



THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT STAFF COMMISSION FOR NORTHERN IRELAND

Issue 1 | October 2019

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Staff changes at the Commission

After an impressive 27 years of service, the Commission says goodbye to our Chief Executive Dr. Adrian Kerr, as he retired on the 31st July 2019.

Following in Adrian's footsteps was the Commission's Policy Officer, Lisa O'Neill, who also left on this date, within a notable 14 years' service.

This is an exciting new chapter for both Adrian and Lisa. We would like to send our very best wishes and thank them for their considerable contribution to the Commission. From 1st August 2019 the Commission had two new members of staff:

Helen Hall

*Director of Corporate Services
helen.hall@lgsc.org.uk*

&

Donna-Marie O'Prey

*Finance & Administration Officer
donnamarie.oprey@lgsc.org.uk*

Do you have a Rising Star?



Do you have what it takes or do you know someone else who has what it takes to be the next PPMA Rising Star?

This is a unique opportunity for recognition and personal development.

For more details: www.lgsc.org.uk or contact Lorna on 028 9031 3200 for more details

Closing Date is Wednesday 16 October 2019



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Leading through Innovation and Transformation Conference - 5 Dec 2019

An interview with...

Christine Sheridan

Head of Human Resources - Belfast City Council



How has your career evolved to where it is today?

I graduated from Queens University Belfast in 1990 and since then I have spent my entire career working in HR. Straight after graduation, I moved to England with Dunnes Stores and took up the role of Staff Manager, before moving home in 1992, to join the Housing Executive as a Graduate Trainee in Personnel. I spent two years as a trainee on their graduate programme and completed a PGD in HRM at University of Ulster. During this time, I was learning on the job as well as completing the course and working in various HR roles before my final role as Strategic HR Business Partner for three years with Housing Services Division. I left the Housing Executive in July 2017 to take up a Head of HR/ OD post with Co-Ownership Housing Association, before joining Belfast City Council in June this year.

What are you most looking forward to in your new job?

Well, I have joined the Council at a really exciting time. I am looking forward to supporting the Council in delivering the Belfast Agenda which has at its heart the idea of "Inclusive Growth" for Belfast and as a council we want to ensure that our staff are at the heart of our journey of change and improvement.

Describe your typical working day?

There is no typical working day in such a busy and complex organisation! Since joining, just a number of months ago, I already feel very much at home having spent most of my career in another public sector organisation.

How do you keep up to date with Professional Training? Anything you would like to see delivered centrally?

It's really important to keep up to date with professional training and to do this by attending conference and events organised by CIPD, LRS and for me personally WIB NI. It's important to build a network of contacts from across the HR profession, who you can learn from and sound out for advice and guidance at times. For me I would like to see more collaboration and a focus on professionalising HR teams and a greater emphasis on practical areas such as applying T&Cs, employment investigations, implementation of organisational/structural change.

What are the most challenging aspects of your job?

Belfast City Council is undergoing significant changes across the organisation and the pace of change will not slow down. Alongside this there is a challenge to support the delivery of the Belfast agenda, our city's first Community Plan. This is an ambitious plan and helping the Council to lead, manage, develop, support and engage our staff to deliver outcomes of the Belfast Agenda, that make a difference to the quality of people's lives across the city, will be a key challenge.

How do you look after your personal health and well-being? How do you like to relax outside of work?

Outside of work I am family focused, spending time with my husband and three sons who are at various stages of their education and early career. We love our holidays abroad but also try to get to Donegal as much as possible over the summer, to unwind and recharge our batteries! I also try to stay healthy by exercising a few times a week and while the intention is there it's not always achieved.

We wish Christine every success in her new post.

Gender Research Revisited

Prior to the reform of local government, senior staff in the 26 legacy councils participated in a major public sector research project: 'An Investigation of Gender Equality Issues at the Executive Level of the Northern Ireland Public Sector'. The final report was published in 2016.

As part of an ongoing research partnership, the Local Government Staff Commission, in conjunction with Ulster University, are revisiting this research to see what has changed since the reform of local government. Focus Groups were held over the Summer and these will be followed



up by one-to-one interviews and questionnaires over the next few months. It is expected that this research will be completed early in the New Year.

If you are interested in sharing your opinion or ideas on any aspect of this research, please contact Lorna Parsons on: lorna.parsons@lgsc.org.uk

Are you open for business... for everyone?

Equality Commission
FOR NORTHERN IRELAND

An accessible business is one that is equally open to all potential customers, including the approximately 375,000 people in Northern Ireland who have a disability.

Councils have a legal duty to take reasonable steps to ensure that disabled people can access their services. The Equality Commission has developed the "Every Customer Counts" initiative to support Northern Ireland traders seeking to promote accessible services. Our goal is to encourage business men and women to take a moment to use our free self-assessment tool and consider how open their services currently are to disabled people.

For more information: <https://www.equalityni.org/EveryCustomerCounts>

Recruitment & Selection

New Chief Executive Appointments

Tim Walker has been appointed as Acting Chief Executive of Arc21. Marie Ward has been appointed to Chief Executive of Newry Mourne and Down District Council. Congratulations to them both and wish them every success.

Best Wishes also are extended to Liam Hannaway and Ricky Burnett. Wishing them both a long and healthy retirement.

The Local Government Training Group Programme

The Local Government Training Group continues to be a valuable resource to all Councils.

Currently hosted by Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council, the Group has progressed a number of key initiatives over the last year.

These initiatives have included things such as leadership training, coaching and mentoring programmes, e-learning provision and training for our professional groups. Work on these initiatives will continue in the months ahead and further information on the latest developments will be made available.

Of course, we associate the LGTG with the Open Course Programme, and this has continued to be available to councils. In the last 12 months we have seen this refreshed and a number of new courses and suppliers are now in place. All of the above is supported through the work of the LGTG Board and the Practitioner Group, both of which have continued to meet.

The Practitioner Group sees all 11 Councils represented and attendance and participation at all of the meetings has been excellent. As we look to the future, we are embarking on a review of the LGTG which will explore how it can continue to be of benefit and how it can best support Councils in their future challenges.

Equality and Diversity Update

A new Equality and Diversity Strategy and Action Plan 2019-2021 was launched on 24 September 2019.

The launch event was held in Castle Tower School in Ballymena where participants were welcomed and entertained by the school choir.

The event hosted a number of best practice speakers who shared their insights and experiences of mainstreaming equality. These were:

- *Anne Donaghy, SOLACE NI, Champion for Disability Matters and Chair of the Equality and Diversity Group*
- *Orla King, Head of Organisation Development, Danske Bank, Winner of the CIPD Diversity and Inclusion Initiative 2019*
- *Alderman Gerardine Mulvenna, Mid and East Antrim Borough Council*
- *Bill Atkinson, Chief Executive, USEL*

The Group welcome Anne Donaghy, Chief Executive of Mid and East Antrim Borough Council as the new Chair of the Group and look forward to working with her over the next three years. A special word of thanks to Jacqui Dixon, Chief Executive of Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council and the outgoing Chair for her leadership and stewardship.

For a copy of the Strategy click [here](#) or for further information, email Lorna Parsons, Director of Recruitment & Diversity lorna.parsons@lgsc.org.uk



Commission Members

We would like to thank the ongoing support and commitment of the Commission Members:

Brian Hanna, Chairman; Bernie Kelly, Vice Chair; Lindsay Boal; Monica Burns; Paul Corrigan; William Francey MBE; Bumper Graham; Robert Hutchinson; Charlie Mack; Roisin McDonough & Hilary Singleton

We would like to take this opportunity to thank Deborah Colville who resigned from her role as a Commission member at the end of March 2019 and would like to wish her every success in the future.

Do you have an article that you'd like to publish in this newsletter?

We hope to publish this newsletter quarterly. If you would like to contribute to the magazine or be part of the editorial team, please contact Helen Hall - helen.hall@lgsc.org.uk

Local Councils focus on Mental Health

A new regional Group comprising of Council staff, PPMA members and key partners such as Trade Unions, Labour Relations Agency, Equality Commission, Universities, Health and Safety Executive and other relevant bodies are working together to support Mental Health.

The Group will be a mechanism to share best practice and to work in partnership to improve employee well-being, upskill line managers, raise awareness and challenge mental health stigma and contribute to cultures that support attendance.

The Group, chaired by Anne Donaghy, Chief Executive of Mid and East Antrim will meet for the first time on **25 November 2019 at 2.00pm in the Braid, Ballymena.**

If you are interested in joining this Group, please contact Lorna Parsons - lorna.parsons@lgsc.org.uk

Local Government Transformation Conference 2019

*“Leading through
Innovation and
Transformation”*

Thursday 5th December 2019

9.00am - 1.30pm

Seamus Heaney HomePlace, Bellaghy

£60 per person

[Click Here to book](#)

Email: admin@lgsc.org.uk

Tel: 028 9031 3200

Local Government Transformation Conference 2019



- 9.00am **REGISTRATION** - Refreshments available
- 9.30am **OPENING REMARKS & HOUSEKEEPING**
Brian Hanna, Chairman
Local Government Staff Commission for Northern Ireland

SESSION 1 - CHAIR: *Bill McCluggage, Managing Director, Laganview Associates*

- 9.40am **TRANSFORMING OUR PLACES AND SERVICES - WITH GREAT PEOPLE AT THE HEART OF IT**
Neil Schneider, former Chief Executive at Stockton-On-Tees Borough Council
Winner of APSE Lifetime Achievement Award 2019
- 10.00am **TRANSFORMING OUR SERVICES**
Cinty Stubberfield, Enterprise Product Manager, Translink
- 10.20am **TRANSFORMING OUR PEOPLE**
Joy McGimpsey, Head of Organisational Development, Northern Health & Social Services Trust. Winner of CIPD NI, HR Team of the Year 2019
- 10.40am **QUESTIONS FOR THE PANEL**
- 11.00am **BREAK**

SESSION 2 - CHAIR: *Bill McCluggage, Managing Director, Laganview Associates*

- 11.20am **INNOVATIVE LEADERSHIP TO SUPPORT THE ECONOMY**
Deborah Colville, City Innovation Manager, Belfast City Council
- 11.40am **INNOVATIVE TECHNOLOGY TO TRANSFORM SERVICES**
Jenny Nelson, Digital Newcastle Programme Manager, Newcastle City Council
Winner of Smart City of the Year 2019
- 12.00pm **QUESTIONS FOR THE PANEL**
- 12.15pm **LEADING TRANSFORMATIONAL CHANGE**
"Change is a Critical Incident - Treat it as such"
Maxine de Brunner, Ex. Met Police Deputy Assistant Commissioner
- 12.55pm **CLOSING REMARKS & THANKS**
- 1.00pm **LUNCH**
- 1.30pm **SEAMUS HEANEY EXHIBITION TOUR (optional)**