

LGRJF

Local Government Reform Joint Forum

JOINT COMMUNICATION BULLETIN

APPLICATION OF VACANCY CONTROLS IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The Vacancy Control Procedure was reintroduced with effect from 01 November 2012.

In March 2013 the Employers' and Trade Union Side Leads requested information to be provided for the Joint Forum in relation to the application of vacancy controls and to gather views from Local Consultation and Negotiation Forums on the range of posts to be included in Phase 2 of Vacancy Controls.

A seminar was held on 05 June 2013 which provided an opportunity to discuss issues or queries which have arisen in councils or other employing authorities affected by Vacancy Controls in relation to the practical application of the Procedure, as well as views on the introduction of Phase 2.

The seminar was attended by over 75 delegates including Human Resources staff, Trade Union Representatives and other interested parties, such as members of the Local Consultation and Negotiation Forums.

The Joint Forum will consider the next steps in relation to Vacancy Control implementation at its meeting scheduled for the 7th August.

RPA STAFF SEVERANCE SCHEME FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The RPA Severance Scheme for Local Government (the Scheme) was issued in April 2013 as an agreed document between the Employers' and Trade Union Sides.

The Joint Forum requires each council and therefore by definition each cluster to adopt the Scheme. This will provide for effective planning for the implementation of local government reform.

The Joint Forum understands that the Local Government Bill will make reference to the Scheme confirming that it is the only Scheme to be utilized for RPA purposes.

The impact of this Scheme will be monitored by the Joint Forum and any changes required will be consulted upon in the normal way, in particular, the Scheme may need to be revised in light of the proposed Local Government Pension Scheme (NI) 2014.

*"...facilitating
local government
reorganisation...."*

Priority Issues for the Joint Forum:

Staff Transfer Scheme

System for Filling Posts in
the new Council
Structures including the
Appointment of Senior
Staff to the new Council
Structures

Location, Relocation and
Expenses

Consultation and
Negotiating
Arrangements Post 2015

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INFORMATION ON THE JOINT FORUM

More detail on the work of the Joint Forum can be found on the dedicated web pages accessed on the Commission's website www.lgsc.org.uk

Terms of Reference and Operating Arrangements

Agreed Minutes

Membership Details

Joint Communication Bulletins

Agreed Circulars

The next Joint Forum meeting is to be held on 07 August 2013

“ ...facilitating local government reorganisation... ”

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REFORM IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE

At its meeting on 15 May the Trade Union Side expressed concern at the lack of progress around the legislation timeline and the impact of this on staff and work of the Joint Forum.

The Trade Union Side Lead proposed writing to the Minister to express their concern about the timeline and the impact on staff.

PROGRESS ON JOINT FORUM IMPLEMENTATION ISSUES

The Joint Forum has agreed to establish two Task and Finish Working Groups to progress the following areas of work:

- ◆ Location, relocation and expenses
- ◆ Code of Conduct for Local Government Officers

Work has commenced on a Job Comparison and Job Evaluation exercise for senior posts. The tender was awarded to Local Government Association. An initial report will be considered by the Joint Forum at its next meeting.

Draft Scheme of Transfer for Local Government Staff

The Joint Forum is awaiting confirmation of the relevant provisions within the Local Government Bill prior to finalising the draft Scheme.

The Northern Ireland Housing Executive (NIHE) has been asked by DSD to produce its own Scheme of Transfer. A draft will be considered by the Joint Forum in due course.

JOINT FORUM MEMBERSHIP

Maureen Taggart retired from the NIHE in June 2013 and has stood down as a Member of the Joint Forum and Employers Side Lead. We would like to wish Maureen well for the future.

Maurice Jennings, Assistant Director of Personnel & Management Services, NIHE will now represent the Transferring Functions (with the exception of NICS and DSD).

The Employers' Side has agreed that Roger Wilson, Chief Executive, Coleraine Borough Council will now be the Employers' Side Lead.