

LGRJF

Local Government Reform Joint Forum

JOINT COMMUNICATION BULLETIN

CIRCULAR LGRJF/01—VACANCY CONTROL SYSTEM AND CIRCULAR LGRJF/02 LOCAL CONSULTATION AND NEGOTIATION FORUMS

Circular LGRJF/01 was agreed by the Joint Forum and issued by the Local Government Staff Commission as a statutory recommendation for adoption by councils from 1 October 2009.

In accordance with the NI Executive's Guiding Principles all employing authorities should immediately engage

with their local NIJC recognised Trade Unions to consider application and implementation arrangements and in accordance with the provisions of Circular LGRJF/02 issued in September 2009.

The Joint Forum, in liaison with the Staff Commission, are currently examining the

structure of the 'at risk' group and will issue an Information Bulletin in the near future to provide further guidance on the application of Vacancy Controls to the 'at risk' group.

Further advice will be issued as necessary.

AWARENESS SEMINAR—HR IMPLEMENTATION ISSUES THURSDAY 10 AND FRIDAY 11 DECEMBER 2009

The Joint Forum, in partnership with the Staff Commission, SOLACE and the Public Service Commission, are facilitating an event focusing on reform implementation issues.

The event will be held on Thursday 10 and Friday 11 December 2009. More details will be available shortly.

The seminar will be an opportunity for chief executives, senior managers, HR managers and trade union representatives to consider aspects of the work of the Joint Forum including:

- Vacancy Controls
- Establishment of the Local Forums
- Staff Severance Scheme
- Filling Posts in the New Organisations

COMMUNICATING HR ISSUES TO STAFF

Councils are encouraged to circulate copies of the Joint Communication Bulletin to all employees including those on any form of leave from the organisation e.g. long-term sickness, maternity leave, secondments and any agreed career breaks. Relevant employment legislation must be taken into account e.g. in relation to maternity leave.

CHANGES TO JOINT FORUM MEMBERSHIP

Wesley Shannon, newly appointed Director of Local Government Policy Division, will replace Ian Maye and represent the NICS on the Employers' Side.

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

Priority Issues for the Joint Forum:

Local Government RPA Staff Severance Scheme

System for Filling Posts in the New Council Structures

Staff Transfer Scheme

Consultation and Negotiating Arrangements Post 2011

Contact Details:

Independent Secretariat (LGSC):
Commission House
18-22 Gordon Street
Belfast, BT1 2LG
Tel No. (028) 90313200
Email: lgrjf@lgsc.org.uk



INFORMATION ON THE JOINT FORUM

More on the Joint Forum can be accessed on the dedicated web page at:

<http://www.lgsc.org.uk/new-initiatives/local-government-reform-joint-forum/>

The following details are now available for information:

Terms of Reference and Operating Arrangements

Agreed Minutes

Membership Details

Joint Communication Bulletins

Agreed Circulars

The next Joint Forum meeting will be a consultative session on a number of issues and will be held on:

Wednesday 4 November 2009

JOINT COMMUNICATION BULLETIN

RPA STAFF SEVERANCE SCHEME FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The Joint Forum agreed to establish a short-life Task Group to develop an RPA Staff Severance Scheme that will apply to all local government staff under the scope of the Forum, i.e:

- 26 district councils (including Environmental Health and Building Control Group Committees)
- Arc21 and SWaMP 2008
- Any staff employed by Transition Committees
- Staff in the 11 new councils

The Group has met on two occasions and considerable progress has been made and Forum members considered a further draft of the Scheme at the meeting held on 14 October 2009. The Scheme is based on the provisions of the NI Executive’s 5th Guiding Principle as recommended by the Public Service Commission ‘Voluntary Severance Arrangements’.

It was agreed that following a meeting with NILGOSC to discuss pension issues the Scheme could be finalised and issued by early November. It will be available for use from the date of Agreement, however, the introduction of Severance will be phased and expressions of interest will be invited from specific groups of staff at the appropriate time in the phasing process.

The funding arrangements, which are separate to the terms of any scheme, have still to be resolved and are subject to ongoing deliberations.

AT THE MEETING ON 14 OCTOBER 2009 THE FOLLOWING PROGRESS WAS ALSO MADE:

Filling Posts in the New Organisations

Members have considered an early draft of a system for filling posts in the new council structures. The Joint Forum has requested further legal advice specifically to address concerns on the use of restricted recruitment pools and the equality implications thereof.

Work is currently progressing on the preparation of a draft, generic job descriptions and person specifications for the new chief executive posts.

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

LGRJF LOCAL GOVERNMENT REFORM JOINT FORUM

facilitating local government reorganisation

Independent Secretariat (LGSC)

Adrian Kerr

Linda Leahy

Diana Stewart

Lisa O’Neill