

PDP C PAPER ON THE PROPOSAL TO ESTABLISH A HUMAN RESOURCES (HR) CO-ORDINATING GROUP AND HR IMPLEMENTATION ISSUES

Agenda Item: 5

Summary: This paper sets out Policy Development Panel C recommendations relating to:-

- The establishment of a Local Government Reform Joint Forum.
- Human Resources Implementation Issues

Action: To consider and agree.

Background

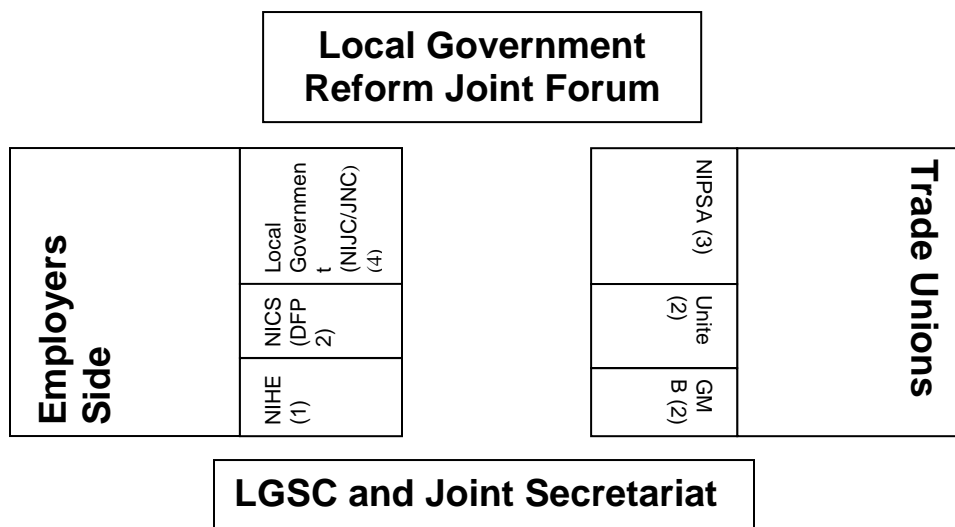
1. Paul Simpson wrote to Policy Development Panel C (PDP C) in December outlining the Regional Transition Co-ordinating Group's (RTCG) proposal to establish a Human Resources (HR) Co-ordinating Group to advise on regional human resource and staff transfer implementation issues. He also requested that the Panel prepare a paper setting out the HR Implementation issues to be addressed operationally for consideration and clearance by the Strategic Leadership Board (SLB). It was proposed in the letter that the HR issues would then pass to the RTCG for implementation through the HR Co-ordinating Group.
2. It has taken longer than anticipated to finalise the paper as there were a number of issues which required detailed consideration by PDP C and its working group. The Panel has now finalised its response to the matters raised and its recommendations are set out below.

Detail

3. It is the view of the Panel that there should be a rationalisation of the policy and implementation HR structures. As well as the proposed HR Coordinating Group there is also currently a HR Working Group set up under Policy Development Panel C to develop HR related policy. In addition, there is also an urgent need to establish a forum to consult and negotiate with Trade Unions on issues that are cross sectoral in nature. **The Panel therefore proposes the creation of one group to be known as the Local Government Reform Joint Forum.** The establishment of one group will result in resource savings in terms of overall costs, time and administration.

4. The Panel agrees that the Joint Forum should consist of two groupings; the Employers side which will include the Northern Ireland Joint Council (NIJC) and Joint National Council (JNC) [for local government employers], Departments (either transferring Departments themselves or DFP acting on their behalf), and depending on final numbers transferring, representatives from the NIHE. The second grouping will comprise various Trade Unions as appropriate. It will be a matter for each group to agree its representative membership. It is also proposed that the Local Government Staff Commission (LGSC) and representatives from the joint Secretariat should provide secretariat support to the Joint Forum.

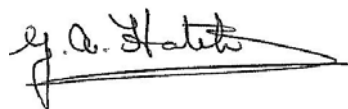
5. This is summarised in the diagram below (Please note that the numbers attached are purely as examples)



6. It is also the view of the Panel that the employer's side should be appropriately supported by local government HR experts as, where necessary the Employers side will be tasked with developing any further HR policy. In relation to further policy development Panel C will continue to fulfil a scrutiny role, cross reference to other issues and provide direction.
7. Where relevant the Employers side will then engage with Trade Unions on cross sectoral issues. Any negotiation or consultation with Trade Unions will, of course, be carried out independently of Panel C.
8. Turning to implementation issues, an initial outline of the HR implementation issues is attached at **Annex A**. Given the recommendations above the Panel proposes that the Local Government Reform Joint Forum under Panel C should now take forward all HR related issues.

Recommendations

9. The Panel therefore recommends that the SLB considers and agrees :-
 - the creation of one group to be known as the Local Government Reform Joint Forum.
 - the initial HR Implementation issues.



ALD A HATCH
Chair of PDP C

11 May 2009

Annex A

HR IMPLEMENTATION ISSUES PLAN

No.	ISSUE	PROGRESSED BY	TARGET DATES
1.	<p>Severance Scheme/Compensation Arrangements</p> <p>Based on PSC 5th Guiding Principle</p>	<p>DoE LG Division, Proposed Local Govt Reform Joint Forum</p>	<p>Identify 'at risk' groups and consider potential severance terms in order to establish potential quantum - June 2009</p> <p>Estimate of costs prepared – June 2009</p> <p>Draft of process and criteria for availing of severance - Oct 2009</p> <p>Business case to Minister for a central Scheme including funding arrangements - Autumn 2009</p> <p>Scheme etc finalised and timing considered - early 2010</p>
2.	<p>Secondment of Civil Servants to Local Government</p>	<p>Proposed Local Govt Reform Joint Forum</p>	<p>A watching brief is required on the new Health & Education Authority after the implementation of their secondment policies on 1 April 2009.</p>
3.	<p>Vacancy Controls System - detailed Guidance</p> <p>Based on PSC 2nd Guiding Principle and consistent with RPA Code of Practice (when finalised)</p>	<p>Proposed Local Govt Reform Joint Forum</p>	<p>Consultation required with Trade Unions through the proposed Local Govt Reform Joint Forum</p> <p>Consultation responses considered by Staff Commission and Scheme implemented in Autumn 2009</p>
4.	<p>Staff Transfer Scheme and Guidance</p> <p>Based on PSC 3rd Guiding Principle and consistent with RPA Code of Practice (when finalised)</p>	<p>LGSC, Proposed Local Govt Reform Joint Forum</p>	<p>Consultation required with Trade Unions through the Local Govt Reform Joint Forum</p> <p>Guidance for councils developed to accompany Scheme - Summer 2009</p>

	<p>Based on NI Libraries Authority models</p> <p>To transfer existing council staff, any group committee staff and staff employed by Transition Committees to new councils in May 2011</p>		<p>Final Draft issued to Councils and Transition Committees for information - Autumn 2009</p> <p>The Local Government (Restructuring) Bill will bring the old districts to an end and deal with the transferring of staff, contacts, liabilities etc to the new structure including the enabling power for a Staff Transfer Scheme. The final Staff Transfer Scheme therefore cannot be operationalised in advance of this piece of legislation.</p>
5.	<p>System for Filling Senior Posts in the New Council Structures</p> <p>Based on PSC 4th Guiding Principle and consistent with principles in LGSC document 'Guidance on the Staffing Implications of Organisation Development and Change - September 2002' i.e. the system that currently operates in local government</p>	<p>LGSC, Proposed Local Govt Reform Joint Forum</p>	<p>Draft finalised - Apr/May 2009</p> <p>Considered by Commission in May 2009</p> <p>Consultation in Summer 2009</p> <p>Issued to Councils and Transition Committees - Autumn/Winter 2009</p>
6.	<p>Preparing draft job descriptions and person specifications</p> <p>Chief Executive, senior HR and finance posts</p>	<p>LGSC in partnership with SOLACE Enterprises, PPMA/IDEA and CIPFA STCs</p>	<p>Drafts finalised - May 2009</p> <p>Considered by PDP C/SLB/RCTG - June 2009</p> <p>Consultation - Summer 2009</p> <p>Issued to Councils and Transition Committees - Autumn/Winter 2009</p>
7.	<p>Location, relocation expenses</p>	<p>Proposed Local Govt Reform Joint Forum</p>	<p>Further policy development required.</p> <p>Consultation with Trade Unions required through Local Govt Reform Joint Forum – June 09</p>

8.	Civil Service Pension Issues	NI Executive	<p>Further policy development required.</p> <p>Consultation with Trade Unions required through Local Govt RPA Joint Forum - June 2009</p>
10.	Collation of timely information on transferring staff	Transition Management Teams and transferring functions DFP	For discussion at proposed Local Govt Reform Joint Forum
11.	Communication Arrangements on HR Issues	Proposed Local Govt Reform Joint Forum	Issued jointly as agreement is reached on HR implementation issues.