



THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT STAFF COMMISSION
FOR NORTHERN IRELAND
Achieving Excellence Through People



CORPORATE PLAN – 2010/11 – 2012/2013
BUSINESS PLAN – 2010/11

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CHAIRMAN'S STATEMENT

This Corporate Plan, which covers the three-year period from April 2010 to March 2013, has been prepared against a background of continuing uncertainty regarding the timetable for establishing the 11 new councils and the consequent implications for local government officers and elected members.

The Commission's work, as reflected in the Business Plan for 2010-11, will be based on implementing the reform and modernisation of local government, on the assumption that the new councils will be operational from May 2011.

The Local Government Reform Joint Forum (LGRJF), for which the Commission provides the independent secretariat, will continue to play a vital role in the implementation process. The excellent work of the LGRJF has been recognised within local government and across the public sector generally. This will be of particular assistance to the Public Service Commission on which I serve as a member.

In October 2009, the Vacancy Control System agreed by the LGRJF came into operation. The ongoing uncertainty within the local government sector, however, means that the Commission will keep vacancy control issues under review. Meanwhile, progress will continue on developing a Staff Severance scheme, with particular regard to how severances would be funded, and on a scheme for Filling Posts in the New Council Structures. A legal opinion on the use of restricted applicant pools will inform the final decision.

The LGRJF's remit includes consideration of the negotiating machinery for the post May 2011 local government structures. Accordingly a 'fit for purpose' review of the Northern Ireland Joint Council (NIJC) will be undertaken in partnership with the Labour Relations Agency. In this context the LGRJF may well prove to be a helpful model in developing a better system for dealing with industrial relations in local government.

I would take this opportunity to highlight three further examples of the Commission's activities for 2010 - 11:

- The 'Disability in Local Councils' initiative, launched in 2009, will be embedded across the councils through the development of a network of officer and elected member Champions, based on the successful 'Women in Local Councils' model.
- Organisational aspects of capacity building will be taken forward by an Improvement and Development Sub-Group, which will focus on people-based improvement and change under the auspices of the Local Government Training Group.
- The Training Group will be restructured to maximise its effectiveness in implementing the recommendations of the Strategic Leadership Board's Capacity Building Working Group.

Irrespective of the eventual timetable for reform and modernisation, the work of the LGRJF, the review of the NIJC, and the other Commission initiatives will provide significant benefits for the local government sector.

Finally, the Minister of the Environment extended the life of the present Commission for one year from 1 December 2009. A new Commission will therefore be recruited during the year and will come into operation from 1 December 2010.



Brian Hanna CBE
Chairman

THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT STAFF COMMISSION FOR NORTHERN IRELAND

"ACHIEVING EXCELLENCE THROUGH PEOPLE"

STATUS OF THE COMMISSION

The Local Government Staff Commission for Northern Ireland (The Commission) is an Executive Non-Departmental Public Body established under the Local Government Act (NI) 1972. The Commission's powers were later extended under the Housing Orders 1976 and 1981 and the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) (NI) Order 1992.

In general, the terms of reference for the Commission are to exercise:

'general oversight of matters connected with the recruitment, training and terms and conditions of employment of officers of councils and the Northern Ireland Housing Executive and of making recommendations to councils and the Northern Ireland Housing Executive on such matters.'

[Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 1972 as amended by the Housing Orders (NI) 1976 and 1981]

Appendix 1 details the Commission's full statutory remit and specific functions.

PURPOSE OF THE CORPORATE PLAN

This document has been developed to guide the Commission's work for the rolling period 2010 -13 and to illustrate the action plan for the Year 1, 2010 -11. It is based on client/customer requirements and takes account of the need to provide leadership within local government in relation to all human resource (HR) matters and those arising from the implementation of the local government reform programme.

In June 2009, the Commission was tasked by the then Minister for the Environment to set up a new RPA negotiating body for local government, the Local Government Reform Joint Forum (the Joint Forum). Providing the independent secretariat to the Forum is a major part of the Commission's work programmes and priorities, and this has been reflected in the Business Plan.

The key areas of activity detailed in this document have been identified as being of importance to councils and the Northern Ireland Housing Executive (NIHE) in implementing change in Local Government and addressing the Modernisation Agenda.

In focusing on these activities, continuing to work with our partners and responding to client/customer needs, the Commission aims to support and develop the HR capacity in councils and the Housing Executive thereby assisting to improve organisational effectiveness within the local government sector.

REPORTING MECHANISMS

Progress on meeting the actions detailed within the Key Performance Areas (KPA) is addressed on a monthly basis by the Management Team and reported every six months to Commission Members by the officers with responsibility for ensuring compliance and developing each KPA.

SERVICES PROVIDED

The Commission aims to be 'the strategic organisation for the development of human resource management and the promotion of excellence through people in the delivery of local government services in Northern Ireland'.

The Key Performance Areas of the Commission's business are supported by corporate and operational arrangements designed to ensure that the Commission provides its services to the highest public sector standards and demonstrates corporate accountability in an atmosphere of continuous improvement.

The Key Performance Areas are presented in the document as follows:

Key Performance Area 1	Local Government Reform
Key Performance Area 2	Recruitment and Selection
Key Performance Area 3	Equality and Diversity
Key Performance Area 4	Learning and Development
Key Performance Area 5	Employee Relations
Key Performance Area 6	Organisation Design and Development
Key Performance Area 7	Corporate Governance

Whilst this document groups the Commission's specific actions and target outcomes into seven Key Performance Areas, Commission officers provide ongoing services to councils and the NIHE by providing professional HR advice and assistance and supporting the sector as follows:

RECOMMENDING GOOD PRACTICE

- Making authoritative recommendations on all HR related matters within local government and across the wider public sector
- Providing and/or recommending independent expert consultancy support
- Initiating HR policy development, evaluation and review
- Acting as a single point of entry to the local government sector for major consultation exercises on HR related issues
- Representing local government on HR related issues as necessary.

COMMUNICATIONS

- Hosting and planning events on HR related topics to inform policy developments and legislative change including arranging conferences, seminars and other networking mechanisms
- Providing access to expert employment-specific legal advice and providing employment law updates
- Facilitating capacity building initiatives.

WIDER PUBLIC SECTOR COOPERATION

- Promoting co-operation in the Public Sector and working, where appropriate, with the Association of Public Service Excellence (APSE), Northern Ireland Local Government Association (NILGA), Society of Local Authority Chief Executives (SOLACE) and the Public Sector People Managers' Association (PPMA) in developing and implementing local government reform
- Constituting and facilitating local government-specific and cross-sectoral working groups
- Liaising with government departments and trade unions through the work of the Joint Forum
- Providing advice and support to the Public Service Commission.

CAPACITY BUILDING

- Providing direct support to the work of the Local Government Training Group (LGTG) in the design and implementation of capacity building for local government reorganisation
- Promoting cross cutting initiatives to lead change
- Delivering training and development programmes to build capacity.

COMMISSION INITIATIVES FOR 2010/11

The following major initiatives have been identified as being particularly important to local government in the coming year. The Commission will assist councils to meet the many HR challenges facing local government by co-ordinating, promoting and progressing these initiatives to make best use of the limited HR resources in local government.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT REFORM

Local Government Reform Joint Forum (the Joint Forum)

The Commission will continue to provide an Independent Secretariat service to the Joint Forum and assist with the delivery of the priorities in its rolling Implementation Plan to ensure that the requisite HR policies, procedures and processes are in place to effect a smooth transition of staff to the new council structures.

HR Framework for Local Government

The Commission will prepare a transitional HR Framework for local government, comprising the key principles and processes to be followed by councils during RPA implementation for circulation to councils and Transition Committees. The Commission will also provide advice and assistance to the Strategic Leadership Board (SLB) and sub-groups, Transition Committees and Management Teams and the Regional Transition Committee, as requested.

RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION

Vacancy Control System

The Commission, in consultation with the Joint Forum, will continue to work with individual councils and Transition Committees to provide advice and assistance on implementing the Vacancy Control System with the aim of safeguarding the employment of existing council staff as a result of the decisions arising from the Review of Public Administration.

Staff Transfer Scheme and Filling Posts in the New Organisations

The Commission will, in consultation with the Joint Forum, develop a model Staff Transfer Scheme to transfer local government staff to the new structures and a mechanism for filling posts in the new council structures. These mechanisms will be based on the PSC Guiding Principles, employment law and good practice. Detailed guidance for councils and the Transition Committees will also be developed.

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

Women in Local Councils – Making a Difference

The Commission will continue to drive the Women in Local Councils initiative, to ensure that each council and individual political parties are challenged and supported to make measurable progress towards addressing any gender under-representation, thereby creating a local government sector which more accurately reflects the community it serves. Key activities for this year include recommending to councils that they endorse their commitment to the initiative by reappointing their Gender Champion, continuing to support the network of Champions, and encouraging councils to participate in a "Women in Work" week.

Disability in Local Councils

During the year, the Commission will drive the Disability in Local Councils initiative to work with individual councils to encourage the participation of people with disabilities at all levels. Key activities for the year include establishing a network of Champions and providing a package of training and support to assist them to carry out their role at individual council level.

LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

Framework for Addressing Capacity Building

The Commission will work through the Local Government Training Group (LGTG) to implement the recommendations of the Capacity Building Working Group, which have been accepted by the Strategic Leadership Board. The LGTG will in turn cooperate with NILGA in the areas of elected member training and joint initiatives involving members and officers. To maximise its efficiency and effectiveness, the LGTG will be restructured to become a smaller and more strategically focused body, supported by two Sub-Groups representing Training Liaison Officers and Elected Members respectively.

EMPLOYEE RELATIONS

Negotiating Machinery

In addition to the Independent Secretariat service provided to the Local Government Reform Joint Forum (the Joint Forum), the Commission will also provide advice and support to any local negotiating mechanisms. The Commission will continue to provide advice and assistance to the NIJC in relation to sector-specific employee relations issues and will facilitate a 'fit for purpose' Review of the NIJC in partnership with the Labour Relations Agency. The Commission will continue to provide an Independent Chair to the Joint Negotiation Forum for the Proposed Transfer of Field Staff from Environmental Health Group Committees to the NI Environment Agency, Water Management Unit.

ORGANISATION DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT

Change Management and Continuous Improvement

The Commission will continue to work with SOLACE NI, PPMA NI and other partners to strengthen and enhance the capacity of Chief Executives, Management Teams, HR practitioners, Change Management Officers and other senior staff to respond to change and meet organisational needs in an atmosphere of continuous improvement. In particular the Commission, in partnership with the Local Government Training Group, will support and facilitate the Improvement and Development Sub Group to progress and promote a people-based improvement and change agenda including arranging a number of events introducing organisational development and design tools and techniques for councils, Transition Committees and Transition Management Teams.

Workplace Health and Well Being

The Commission will continue to work in partnership with the Health and Safety Executive NI and the Labour Relations Agency to oversee a programme of work to support councils. Support will be provided to councils implementing the Stress Management Standards and a programme to address specific workplace health issues will be developed, including promotion and prevention, mental health guidance, management and support systems.

PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK

The Commission, in common with other public sector bodies, works in an environment of performance management and continuous improvement. The following performance themes assist the Commission in achieving its performance objectives.

COMMUNICATION

The Commission has developed open and accountable internal and external communication systems relevant to the needs of the stakeholders, through:

- Effective Information Technology systems
- Information bulletins
- Freedom of Information and the Publication Scheme
- Staff and Member briefings
- Conferences and seminars
- Efficient responses to requests for advice and information.

MARKETING SERVICES

The Commission determines its objectives and targets having regard to its statutory functions and following consultation with its stakeholders, by:

- Consulting with clients to ensure proper service delivery
- Identifying and monitoring service standards
- Benchmarking and comparing against best practice to ensure continuous improvement
- Partnering other public service organisations in joint problem solving and service delivery
- Identifying opportunities to expand and enhance the work of the Commission in the wider public service context.

MEASURING SUCCESS

The Commission implements accredited success criteria to assist local government to achieve excellence, by:

- Developing best practice standards in conjunction with key partners
- Monitoring performance against standards and recommending improvement plans
- Maintaining Investors in People accreditation
- Providing advice and assistance to improve standards and continually develop best practice
- Facilitating peer assessment and mentoring arrangements.

*“ACHIEVING
EXCELLENCE
THROUGH PEOPLE”*

KEY PERFORMANCE AREA 1**LOCAL GOVERNMENT REFORM (LEAD OFFICER – ADRIAN KERR)****STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE**

To provide leadership within local government in relation to HR matters arising from Local Government Reform and the Modernisation Agenda.

OUTPUT AREAS 2010 - 13

- Together with the Strategic Leadership Board and related sub-groups, assist in HR and Capacity Building initiatives
- Lead local government preparations for the HR aspects of local government reform implementation and local government modernisation
- Support the work of the Public Service Commission (PSC)
- Provide independent secretariat support to the Local Government Reform Joint Forum
- Contribute to specific local government or cross-sectoral implementation initiatives
- Review developments in Organisation Design/ Development techniques and recommend as necessary
- Address staff capacity building issues through the LGTG and individual personal development plans
- Promote the Commission's HR Standards as a model for best practice in councils

*“TO PROVIDE
LEADERSHIP
WITHIN LOCAL
GOVERNMENT
IN RELATION TO HR
MATTERS...”*

ACTION PLAN 2010/11

- Continue to advise the PSC on the local government perspective on HR issues, as required, and assist councils to operationalise the PSC Guiding Principles and Recommendations
- Plan for the integration of the PSC Guiding Principles into strategy implementation in councils – e.g. Communication, Vacancy Controls and Filling New Posts
- Contribute to HR working groups and implementation groups, as required, and take the lead to develop guidance on issues such as vacancy controls, staff transfer scheme, filling posts in new structures and job specifications for senior staff in the new councils. These issues will be collated under a single HR Transition Framework document for issue to councils and Transition Committees
- Advise the Department of the Environment (DoE), the Joint Forum and SOLACE on local government HR matters, as required
- Plan for the design of a comprehensive HR Framework to facilitate change in service delivery mechanisms
- Assist the Transition Committees, Strategic Leadership Board, Policy Development Panel C and the Regional Transition Co-ordinating Group on HR issues
- Assist local government Change Managers in the transition process
- Research change management processes and best practice models and recommend, as appropriate
- Build long term change capability for senior and middle management
- Revisit the Commission's HR Standards and expand to facilitate transitional and transformational HR strategies and promote the HR Standards Framework as a benchmark for improving council HR services
- Provide specific support for local government HR professionals through information sessions, seminars and development programmes and begin to develop action research projects and action learning sets to facilitate peer learning
- Introduce the learning from the 'Women in Local Councils' initiative into frameworks for other ongoing change required to deliver local government reform
- Build on the results of the Change Champions Research to extend best practice in Change in all relevant areas of local government operations and service delivery.

KEY PERFORMANCE AREA 2

RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION (LEAD OFFICER – LORNA PARSONS)

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE

To ensure that councils and the Northern Ireland Housing Executive (NIHE) have effective recruitment practices which treat all applicants fairly and equitably.

OUTPUT AREAS 2010 - 13

- Continue to improve the Code of Procedures on Recruitment and Selection
- Research best practice in recruitment and selection techniques and consider how these could be applied in local government
- Provide clear guidance and outline best practice in recruitment and selection
- Revise the Code of Procedures on Recruitment and Selection to assist councils to appoint officers to grades rather than individual posts
- Ensure the implementation of the Code of Procedures and encourage councils to continuously improve their recruitment practices through applying the HR standards and other monitoring/ auditing procedures
- Advise on best practice in the use of assessment centres and how recruitment exercises can be made more objective and transparent
- Independently administer recruitment processes, as requested

*“TO ENSURE
EFFECTIVE
RECRUITMENT
PRACTICES...”*

ACTION PLAN 2010/11

- Continue to assist councils to implement the Vacancy Control System Detailed Procedure, in conjunction with the Local Government Reform Joint Forum
- Keep under review the guidance on the Vacancy Control System and bring forward amendments for consideration by the Joint Forum, if necessary
- Consider how the Vacancy Control System can be utilised as a staff development mechanism
- Continue to advise councils in relation to the implementation of the Code of Procedures on Recruitment and Selection, and on best practice in recruitment and selection
- Provide a seminar on best practice in recruitment and selection, in conjunction with the Equality Commission for NI
- Conduct in-depth reviews of the recruitment practices in councils, as required
- Research best practice in assessment centre techniques and consider how these could be applied in local government
- Contribute to external working groups, such as the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Stakeholder Group, and disseminate the information to councils
- Continue to implement the Observer strategy
- Continue to review the role of Observers examining other models such as the Assessor role provided by the Office of the Commissioner for Public Appointments
- Provide training in the role of the Observer for Commission members.

KEY PERFORMANCE AREA 3

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY (LEAD OFFICER – LORNA PARSONS)

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE

To ensure fair and equitable treatment for all by promoting an environment free from all forms of unlawful discrimination and where diversity is valued.

OUTPUT AREAS 2010 - 13

- Assist local government to deliver best practice in equality and diversity
- Assist councils and the NIHE to develop model policies, as required
- Provide clear guidance and outline best practice on equality and diversity issues
- Promote and facilitate the Women in Local Councils initiative
- Promote and facilitate the Disability in Local Councils initiative

*“TO ENSURE
FAIR AND
EQUITABLE
TREATMENT
FOR ALL...”*

ACTION PLAN 2010/11

- Continue to advise and assist councils and the NIHE to implement their Section 75 duties
- Provide equality and diversity case study examples and best practice seminars, as required
- Assist councils to develop new Equality Schemes when the revised Guidance is issued by the Equality Commission for NI
- Co-ordinate meetings of the Statutory Duty Network, as required, and disseminate relevant information on equality issues to the Equality Officers in individual councils
- Continue to co-ordinate responses on behalf of councils to equality consultation exercises through the Statutory Duty Network, as required
- Continue to develop relationships with the Commission's Partner Consultees
- Continue to assist councils and the NIHE to implement their Disability Action Plans
- Continue to drive the Women in Local Councils initiative including the Women's Development Steering Group and network of Gender Champions
- Continue to drive the Disability in Local Councils initiative through the network of Disability Champions
- Provide an annual employment law and case law update for the Equality Network and other seminars on changes in legislation, as required
- Maintain links with external equality bodies and networks, such as Business in the Community and Employers for Disability NI, and participate in joint working opportunities, as appropriate.

KEY PERFORMANCE AREA 4

LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT (LEAD OFFICER – JOHN HANNA)

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE

To enhance knowledge and skills and to build capacity through the Local Government Training Group (LGTG) as the preferred source of advice and support for learning and development.

OUTPUT AREAS 2010 - 13

- Restructure the LGTG and review the effectiveness of the new structure in the context of the reform and modernisation of local government
- Review and develop the LGTG's strategy and resultant business plans
- Match the provision of learning and development opportunities to identified needs
- Evaluate the benefits of short courses and development programmes to ensure continuous improvement and value for money
- Maintain mutually beneficial relationships with NILGA, the Interchange Partner Group, professional groups within local government and other stakeholders
- Continuing to support and promote secondment arrangements through the Interchange initiative

*“TO ENHANCE
KNOWLEDGE
AND SKILLS
AND TO BUILD
CAPACITY...”*

ACTION PLAN 2010/11

- Implement a restructuring of the LGTG by establishing a smaller body to focus on strategic policy and resourcing issues, supported operationally by sub-groups representing officer and elected member interests respectively
- Develop capacity within the Training Liaison Officer (TLO) Sub-Group as the primary operational focus for the work of the LGTG in identifying learning and development needs, implementing solutions, and evaluating outcomes
- In conjunction with NILGA, provide support to the Elected Members' Sub-Group
- Assist Transition Committees, Transition Management Teams, Change Management Officers, HR Managers and other key stakeholders to maximise their effectiveness through capacity building during the transition period
- Identify and implement appropriate leadership development programmes and arrange provision as required
- Continue to review the effectiveness of the LGTG's provision of knowledge and skills-based training courses and staff development programmes in light of emerging needs
- Continue to identify and disseminate examples of best practice and case studies
- Provide web-based and other electronic systems to ensure that the information and communications needs of stakeholders are met and to enable sharing as appropriate
- Continue to support ongoing initiatives including Women in Local Councils, Disability in Local Councils and Interchange.

KEY PERFORMANCE AREA 5

EMPLOYEE RELATIONS (LEAD OFFICER – LINDA LEAHY)

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE

To ensure that effective, productive and harmonious working environments and staff/management relationships are sustained within local government.

OUTPUT AREAS 2010 - 13

Local government delivering effective regional collective bargaining

- Provide an Independent Secretariat service to the Local Government Reform Joint Forum (the Joint Forum), established specifically to progress local government reform HR implementation issues
- Provide advice and support to Transition Management Teams and negotiating mechanisms established at local level
- Continue to provide advice and assistance to the Northern Ireland Joint Council for Local Government Services (NIJC) on sector-specific issues and encourage implementation of the recommendations of the Commission's Review Report (March 2001)
- Advise the NIJC on best practice and benchmarking opportunities and on the role of the NIJC in developing a model for negotiations which confers sufficient authority on the negotiating body to make agreements binding on councils
- Assist the NIJC to address issues arising from the local government reform programme

Local government sustaining stable and productive working arrangements

- Introduce and promote Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) mechanisms in district councils and encourage the integration of ADR mechanisms into existing policies and procedures
- Assist district councils with complaints, grievances and disciplinary matters as requested

*“TO ENSURE
EFFECTIVE,
PRODUCTIVE
AND
HARMONIOUS
WORKING
ENVIRONMENTS...”*

ACTION PLAN 2010/11

- Provide an Independent Secretariat service to the Local Government Reform Joint Forum (Joint Forum), including the preparation of draft Agreements and policies for consideration by the Joint Forum and initiating discussion and action on relevant HR implementation issues
- Manage and co-ordinate the arrangements for formal meetings of the Joint Forum and Sides' and Leads' meetings. Maintain and develop contact between the Joint Forum and other bodies/stakeholders
- Ensure that Joint Communication Bulletins are issued following each meeting of the Joint Forum and prepare briefing reports on the work of the Joint Forum for DoE, RTCG, SLB, SOLACE NI, PPMA NI etc
- Assist the Joint Forum to refocus and prioritise its rolling Implementation Programme to meet the challenges of any interim arrangements for RPA implementation whilst continuing to secure agreement on the HR issues necessary for effective RPA Implementation
- Advise, assist and support Transition Committees, Transition Management Teams and any local negotiating mechanisms as required
- Report to the Commission on the operation of the Joint Forum and the NIJC on an ongoing basis
- Research structures and mechanisms for negotiations aimed at establishing a robust, authoritative regional collective negotiating body for the new 11 council structure
- Fast-track the review of the NIJC in order that the immediate employee relations needs of councils can be met in both the short term and over the next few years
- Maintain effective and productive working relationships with the recognised Trade Unions and other representative bodies
- Assist councils, committees and senior managers to effectively deal with complaints, disciplinary and grievance issues
- Recommend and quality assure independent Employee Relations investigation processes as required
- Assist to implement the outcomes and recommendations of the Review of the Statutory Dispute resolution Procedures undertaken by the Department for Employment and Learning
- Seek to ensure that Alternative Dispute Resolution mechanisms are integrated into Employee Relations policies during the review process
- Maintain and develop relationships with the Centre for Effective Dispute Resolution (CEDR); Core Solutions; Labour Relations Agency; and the panel of CEDR Accredited Mediators in local government.

KEY PERFORMANCE AREA 6

ORGANISATION DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT (LEAD OFFICER – LINDA LEAHY)

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE

To ensure that local government sustains flexible, 'fit for purpose' organisations which can respond to change and meet customer needs in an atmosphere of continuous improvement.

OUTPUT AREAS 2010 - 13

To ensure that local government sustains flexible, 'fit for purpose' organisations which can respond to change and meet customer needs in an atmosphere of continuous improvement.

- Assist councils and Transition Committees with the staffing implications of organisation design, development and change particularly in the context of local government reform implementation
- Research and promote Organisational Development (OD) tools and techniques in local government, particularly to support preparations for local government reform implementation
- Initiate and facilitate discussion on the longer term modernisation of HR and workforce strategies, policies and practices for councils including:
 - Pay and grading systems
 - Workforce development strategies
 - Organisation improvement initiatives
 - Employee engagement models
- Assist councils to develop actions and initiatives to reduce employee sickness and promote health and well being
- Partner the Local Government Management Services Board (LGMSB) to promote best practice examples of change management

*"TO ENSURE...
'FIT FOR PURPOSE'
ORGANISATIONS..."*

ACTION PLAN 2010/11

- Assist Transition Committees and councils to implement the Agreements of the Joint Forum including Vacancy Control Procedures, Filling Posts in the 11 new councils, compiling Schedules of transferring staff under the Staff Transfer Scheme etc
- Assist Transition Committees and councils to implement any re-focussed Agreements of the Joint Forum and any specific arrangements made for any interim arrangements for RPA implementation
- Facilitate the work of the OD Discussion Group to develop and promote a Strategic Improvement Agenda for councils
- Promote relevant and best practice OD processes including cultural change, leadership, change management, service and performance improvements and arrange event/s specifically aimed at introducing and promoting OD tools and techniques
- Assist the Employer Councils and Group Environmental Health Committees to effect the decision of the Environment Minister to transfer Water Quality Management field staff currently employed by councils into the NI Environment Agency (NIEA)
- Independently chair the quadripartite Joint Negotiating Forum for the Transfer of Water Quality Field Staff to the NIEA and its Pensions Sub-group
- Assist councils to interpret and implement the provision of the Commission's Guidance on the Staffing Implications of Organisation Development and Change (2002) document
- Contribute to the Public Sector People Managers' Association (PPMA) Lead Group on OD and promote PPMA's OD Toolkit
- Assist in the development of the Councillor's Code of Conduct as required and review the Code of Conduct for Employees, in particular the Councillor/Employee interface arrangements, when the Councillor's Code of Conduct is finalised
- Support a programme of initiatives to improve the management of employee health and well being within the workplace, including showcasing best practice, masterclass sessions and networking
- Promote the Commission's HR Standards as part of an overall OD framework
- Promote best practice examples of change management in partnership with the Local Government Management Services Board.

KEY PERFORMANCE AREA 7

CORPORATE GOVERNANCE (LEAD OFFICER – ADRIAN KERR)

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE

To provide the highest level of public service standards in all areas of the Commission's operation.

OUTPUT AREAS 2010 - 13

Accountability: Continue to implement a sound system of control to support the Commission's objectives in accordance with Government Accounting Northern Ireland

People Development: Operate a culture of open communication and participation, where staff feel valued and involved and where innovation is encouraged within a Performance Management Framework

Operational Support Services: Provide continuous improvement in the provision of the Commission's Administrative Support and Financial Services

*“TO PROVIDE
THE HIGHEST LEVEL
OF PUBLIC SERVICE
STANDARDS...”*

ACTION PLAN 2010/11

- Continue to work with Internal Audit, the Local Government Auditor and the Commission's Audit Committee to improve the audit process, including preparing the annual accounts and updating the Risk Strategy and Register as necessary
- Finalise the Commission's Management Statement with the Department of the Environment (DoE) and Department of Finance and Personnel (DFP). Establish a regular review mechanism to reflect best practice
- Continue to present half-yearly budget reports to the Audit Committee and the Commission
- Continue to develop and update policies to meet best practice standards in corporate governance, as required
- Develop a new Equality Scheme for the Commission, following the issue of the revised Guidance by the Equality Commission for NI
- Begin the process of examining improvement areas in conjunction with the Equality Network and other best practice forums
- Provide new member induction training
- Agree a Strategy with reconstituted Commission members
- Continue to implement the Disability Action Plan
- Implement staffing guidelines as appropriate issued by the Public Service Commission
- Continue to utilise specialist IT consultancy services and training, as appropriate. Begin the process of examining the feasibility of entering into a shared service arrangement with local government for the provision of IT and administrative services
- Continue to develop the Commission's website for internal and external users, including surveying users for improvement suggestions. Examine the extension of IT based communications systems e.g. HR Blogs, video conferencing and shared networks
- Review and amend policies and procedures for key administrative areas of operation
- Work with the Department of the Environment in continued implementation of the 'Report on the Review of the Local Government Staff Commission for Northern Ireland'
- Examine and begin preparation of scenario plans in relation to the planned review of the Commission following the reorganisation of local government.

LEGISLATION

APPENDIX 1

In addition to the Commission's general oversight role as detailed in the introduction of this document, the following specific functions are detailed in the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 1972, as amended by the Housing Orders (NI) 1976 and 1981 and the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) (NI) Order 1992.

The functions of the Staff Commission shall include:-

- a) Establishing in such a manner as the Staff Commission thinks fit, bodies (to be known as "advisory appointment panels") for the purpose of giving advice to councils on the suitability of applicants for appointment to the office of clerk and to other offices for which qualifications are prescribed under section 41 (including the making of a selection of persons who may be treated as eligible for such appointments);
- b) Establishing a code of procedure for securing fair and equal consideration of applications to councils and to the Executive¹ by persons seeking to be employed by them as officers, and fair and equal treatment of persons who are so employed;
- c) Assessing the probable future requirements of councils and of the Executive for the recruitment of officers and securing publicity for the opportunities that are available to persons who may seek employment as such officers;
- d) Promoting co-operation between councils, the Executive, public bodies, government departments and educational institutions in matters connected with the recruitment, training and terms and conditions of employment of officers, and promoting the temporary transfer of officers (with their consent) in pursuance of arrangements made between councils, between councils and the Executive or between councils or the Executive and any such bodies, departments or institutions;
- e) Promoting or assisting the development of, or providing, facilities for the training of officers;
- f) Promoting or assisting the establishment of, or establishing, procedures for the negotiation between councils, the Executive and officers of councils or the Executive or associations representing any of them, of standard rates of remuneration, or other terms and conditions of employment, for officers of councils or the Executive and recommending the adoption by councils and the Executive of rates, terms and conditions so negotiated.

¹The term 'Executive' refers to the Northern Ireland Housing Executive.

COMMISSION MEMBERS 2005 – 2010

APPENDIX 2

Chairman

Brian Hanna CBE Former Chief Executive, Belfast City Council

Vice-Chair

Marion Smith UUP Councillor, North Down Borough Council

Members

Carol Ackah HR Consultant and Part-Time Lecturer
Member of the Local Government Staff Commission Audit Committee

Brian Campfield General Secretary, Northern Ireland Public Service Alliance (NIPSA)

Carmel Connelly Assistant Director of Corporate Services, Lisburn City Council

Adrian Donaldson MBE Chief Executive, Northern Ireland Policing Board

Oliver Gibson Former DUP Councillor, Omagh District Council
Commission representative on the Local Government Training Group

Barbara Gilliland UUP Councillor, Newtownabbey Borough Council

Robert Hanna CBE Former Pro-Chancellor, University of Ulster
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Thomas McCall Chief Executive, Newry and Mourne District Council

Wavell Moore Public Sector Consultant
Chair of the Local Government Staff Commission Audit Committee

Eamon Mullan Head of Governance Services, University of Ulster

Roger Wilson Chief Executive, Coleraine Borough Council

An experienced and qualified team of professional and administrative staff ensure that a professional service is provided to the Commission’s clients. The professional team consists of qualified HR specialists who also hold a range of high level post-graduate business related qualifications including Change Management, Diplomas in Business Research and Accredited Mediation and Dispute Resolution. The administrative team similarly consists of highly qualified staff who are also trained in governance related competences.







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