



**Key Outcomes from Regional Transition Co-ordinating Group (RTCG)
Thursday, 25 March 2010**

1. Minutes of Meetings

- Minutes from the previous RTCG meeting on 21 January 2010 were approved. The minutes and associated papers are available on the Local Government section of the Department of the Environment (DOE) website on www.doeni.gov.uk and the Northern Ireland Local Government Association (NILGA) website www.nilga.org.uk.

2. Update on the Reform Programme

- It was discussed that Minister Poots met all Executive parties on Tuesday 23 March to discuss local government reform.
- The meeting was a constructive stock taking exercise and further engagement will follow.

3. Strategic Leadership Board (SLB) update

- An update was provided on the SLB meeting which took place on the 25 February 2010.
- For any further information please refer to the Key Outcomes document issued after the SLB meeting or the papers which are available on the NILGA and DOE websites.

4. Voluntary Regional Transition Committee (RTC) / Regional Transition Management Team (RTMT) Proposals

- A paper outlining the proposals for establishing a voluntary RTC and RTMT was noted as an update.
- These proposals are now with Transition Committees (TCs) for discussion and endorsement.

5. Transfer of Functions Working Group & Finance and Estates Implementation Group Joint Meeting

- Representatives from both groups met to ensure an integrated approach is taken to cross cutting issues.
- These issues are being identified and addressed, and it was agreed to focus on future work streams and practices.

6. Finance and Estates Implementation Group Progress Report

- A progress report on the Group's main items of work was noted by RTCG members.

7. Transfer of Functions Working Group

- RTCG members noted a copy of the Group's update report that was presented at the last SLB meeting.

8. Local Government Reform Joint Forum

- A verbal update was provided on the Local Government Reform Joint Forum meeting that took place on 24 March 2010. The following was noted:
 - A Statutory Severance Scheme has been agreed and is ready to be put forward to the next SLB meeting on 14 April 2010 but making clear that securing sufficient funding is critical to successful implementation.
 - RTCG members noted concerns about staff anxiety and morale linked to the current period of uncertainty around local government reform, and in particular the possible implications for the smooth operation of the Vacancy Control System. The Local Government Reform Joint Forum is considering how best to respond.
 - A generic job information and specification document for new Chief Executive posts has been agreed and will be passed to the Local Government Staff Commission for comment before going to the SLB.

- A proposed approach to filling posts in the new councils has been broadly agreed with minor amendments to be included. This will also now go to the Local Government Staff Commission and then to the SLB.

- It was confirmed that the Local Government Reform Joint Forum take full cognisance of the Northern Ireland Executive Guiding Principles (Public Service Commission Guiding Principles).
- It was noted that the Local Government Reform Joint Forum has delivered a lot of good product in a short period of time.

9. Customer Focussed Approach to Service Delivery

- Proposals were presented for implementing the agreed approach to the development of a customer strategy.
- It was agreed that this paper would be the first item on the agenda of the voluntary RTC to take forward.
- It was also agreed that in the interim DOE and NILGA in partnership will market this approach to Transition Committees (TCs) to receive buy in prior to taking forward to RTC.
- RTCG members recognised the work and commitment of the NILGA officers to the local government reform process that have supported their members in taking it forward.

10. Local Government Reform Monthly Progress Reports

- It was acknowledged that whilst the new reporting system is robust with a lot of buy in from the sector, further clarity is required on the key milestones for it to be used to its full potential.

11. AOB

- Ian Maye, as Chair of RTCG, thanked Heather Moorhead CE of NILGA in her absence for the work and commitment invested during her time at NILGA. This was endorsed by RTCG members.

12. Date of Next Meeting

- There will not be any further meetings of the RTCG. Notification will come forward in due course to commence the voluntary RTC and the voluntary RTMT.

Please note: The information above may be subject to change. The formal minutes will represent the information in full and finalised format.