

Civil Service Management Board – 24 March 2022

The list of attendance is appended.

1. Update from the Joint Secretary

Mr Laurence Simms Joint Secretary to the British-Irish Intergovernmental Secretariat in Belfast welcomed the group and gave an overview of the Secretariat's work and the situation in Northern Ireland.

2. Performance Review Process

Bernie Gray, Chair of the Performance Review Group gave some reflections on the PRG following the 5th year of the process, noting the changes that had occurred over the period - including as regards the change in membership of the SG Group. A number of themes were noted - the impact of the pandemic, the role/profile of the Civil Service Management Board, the terms and conditions of the SG cohort and the PRG process generally. Overall, it was agreed that the process has proven to be valuable - as highlighted by SGs themselves - as a point of reflection and an opportunity for discussion. A number of possible next steps were discussed.

3. CSMB Discussion on Challenges, Opportunities and Priorities

There was a wide ranging discussion on the Civil Service, the role of the SG cadre as leaders and how we remain responsive and agile in light of new demands and challenges.

It was noted that important additional structures and processes have been introduced over the last 10 years which have strengthened the capacity and capability of the Civil Service at the most senior levels.

The group reflected on the performance of the civil and public service in the context of the Pandemic in particular and enhanced perception of the public of public service performance. Issues discussed included:

- Importance of values and mission of the Civil Service: independence and impartiality
- People as our most valuable asset, their ambitions, expectations and the impact of new ways of working
- The changing environment including in politics, the role of the media in agenda setting and the speed and polarisation of public debate.
- The achievements of the pandemic but the ongoing challenge to improve delivery in some areas.
- The value, role and impact of the Civil Service Management Board as providing collective ownership of and leadership for the challenges ahead.

Attendance

Martin Fraiser Department Taoiseach

Bernie McNally Department of Education

Mary Hurley Department of Rural and Community Development

Maurice Buckley Office of Public Works

Damien Moloney Office of the Attorney General

Oonagh McPhillips Department of Justice

David Moloney Department of Public Expenditure and Reform

Katherine Licken Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport & Media

Orlaigh Quinn Department Enterprise, Trade & Employment

Kevin McCarthy Department Children, Equality, Disability, Integration & Youth

Niall Cody Revenue

John McKeon Department of Social Protection

Ken Spratt Department of Transport

Jacqui McCrum Department of Defence

John Hogan Department of Finance

Mark Griffin Department Environment, Climate & Communications

Pádraig Dalton Central Statistics Office

Robert Watt Department of Health

Brendan Gleeson Department Agriculture, Food & the Marine

Joe Hackett Department of Foreign Affairs

Graham Doyle Department of Housing, Local Government & Heritage

Marianne Cassidy (PER) Department of Public Expenditure and Reform

Apologies

Shirley Comerford Public Appointments Service

Jim Breslin Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation & Science