



**STAFF COMMISSION FOR
EDUCATION AND LIBRARY BOARDS**



CORPORATE AND BUSINESS PLAN

2008/2009



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CORPORATE AND BUSINESS PLAN 2008 - 2009

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SECTION 1

INTRODUCTION

The Staff Commission for Education and Library Boards was established as a statutory body in 1972 under the provisions of Article 70 and schedule 11 of the Education and Libraries (Northern Ireland) Order 1972 (now consolidated as Article 82 and schedule 15 of the Education and Libraries (Northern Ireland) Order 1986).

CORPORATE PLAN 2008 - 2009

The Corporate Plan is normally developed to guide the Commission's work for a rolling three year period.

Given the planning context detailed at Section 2 of this document, an integrated Corporate and Business Plan has been developed for the period April 2008 - March 2009.

MAIN FUNCTIONS OF THE COMMISSION

The Commission was established to:-

'exercise general oversight of matters connected with the recruitment, training and terms and conditions of employment of officers of boards and to make recommendations to boards on such matters'.

(Education and Libraries (Northern Ireland) Order 1986)

The specific functions of the Commission are:

- Recommending Appointment and Promotion Procedures
- Establishing Advisory Appointment Panels
- Ensuring Effective Negotiating Machinery
- Advisory, Training and Support Systems
- Advising on Best Practice in relation to Organisational Development and Management of Human Resources
- Promoting Equality of Opportunity and Good Relations
- Promoting Co-operation within the Public Sector

THE ORGANISATION

The Education and Libraries (Northern Ireland) Order 1986 specifies that Commission membership comprises a Chairman and not more than 12 members. Members are appointed by the Education Minister in accordance with the guidance issued by the Commissioner for Public Appointments.

The Commission is managed by a Chief Executive/Secretary, assisted by a Deputy Secretary, a Senior Principal Officer and an administrative team. The Commission membership and staffing structure is outlined in Appendix 1.

SECTION 2 - CORPORATE AND BUSINESS PLAN 2008/2009

MISSION STATEMENT

“To maintain the Commission as a key strategic resource within the Education and Library Service ensuring best practice in relation to organisational development and human resources management.”

EQUALITY STATEMENT

The Commission is fully committed to an organisational culture that provides diversity. The Commission will mainstream equality and diversity into its policies and practices. The Commission will also explore opportunities to promote good relations in the delivery of its services.

CORE VALUES

In delivering services the Commission will be equitable; be accessible; respond to customer needs; be open and accountable; act promptly; be professional; behave with integrity; maintain confidentiality; and respect all opinions.

PLANNING CONTEXT

The main focus of the RPA was on the rationalisation and modernisation of the present local Government, Health Bodies and Education administration structures. The key proposal for education was the formation of a new Education and Skills Authority (ESA) and a new Northern Ireland Regional Library Authority (NILA).

The then Minister for Education stated that “... with regard to the Staff Commission, the creation of the Education Authority will mean that some of the functions will be absorbed into the Authority while others will no longer be required”.

In July 2007, the Education Minister announced a revised RPA implementation timetable for education with a view to having the ESA operational by April 2009. The establishment date of April 2008, set by the previous Administration, was viewed by the Executive as being unrealistic given the scale of change facing the education system at the present time.

During this extensive change programme, the Staff Commission is committed to providing professional advice and guidance to all the education partners on human resource and equality matters connected with the change process, as well as providing on-going services to the Education and Library Boards. In particular, there has been significant input to the gathering and analysing of information relating to the terms and conditions of service for the non-teaching staff employed in the current education employing authorities. This valuable work will assist in the development of terms and conditions of service for

new staff in both ESA and NILA, as well as identifying harmonisation and protection issues for existing staff.

The Commission's brief in the area of Equality has also been significantly expanded as we prepare for the change-over with Commission officers contributing to the development of a human resource equality strategy for ESA and NILA. Much of this extensive work will not bear fruit until after the new employing bodies have been established. It is within this planning context that the Commission's key strategic objectives and associated business objectives have been set.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES 2008 - 2009

In pursuit of its Mission Statement and in considering the planning context the Commission shall focus its attention and deploy its resources on the following strategic objectives:-

Objective 1:

Review of Public Administration (RPA) - Implementation Arrangements

Work in partnership with the Education and Skills Authority Implementation Team (ESAIT), the Northern Ireland Library Authority Implementation Team (NILAIT), the Department of Education, the Education and Library Boards and the other education employing authorities, the Trade Unions, the Public Service Commission and other stakeholders to help achieve the human resource objectives of the RPA.

Objective 2:

Code of Procedures on Recruitment and Selection

Ensure that the Education and Library Boards provide fair and equal treatment for all employees and potential applicants by actively promoting best practice.

Objective 3:

Industrial Relations

Ensure that suitable machinery and mechanisms exist for negotiating the terms and conditions of employment for all officers of the Education and Library Boards.

Objective 4:

Transition Arrangements

Develop a programme of work aimed at dissolving the Commission on the establishment of ESA on 1 April 2009.

Objective 5:

Corporate Governance

To provide a high standard of service delivery and value for money in all areas of the Commission's operation.

Objective 1

Review of Public Administration (RPA) - Implementation Arrangements

Work in partnership with the Education and Skills Authority Implementation Team (ESAIT), the Northern Ireland Library Authority Implementation Team (NILAT), the Department of Education, the Education and Library Boards and the other education employing authorities, the Trade Unions, the Public Service Commission and other stakeholders to help achieve the human resource objectives of the RPA.

To meet this objective, the Commission will:

- 1.1** Contribute to the ESAIT Human Resource Project Plan and in particular play a key role in:
 - the ESAIT/HR Managers Group;
 - the Education Sector Joint Forum for HR issues;
 - the Communicating Change Consultation Group;
 - the Terms and Conditions Working Group;
 - the Section 75 Equality Duties Group;
 - the Employment Equality Group.
- 1.2** Contribute to the NILA HR Forum
- 1.3** Facilitate the review and development of human resources policies and procedures in the context of the change management process in partnership with the stakeholders.

Key Performance Indicators

- Review and analyse the terms and conditions of employment across the legacy organisations to enable the identification of harmonisation and protection issues and the development of terms and conditions for new recruits. This work is being undertaken in partnership with ESAIT, NILAIT, the Trade Unions and other stakeholders.
- Contribute to the development of policies and procedures for the Recruitment and Selection of staff to ESA and NILA.
- Assist with the review of the negotiating machinery in consultation with ESAIT, NILAIT and the Trade Unions.
- Contribute to the development of proposals to ensure that effective mechanisms are established for negotiating the terms and conditions of service of staff in the new authorities.

- Conduct a review of employment equality policies across the legacy organisations and develop proposals for consideration by ESAIT, the Trade Unions and other stakeholders.
- Assist ESAIT in the completion of an equality impact assessment of its Human Resources Principles and Policies framework document.
- Provide advice and support on human resources, equality and industrial relations matters related to the RPA.
- Ensure the most effective use of Commission resources to provide an on-going quality service in relation to our current statutory functions and the additional responsibilities associated with the RPA.

Objective 2

Code of Procedures on Recruitment and Selection

Ensure that the Education and Library Boards provide fair and equal treatment for all employees and potential applicants by actively promoting best practice.

To meet this objective the Commission will:-

- 2.1** Facilitate and monitor the implementation of the Code.
- 2.2** Appoint officers of the Staff Commission as Observers at shortlisting/interview panels across the Education and Library Boards to ensure that the Code is adhered to.
- 2.3** Appoint Assessors, as required, to provide advice on the professional and technical suitability of applicants for appointment and ensure that the Assessors have been appropriately trained.

Key Performance Indicators

- Provide advice and guidance on best practice in recruitment and selection.
- Provide an input to the training programme for Board/Commission members and officers involved in recruitment and selection.
- Monitor feedback from Observers on the effectiveness of the recruitment and selection process.
- Monitor feedback from the Education and Library Boards in relation to the performance of Assessors in the recruitment and selection process.

Objective 3

Industrial Relations

Ensure that suitable machinery and mechanisms exist for negotiating the terms and conditions of employment for all officers of the Education and Library Boards.

To meet this objective the Commission will:

- 3.1 Ensure that the Joint Negotiating Council (JNC), its Executive Committee and the Senior Management Pay Review Panel (SMPRP) are effective in negotiating the terms and conditions of service of Board Officers.
- 3.2 Provide an advisory and support service to the Education and Library Boards and the Trade Unions on the implementation of employee relations policies and procedures.

Key Performance Indicators

- Provide an independent joint secretariat, research and advisory facility to the JNC, the Executive Committee and related sub-groups, including preparation and issue of agenda and minutes.
- Provide chair, research, secretariat and advisory facility to the Senior Management Pay Review Panel.
- Report to the Commission on the operation of the JNC and the SMPRP on an ongoing basis.
- Contribute to the formulation of policies which impact on the conditions of service of Education and Library Board staff and Commission staff.
- Maintain a database of terms and conditions of service of officers of Education and Library Boards and other relevant human resource and industrial relations matters.

Objective 4

Transition Arrangements

Develop a programme of work aimed at dissolving the Commission following the establishment of ESA on 1 April 2009.

To meet this objective the Commission will:-

- 4.1 Identify, in consultation with DE and ESAIT, the Commission's statutory functions, those identified for transfer and those no longer required.

- 4.2 Co-operate with ESAIT in the arrangements for the transfer of staff and Commission resources.
- 4.3 Co-operate with ESAIT on accounting and audit arrangements for the preparation, approval and signing of the final year accounts.
- 4.4 To ensure that Commission staff are equipped with the appropriate skills to enable them to meet the challenges/opportunities presented by the establishment of the Education and Skills Authority.

Key Performance Indicators

- Review each of the Commission's functions, document the impact of RPA and provide detailed information on the Commission's current role for consideration by ESAIT and NILAIT.
- Consult with NIPSA on the transfer of staff in accordance with the overarching Transfer of Staff agreement.
- Prepare final Accounts, Annual Report, final Review of the Commission's Equality Scheme and Disability Action Plan.
- Prepare, for submission to the Equality Commission, a final monitoring return on the composition of employees as at 1 January 2009.
- Contribute to the ESAIT Financial and Accounting System Consultative Group.
- Prepare financial management information for transfer to ESA.
- Prepare an assets register and inventory of equipment/resources for transfer to ESA.
- Transfer database information to ESA and NILA on:
 - terms and conditions of employment (JNC circulars, AECPT, Ancillary and General and General Council circulars);
 - Section 75 information including Equality Schemes, Annual Reports, EQIA conducted, publications; and
 - employment monitoring data.
- Negotiate termination or transfer, as appropriate, of service provision, contracts, lease arrangements, etc
- Provide appropriate opportunities for Commission staff to meet their identified training and development needs in preparation for the transition to ESA.

Objective 5

Corporate Governance

To provide a high standard of service delivery and value for money in all areas of the Commission's operation.

To meet this objective, the Commission will:

- 5.1** Continue to implement a sound system of control to support the Commission's objectives in accordance with Government Accounting Northern Ireland.
- 5.2** Provide continuous improvement in the Commission's Administrative Support and Financial Services.

Key Performance Indicators

- Work with Internal Audit, NIAO and the Commission's Audit Committee to improve the audit process, including preparing the annual accounts and updating the Risk Management Strategy as necessary.
- Develop and update policies as necessary, to meet best practice standards in corporate governance.
- Provide awareness sessions for all staff on the Commission's Corporate and Business Plan.
- Keep under review, and amend as appropriate, policies and procedures for key administrative areas of operation.

THE ORGANISATION

Commission Membership

The Education and Libraries (NI) Order 1986 specifies that Commission membership comprises a Chair and not more than 12 members. Members are appointed by the Education Minister in accordance with the guidance issued by the Commissioner for Public Appointments.

Commission Members 2006 - 2008

- Chairman
 - 5 Members of Boards
 - 2 Chief Executives
 - 1 Chief Librarian
 - 2 Staff Association Representatives
 - 2 other persons
 - Department of Education Assessor.
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- Professor B Cullen (Chair)
 - Mrs H Sloan (Board Member – BELB)
 - Rev S Graham (Board Member – NEELB)
 - Cllr W Ward (Board Member – SEELB)
 - Cllr P Brannigan (Board Member – SELB)
 - Mrs F Brunt (Board Member – WELB)
 - Mr D Cargo (Chief Executive – BELB)
 - Mr B Mulholland (Chief Executive – WELB)
 - Mrs E B Porter (Chief Librarian – SEELB)
 - Ms L Kerr (Staff Association Representative – UNISON)
 - Mr B Graham (Staff Association Representative – NIPSA)
 - Mrs A Connolly (Independent Member)
 - Mrs U O’Kane (Independent Member)

MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE

The Commission is managed by a Chief Executive/Secretary, assisted by a Deputy Secretary, a Senior Principal Officer and administrative staff.

Commission Staffing:-

Chief Executive/Secretary	Mrs Patricia Weir
Deputy Secretary	Mr Philip Robinson
Senior Principal Officer – Equality	Ms Deirdre Vaugh
Project Officer	Mrs Patricia Murray
Senior Executive Officer/Office Manager	Mrs Grainne McClean
Executive Officer	Mrs Suzanne Briggs
Clerical Officer	Mr Philip Brown
Domestic Assistant	Mrs Anne Barron

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