



**Minutes of Human Resource Committee  
Meeting Number 34  
Wednesday 15 June 2022 at 9am via video conference.**

**Present:**

Kieran Donaghy, Commissioner (Chair)  
Hugh McKeag, Commissioner

**In Attendance:**

Frances McCandless, Chief Executive CCNI  
Aubrey McCrory, Head of Corporate Services  
Anne-Marie Watts, Administrative Officer

**Apologies**

Gerard McGurdy, Deputy Chief Commissioner  
Representatives from DfC

The Chair opened the meeting at 8.55am. No conflicts of interest were declared.

**1. Minutes of meeting No. 33, 22 February 2022**

The minutes of the committee meeting held on 22 February 2022 were discussed and an update on actions completed. The Committee discussed office air monitoring arrangements going forward and agreed to remove the issue from the action list. The minutes were agreed as proposed by Hugh McKeag and seconded by Kieran Donaghy.

**AP 1: Minutes of 22 February 2022 meeting to be recommended to the Board for approval.**

**2. HR Policy development**

The Head of Corporate Services provided a general update on HR Policy development agenda and a short briefing in relation to each agenda items 2a-d. A timetable for bringing outstanding parts of the handbook to committee was noted along with plans to make the handbook available on the intranet. Going forward potential to record staff briefing sessions for e learning were highlighted.

**AP 2: Formal Launch and demo of updated staff handbook on intranet to be arranged.**

**2a. Staff Handbook Section 3 – Leave & Attendance - Bereavement Policy**

The committee considered the changes brought into effect by the Parental Bereavement (Leave and Pay) Act (Northern Ireland) 2022 and agreed with the proposed updating of the Commission's Working Hours and Leave policy as proposed by Hugh McKeag and seconded by Kieran Donaghy.

**AP 3: amended Working Hours and Leave policy reflecting new bereavement leave provision to be recommended to the Board for approval.**

**2b. Staff Handbook Section 3 - Leave & Attendance - Enhanced Parental Leave**

The committee considered the Board's previous commitment to broaden the approach to parental leave by introducing a shared parental policy modelled on the NICS approach, which reflected new statutory entitlements to take unpaid leave. Following legal advice and discussions on the Commission's existing policy of providing up to 5 days paid leave with the recognised trade union a means to afford continuity of terms was identified and the Committee agreed to include this entitlement in the Commission's Working Hours and Leave policy as proposed by Hugh McKeag and seconded by Kieran Donaghy.

**AP 4: amended Working Hours and Leave policy reflecting paid parental leave provision to be recommended to the Board for approval.**

**2c. Staff handbook Section 9 - Travel & Subsistence - Mileage & Expenses**

The committee considered and agreed a minor change to wording to align with updated Northern Ireland Civil Service (NICS) wording in relation to staff who need to use their private vehicle for work journeys as proposed by Hugh McKeag and seconded by Kieran Donaghy.

**AP 5: amended Travel & Subsistence - Mileage & Expenses policy reflecting paid parental leave provision to be recommended to the Board for approval.**

**2d. Staff Handbook - Sections 4 to 9 - Various HR Connect administered policies**

The committee considered the briefing paper which highlighted various policies set out under sections 4 to 9 of the NICS handbook that the Commission largely relies on the NICS (or its shared services partners) to carry out on the Commission's behalf. Appendix 1 of the briefing paper setting out links to the full policies, summary details and an assessment of implications was welcomed. Following discussion the committee agreed to adopt the policy position statement approach to areas in Sections 4 to 9 of the NICS Handbook (set out in Appendix 1) as proposed by Hugh McKeag and seconded by Kieran Donaghy. The Committee noted although not aware of the detailed wording of each area they were reassured of the need for and practical application by the NICS.

**AP 6: policy position statement approach to various HR Connect administered policies in Sections 4 to 9 of NICS Handbook to be recommended to the Board for approval.**

**3. Staff Survey Results**

The committee discussed the results of the latest staff survey and noted the high level of response from staff and the very positive results across a range of areas compared to previous years and other organisations. They also noted a session to brief staff and discuss results would be held shortly to inform development of an improvement plan.

**AP7: Staff engagement session to develop a specific action plan and take forward recommendations as part of delivering strategy.**

#### **4. People Strategy 2022/23 (incl Training Needs Analysis and plan)**

The Head of Corporate services introduced the strategy which had been updated with some initial areas following the staff survey. The committee discussed the strategy and were content with direct and travel noting the challenges that would arise this year in beginning to transform to an enabling regulator. The strategy will be kept under review and further work undertaken. Following discussion it was agreed to develop a training plan for the Commissioners structured around the new Northern Ireland Audit Office (NIAO) governance guidance with a further Board development day to discuss training in committee roles which may arise from consideration of board and committee structures.

**AP8: training plan to be developed for Commissioners around new Northern Ireland Audit Office (NIAO) governance guidance.**

**AP9: training in committee roles which may arise from consideration of new board and committee structures to be developed.**

#### **5. Staffing Plan 2022/23**

The committee discussed the staffing plan and the relevance and importance of several recommendations from the Independent Review of Charity Regulation. They noted while the Minister's response was awaited budget uncertainty remained a factor in business and staff planning.

#### **6. Training Evaluation Report 2021/22**

The committee discussed the training evaluation report and the various areas progress in 2021/22. A series of areas to be taken forward in 2022/2023 were identified, including skills transformation needed to underpin the Independent Review of Charity Regulation. The committee discussed bespoke on-board training for Board and relevant staff and the wish to tie staff training more into the competency framework.

#### **7. HR Dashboard**

The Committee noted the range of information presented and improvements in reporting relating to the performance management strategy. The Head of Corporate Services highlighted potentially missing the sickness absence target due to long term sickness absences in the early part of the year. Committee members discussed reporting of additional information previously requested and agreed to review this practice going forward.

**AP8: HR Dashboard to be review at next meeting.**

#### **8. Trade Union Relations Update**

A verbal update was provided and details of the recent JNCC meeting was noted.

#### **9. HR-Related Audit Recommendations**

The committee noted there were currently no outstanding recommendations and areas for audit in the first assignment in 2022/23 were highlighted.

## **10. HR Developments**

The Committee were advised of the recent change in the Executive's working from home guidance advised. Following communications from the Head of the Northern Ireland Civil Service the Commission intended to commence the Hybrid Working pilot from the start of July 2022 for six months, with evaluations every two months.

**AP9: Initial review of Hybrid working Policy update to October committee meeting.**

## **11. AOB**

None.

## **12. Issues for next meeting**

Items identified to include: initial review of Hybrid working policy, Annual Agenda schedule. People Strategy action plan, Staff Handbook section 3.

Meeting concluded at 10.50am

Date of next meeting 12 October 2022

## HR Committee

### Register of Outstanding Action Points

<b>Committee Meeting and Action Point</b>	<b>Date Raised</b>	<b>Agenda Item</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Owners</b>	<b>Status</b>
34 (1)	15/06/22	1	Minutes of 22 February 2022 meeting to be recommended to the Board for approval.	HCorpS	Completed
34 (2)	15/06/22	2	Formal Launch and demo of updated staff handbook on intranet to be arranged.	HCorpS	Underway
34(3)	15/06/22	2a	Amended Working Hours and Leave policy reflecting new bereavement leave provision to be recommended to the Board for approval.	HCorpS	Completed
34(4)	15/06/22	2b	Amended Working Hours and Leave policy reflecting paid parental leave provision to be recommended to the Board for approval.	HCorpS	Completed
34(5)	15/06/22	2c	Amended Travel & Subsistence - Mileage & Expenses policy reflecting paid parental leave provision to be recommended to the Board for approval.	HCorpS HCorpS	Completed
34(6)	15/06/22	2d	Policy position statement approach to various HR Connect administered policies in Sections 4 to 9 of NICS Handbook to be recommended to the Board for approval.	HCorpS	Completed

34(7)	15/06/22	3	Staff engagement session to develop a specific action plan and take forward recommendations as part of delivering strategy.	HCorpS	Underway
34(8)	15/06/22	4	Training plan to be developed for Commissioners around new Northern Ireland Audit Office (NIAO) governance guidance.	HCorpS	Underway
34(9)	15/06/22	4	Training in committee roles which may arise from consideration of new board and committee structures to be developed.	HCorpS	Underway
31(5)	13/10/2021	3	Staff to review wider approaches to safeguarding policy.	HCorpS	Underway