



**“Putting
Communication
on the RPA Agenda”**



The Need for Effective Communications

Stephen Graham

Chief Executive

Public Service Commission

Membership

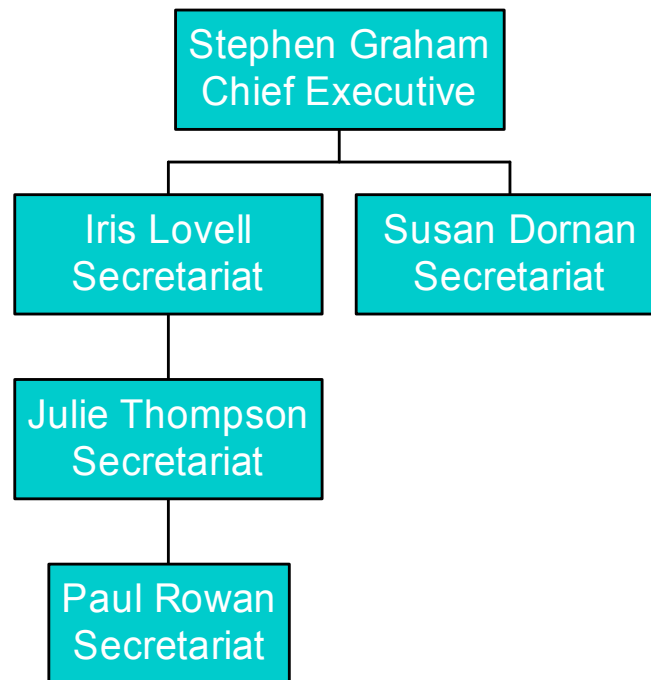
- Sid McDowell – Chairman
- Brian Hanna
- Professor Bernard Cullen
- Brenda McLaughlin
- Dr Collim Patton
- Dessie Mitchell
- Jim McCusker

Established March 2006

Role

To make recommendations to government on the guiding principles and steps necessary to safeguard the interests of staff and to ensure their smooth transfer to new organisations, established as a consequence of government decisions on the Review of Public Administration, taking into account statutory obligations, including those arising from Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998.

The Secretariat



PSC in Context

PSC will make recommendations to:

- Government

PSC will engage directly with:

- RPA Steering Group
- Employers, Staff Commissions and Trade Unions

ENGAGEMENT

Secretary of State

David Hanson

NIC/ICTU

DHSS&PS

DOE

Steering Group

Nigel Hamilton

Mary Bunting

Staff Commission

DE

Remit of Steering Group

To ensure co-ordinated implementation of Ministerial decisions on the Review of Public Administration in accordance with consistent principles and statutory obligations, including those arising from Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998, and to promulgate, publish and circulate regular progress reports on the implementation process.

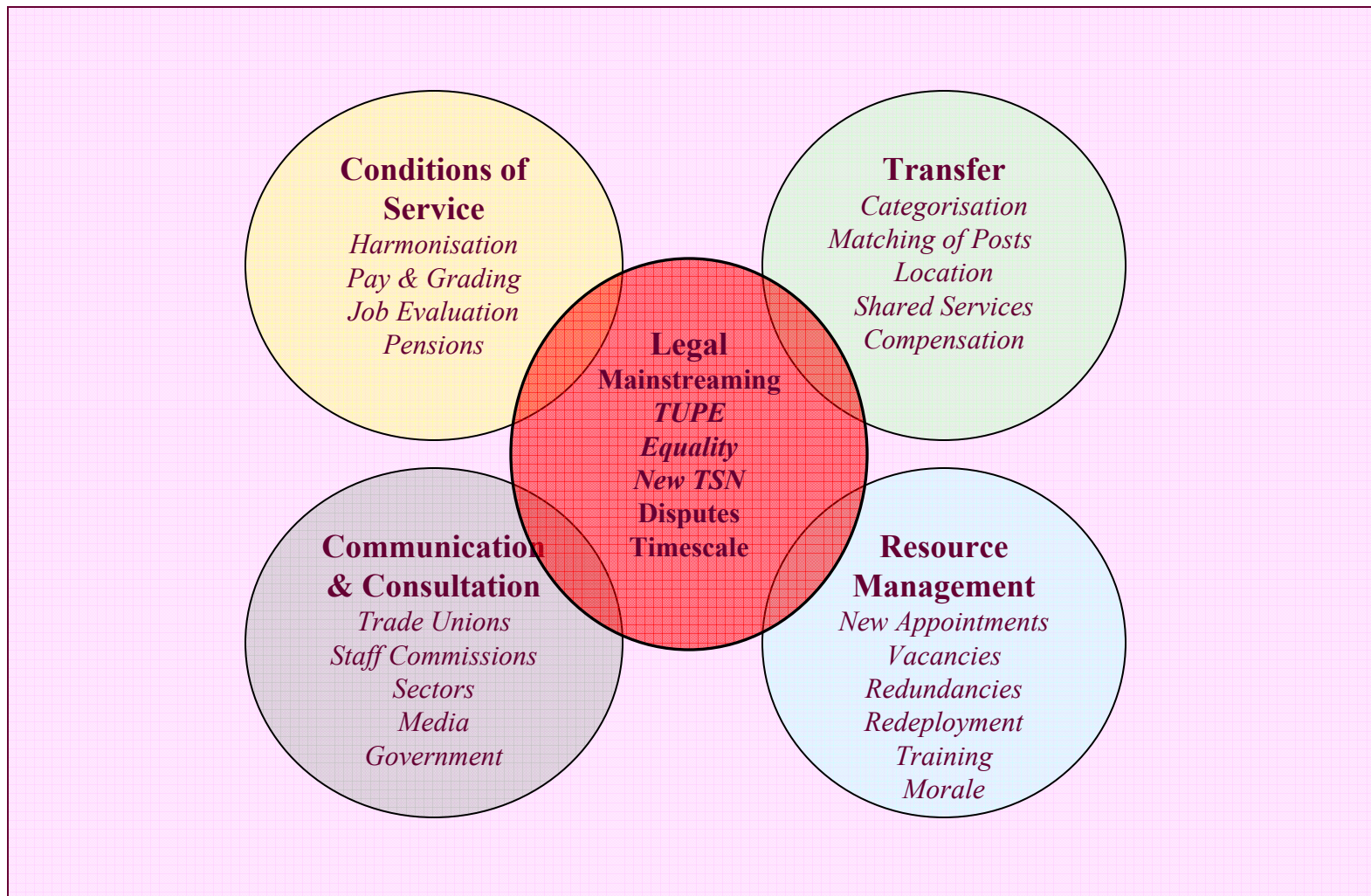
Early Advice Issues - Government

- the application of the TUPE principles as set out in the Guidance issued by the Cabinet Office in January 2000 “Statement of Practice on Staff Transfers in the Public Sector” for the transfer of functions and associated staff, including ensuring, in regard to pensions, that staff suffer no material detriment and supplemented by the new regulations from April 2006;
- the arrangements for the appointment of staff to the new organisations;
- the arrangements for dealing with any staff surpluses and the avoidance of compulsory redundancies;

Early Advice Issues – Government

- the arrangements for engagement with Trade Unions;
- the development of informal dispute resolution procedures (based on informal appeals processes);
- the training and development implications of the implementation of the RPA decisions; and
- any additional issues determined by government.

The Commission's Agenda



Senior Posts in New Organisations

- HSSA
- ESA
- HEALTH TRUSTS

First Guiding Principle

Government, and the Steering Group, should be guided by the principle that the support and involvement of staff, and their staff representatives, is required to give positive effect to change. The Commission considers that such co-operation will be readily forthcoming provided that people are treated with dignity and respect. Regular communication, particularly in relation to the personal and specific effects of change, will provide a large degree of comfort and reassurance to each individual person who is proud to serve in the public sector.

Associated Recommendations

The Public Service Commission recommends that the Steering Group ensures that arrangements are put in place, as a matter of urgency, to ensure that all staff are informed, in a timely way, about how change is to be implemented and what arrangements are planned to safeguard the interests of staff and secure their co-operation during, and after, the period of change. Such arrangements should be subject to industrial relations procedures to ensure staff representatives are properly involved in the processes.

Associated Recommendations

- The Commission further recommends that each organisation provides its staff with an identified contact point (or contact points) to which RPA specific queries might be directed, or from which staff might seek RPA specific information.
- In relation to formal communications, the Public Service Commission recommends that electronic means of communication, including e-mails and websites, should be supplemented by the prudent use of regular newsletters, and direct contact through seminars, workshops, conferences and staff meetings.

The Principal Aim of the Communications Strategy

“to guarantee that timely, consistent and relevant information reaches all staff, in all of the organisations affected, and in such a way as to ensure that relevant queries are dealt with efficiently and effectively.”