. Date of next meeting**

The next meeting was agreed for the 19th September 2016 at 16:00.