

**NORTHERN IRELAND LEGAL SERVICES COMMISSION
BOARD MEETING THURSDAY 12 JUNE 2008 AT 9.30AM
BOARD ROOM, WATERFRONT PLAZA**

MINUTES

Present:	Jim Daniell Les Allamby Fiona Donnelly Joe Donnelly Breidge Gadd Dr Jeremy Harbison Wilson Matthews Hilary McCartan Miceal McCoy Ronnie Spence	Chairman
NILSC:	Gerry Crossan Theresa Donaldson Lesley Johnston Linda Norris Drusilla Hawthorne Iona Milton-Jones Linda Carmichael Rose Jellie	Chief Executive Director Policy & Service Development Director of Finance Interim Change Manager Principal Legal Adviser Secretary to the Commission Corporate Governance & Communications Officer Personal Secretary to Chairman and Chief Executive
In attendance:	Paul Andrews	NICtS

08/77 Apologies & Declaration of Board Members Interests

77.1 The Chairman reminded Members to inform the Secretary to the Commission of any amendments that had to be made to the Register of Interests.

08/78 MINUTES of the 08 May 2008 Board Meeting

The Minutes were agreed, subject to minor amendment.

08/79 Action Point Report and matters arising from the Minutes of 08 May 2008

All items on action point report listed on the agenda.

MATTERS FOR DECISION

08/83 Pensions Strategy Paper

83.1 The Chief Executive presented the paper. It was reported that the Commission's legal advisers would be asked to produce a brief to Counsel to cover the following:

- Regularity
- Potential flexibility to move to 6% contribution
- Potential equality impact
- Arrangements to address discrepancies between existing/new staff

ACTION:

- **Brief to Counsel to be prepared to request advice on the above bullet points, to include input from NICtS and background to the situation.**
- **Further detailed paper to be prepared for August Board meeting on pensions strategy to include proposals regarding the way forward, costings and a communication strategy.**

08/84 Delegation Regarding Stage 3 Complaints

84.1 The Chairman introduced the paper and explained the purpose of introducing an interim measure.

ACTION:

- **The Board agreed to delegate to the Chairman the authority to deal with Stage 3 complaints**
- **An update on the review of complaints to be brought to the August Board meeting**
- **Information about the complaints process to be disseminated to the Profession by way of next series of roadshows.**

08/85 Detailed Budget and Overview Paper and GIA Budget (08/88)

85.1 The Director of Finance presented the paper and confirmed that it had gone to the GPC and to NICtS for consideration. It was reported that a response was awaited from NICtS. The Director of Finance highlighted that there were three main concerns; staffing, IT strategy and accommodation. It was also explained that the assumptions were based on the PWC report and were linked to the Workforce Plan.

A number of issues were raised and discussed in detail.

ACTION: The Board endorsed the initial work that had been undertaken, subject to the detail being agreed with NICtS and subject to a detailed Workforce Plan to be brought to the June GPC

08/86 Terms of Reference for Committees

86.1 The Terms of Reference were agreed by the Board

MATTERS FOR INFORMATION

08/87 Operational Performance – Summary Report

87.1 The Board noted the paper.

08/88 Financial Performance – Summary Report – See 08/85 above.

88.1 NICtS provided an update regarding discussions with HM Treasury

08/89 Chief Executive Report

89.1 LSNI v. NILSC Judicial Review – No update was reported. .

89.2 Business Case for Management Restructuring – This was noted by the Board.

89.3 Disclosure of Payments to the Profession – The Board noted the written update provided by the Chief Executive. NICtS reported on progress. It was anticipated that publication would be delayed by a further 2 – 3 weeks.

89.4 Consultancy Support for Organisational Change – The Board noted the written update provided.

89.5 Development of Merit lists – SO and EO Grades – This was noted by the Board. It was reported that interviews were currently being held.

89.6 Business Plan 2008/09 – NICtS reported that the plan had gone to the Minister for approval, and publication would be synchronised with the Landscape Review.

89.7 Landscape Review – Action Plan – update from NICtS as above

89.8 Annual Accounts and NAO Statements - It was reported that the 2003/04 accounts had now gone to the NAO. It was considered likely that the new Comptroller & Auditor General (C&AG) would wish to shorten the report. A draft audit report for 2004/05 had been circulated. A final version of the draft with the Commission's comments would be handed to the NIAO on 13 June 2008. It was further reported that the delay in producing accounts had led to the C & AG putting the Commission on the provisional list for the Public Accounts Committee.

89.9 Staff Conference – The Chief Executive reported on the arrangements which had been discussed and agreed by TMT.

89.10 Review of Delegated Authority Arrangements in the light of the TMT Decision on 14 May 2008 – This was noted by the Board.

89.11 Omagh Civil Action – This was noted by the Board

08/90 Transformation Programme – Version 1

The Chief Executive presented the paper and advised that the purpose of the paper was to support control projects that were under way in service delivery and to support the Change Management Board. It was reported that the next meeting of the Change Management Board in July would address the extent and operation of formal reporting lines.

08/91 E-forms Project

91.1 The Chief Executive provided an update on the project and advised that the Project Manager had resigned from the Commission. However, work was underway to source a replacement.

08/92 IS/IT Update

92.1 The Chief Executive provided an update and reported that liaison with NICtS was ongoing regarding approval for the Oracle upgrade. A business case would be prepared by the end of June 2008 which would deal with procurement on this matter and which would then be presented to the July Board meeting.

Concerns were raised regarding the detail and specification of the upgrade. NICtS confirmed that their IT Consultant had been involved in a project to upgrade Oracle before. The Board agreed to proceed with the project subject to the NICtS IT consultant carrying out a review of all aspects of the project and assurance being provided regarding timescales.

ACTION: A Business Case regarding the project to be prepared for the July Board meeting.

Miceal McCoy left the meeting

08/93 Devolution of Justice

93.1 The Chairman reported on a meeting he had attended with NICtS and the NIO. A further meeting was scheduled for next week.

93.2 Law Society Conference – A conference was taking place next week on devolution.

08/94 Family Care Centre Fees

94.1 It was reported that previous discussions had focused on appeals and legal advice had been taken on the issue of legitimate expectation. A response was awaited from the Bar. The Chairman was due to meet with the Bar to talk through a range of issues and this would be included.

ACTION: Dr Harbison and the Director of Policy & Service Development to accompany the Chair to the next meeting with the Bar.

08/95 Report from Committee Chairs on Issues and Matters Requiring Decision within the next few weeks and Risks

95.1 Access to Justice Committee Report – The Chair of the Committee introduced the paper as follows:

- It was reported that the resignation of the Funding Code Business Manager would have an adverse effect on the delivery of the plan for the funding code. It was also reported that sign off was now likely to be July rather than May as originally anticipated. NICtS had advised that the priority was obtaining ministerial approval for the consultation document.

95.2 Audit Committee Report – The Board noted the report from the Chair of the Committee.

- Data Security – It was reported that DFP had issued draft guidance.

ACTION:

- **An action plan on data security to be drawn up by the Business Manager Assurance**
- **It was agreed the Annual Audit Report should come to the Board in September and would be put on the Commission's web site.**

95.3 General Purposes Committee Report - The Vice Chair of the Committee introduced the report. The Board requested that their thanks and congratulations to staff on resolving the pay deal be noted. NICtS confirmed the Minister had had sight of the final pay offer which had been approved.

08/96 Judicial Review Report

96.1 NICtS enquired if the Commission had established from colleagues in E&W protocols regarding contracts for Police Station advice and PACE issues. The Chief Executive confirmed that the Commission was awaiting Counsel's opinion on this issue.

08/97 Communications

97.1 Revised Communications Strategy – The Vice Chair introduced the paper and it was agreed a monthly report would come to the Board on external communications meetings and events going forward. It was confirmed that Weber Shandwick, would be paid on an hourly rate going forward and would provide a report of work planned for the coming month.

ACTION: The Board agreed the amended Communications Strategy and endorsed the method of remuneration for Weber Shandwick.

97.2 Parliamentary Question – NICtS reported on a PQ received by them asking about the use of consultants in the public sector. NICtS had responded but a follow up query was anticipated.

08/98 Any Other Business

98.1 Commissioners Remuneration – NICTS reported that Commissioners had received a letter from NICTS today.

98.2 Resident Magistrates – Change in Nomenclature – Noted.

98.2 Institute of Professional and Legal Studies - Seminar – Fiona Donnelly asked the Board to note that this had been a very successful event and congratulated all those who took part in the seminar.

08/99 Board Diary

Meeting Dates 2008

LSRC Biennial Research Conference – 19/20 June 2008
General Purposes Committee – Monday 23 June 2008 at 10.00am
Access to Justice Committee – Tuesday 01 July 2008 at 1.30pm
Change Management Board Meeting – Thursday 10 July 2008 at 8.30am

08/100 Date of Next Meeting – Thursday 10 July 2008

Meeting ended at 1.15pm

SIGNED:
CHAIRMAN

DATED;