



**Minutes of Human Resource Committee  
Meeting Number 43  
Monday 17 February 2025 at 9.30am via video conference**

**Present:**

Kieran Donaghy, Charity Commissioner (Chair)  
Patricia Kelly, Legal Commissioner  
Aoife Hamilton, Deputy Chief Commissioner

**In Attendance:**

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

**Apologies**

Mark Lee, Department for Communities (observer)

The Chair opened the meeting at 9.30 am and welcomed Aoife Hamilton to her first HR Committee meeting.

**1. Minutes of meeting No. 42, 21 October 2024**

The minutes of the Committee meeting No.42 held on 21 October 2025 were previously agreed by correspondence and approved for publication at the Board meeting in October 2024. A minor typo was noted, and the Head of Corporate Services gave an update on actions.

**AP 1: Minor typo to be amended.**

**2. Conflicts of Interest**

No conflicts of interest were declared.

**3. 2024/25 Staff survey results**

Head of Corporate Services introduced the paper highlighting the survey approach and results in terms of increased overall engagement and improvement in areas covered by last year's action plan. Commissioners noted reoccurring issues around pay, grading and lack of career opportunities at the Commission, which were beyond the organisation's control.

Commissioners welcomed the inclusion of questions this year to identify other staff skills that could be used, and steps to discuss results as part of staff business planning. The Committee recognised a range of positive developments and asked for the initial results to be circulated to the Board. It was agreed the paper would be developed and benchmark information included to inform further discussion at the June committee meeting.

**AP 2: Updated survey paper and action paper to be developed for June HR Committee meeting.**

**4. 2024/25 People Strategy update**

Head of Corporate Services highlighted the background to the strategy, the progress made to date and potential areas for next year's action plan. During discussions Commissioners highlighted the need to gather information on the role of hybrid working in attracting and retaining staff. They noted management of change will be complicated next year and supporting staff through the office relocation will feature strongly in the 2005/26 plan.

**AP 3: Gather additional information on hybrid working as an issue in recruitment and retention.**

**5. Staff resourcing & 2025/26 business planning**

Head of Corporate Services introduces the paper and outlined resource budget pressures anticipated around staffing in 2025/26. The committee noted the likely timing of an indicative budget letter and opening funding implications for producing a balance budget at the start of the next financial year. The Chief Executive highlighted in previous years regulatory services had been pared back to resource work on Independent Review of Charity Regulation priority recommendations.

Although the Commission had addressed many of these and were reflected in the way regulatory work was now undertaken, there were big challenges ahead to implement Department for Communities (DfC) new regulatory agenda. This included introduction of a registration threshold and Charitable Incorporated Organisations (CIOs). Preparations for implementing an approved Scheme of Delegation were discussed, in particular registration decisions. Arrangements for additional staff training, ongoing support by Commissioners and assurance checks were outlined by the Chief Executive.

**6. Accommodation Update**

The Chief Executive noted plans for a business case to be brought to the Board in March. Staff are chasing information and engaging directly on potential options and with specialists. Details of engagement with DfC Finance and Economist staff on drafting a business case for Board approval were discussed. The Chief Executive outlined there are strong options within and outside the current travel to work area. The Committee indicated the desire to retain the existing staffing team and expertise it has built up.

**AP 4: Draft accommodation business case to the Board meeting in March.**

**7. HR Dashboard** (this item was taken following item 3)

Head of Corporate Services introduced the dashboard and assessments in relation to the main headings. The committee took a deep dive into learning and development and agreed to include satisfaction with training and information on internal training days. Steps to ensure skills and knowledge around the Scheme of Delegation and enhance the needs analysis process were agreed.

**AP 5: Chief Executive to arrange a briefing by legal counsel on how the Commission refocuses its work.**

**AP 6: Board to discuss training and skills development after the May Board meeting.**

**AP 7: Chief Executive to expand new commissioner induction to include previously inducted commissioners.**

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

Commissioners noted turnover in reps and steps to arrange a meeting.

## **9. HR Developments**

Committee noted recent Safeguarding training and issues identified which would require follow up and further enhancement of the existing policy.

**AP 8: Follow up potential to use DfC Benefits staff training for building Commission staff resilience.**

## **10. AOB**

None

## **11. Issues for next meeting**

- Staff survey action plan
- Updated People Strategy
- HR Internal Audit 2nd assignment report - Payroll

Meeting concluded at 11.25am

Date of next meeting Monday 2 June 2025 by video conference

### 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>
43(1)	17/02/25	1	Minutes of 21 October 2024 meeting Minor typo to be amended.	HCorpS	Complete
43(2)	17/02/25	3	Updated survey paper and action paper to be developed for June HR Committee meeting.	HCorpS	Underway
43(3)	17/02/25	4	To gather additional information on Hybrid Working as an issue in recruitment.	HCorpS	Underway
43(4)	17/02/25	6	To bring the draft business case to the Board meeting in March.	HCorpS	Underway
43(5)	17/02/25	7	Chief Executive to arrange a briefing by legal counsel on how the Commission refocuses its work.	CEX	Underway
43(6)	17/02/25	7	Board to discuss training and skills development after the May Board meeting.	CEX	Underway
43(7)	17/02/25	7	Chief Executive to expand new commissioner induction to include previously inducted commissioners.	CEX	Underway
43(8)	17/02/25	9	Follow up NICS Benefits staff training for building Commission staff resilience.	HCorpS	Underway
42(2)	21/10/24	3	Questions to be added to the next staff survey regarding role of hybrid in recruitment and potential impacts if withdrawn.	HCorpS	Underway

42(6)	21/10/24	7	Updated organisational HR dashboard to June meeting.	HCorpS	Underway
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