

Local Government Reform Joint Forum

Progress and Agreements

PURPOSE

Set up by the Minister to:

‘To facilitate consultation and negotiation between Employer and Employee representatives on a range of HR related issues that are cross sectoral in nature in the context of TUPE regulations, employers’ statutory obligations, Public Service Commission Guiding Principles and Associated Recommendations endorsed and accepted by the NI Executive.’

SCOPE

The scope of the Joint Forum will extend to:

- **Staff employed in the 26 district councils (inc. Group Committee staff, arc21 and SWaMP 2008) & NIHE**

and

- **All identified staff employed in the transferring functions**

MEMBERSHIP

Independent Facilitator: Paul O'Brien, Chief Executive, APSE

7 members each on Trade Union Side and Employers' Side

'Leads' Maureen Taggart, NIHE, Employers & Bumper Graham, TU

Independent Secretariat: Local Government Staff Commission for NI

AGREEMENTS IN THE FOLLOWING AREAS

Circulars:

LGRJF/01 - Introduction of Vacancy Control System

LGRJF/02 - Model TOR & Operating Arrangements for local consultation and negotiating forums at Transition Committee level

+ **Addendum to LGRJF/01** - clarity and additional info. on Vacancy Controls

Joint Communication Bulletins: - 4 so far, issued after every formal meeting of the Joint Forum

Introduction of Vacancy Control System

- **Circular LGRJF/01 issued on 18 September**
- **Implementation from 1 October 2009**
- **Initially apply to vacancies for the following posts:**
 - **Chief Executives**
 - **Directors**
 - **Heads of Service**
 - **PAs to Chief Executives, Directors and Head of Service**
 - **Member Services**
- **Addendum issued in November 2009 – clarity and additional information**
- **Phased Process – Phase 2 now being considered**
- **Making provision for suspension of VCS**

Model TOR & Operating Arrangements for local consultation and negotiation forums at Transition Committee level

Circular LGRJF/02 issued on 30 September

- **Develop an acceptable system of engagement and communications between the Transition Committee, Transition Management Team and employees and their representatives**

Next Agreements

- **Staff Severance Scheme – to be issued for consultation**
- **System for Filling Posts in New Council Structures – to be discussed at Joint Forum meeting on 27 January**
- **Staff Transfer Scheme – early draft being considered**

Staff Severance Scheme

- **Terms of the Scheme nearing finalisation**
- **Issue of central funding still to be agreed**
- **Phased introduction tied to recruitment of senior posts and new structures**

System for Filling Posts in New Council Structures

- **Initial draft Procedure – currently getting legal advice**
- **Work has commenced on the drafting of chief executive job descriptions and person specification**
- **To be discussed at next meeting on 27 January**

WAY FORWARD

- **HR Implementation Workplan**
 - **Staff Transfer Scheme and Guidance**
 - **Transfer Arrangements for Civil Servants**
 - **Consultation and Negotiation Arrangements post 2011 etc.**
- **Joint Communication Bulletins issued**
- **Details on Commission's website**
www.lgsc.org.uk

ISSUES

- **Implementing the Agreements**
- **Measures to avoid redundancies**
- **Good communication processes**
- **Working within the Guiding Principles**