

**NORTHERN IRELAND LEGAL SERVICES COMMISSION  
BREAKFAST BOARD MEETING – THURSDAY 06 JULY 2006  
7.30AM FOR 8.00AM, THE EDGE**

**MINUTES**

**Present:** Sir Anthony Holland Chairman  
Les Allamby  
Maev Bell  
Brian Fee  
Breidge Gadd  
Jennifer Greenfield  
Jeremy Harbison  
Miceal McCoy  
Peter Osborne  
Ronnie Spence

**NILSC:** Gerry Crossan Chief Executive  
Geoff Brooks Director of Corporate Services  
Theresa Donaldson Director of Policy & Service Development  
Rose Jellie Personal Secretary to the Chairman & Chief Executive  
Sheila McPhillips Secretary to the Commission

**In Attendance:** Stephen Sproule ASM Horwath  
Brian Clerkin ASM Horwath

**Apologies:** Frank Hewitt

**1. Items for Decision**

- (a) Draft Northern Ireland Funding Code – Way Forward on Consultation – It was reported that the Exposure Document had gone out to consultation and the responses received were attached to the papers. In relation to Criteria, this had gone through the Reform Committee. The Commission were relying heavily on the England & Wales Funding Code as a basis for the Northern Ireland Funding Code. In relation to Money Damages, issues would be dealt with under the Funding Code.

It was intended that the Commission would hold a meeting with all attendees from the Big Tent Event in September to discuss the Funding Code.

The Commission was currently working on two areas of guidance, Children Order and Judicial Review, both of which would come to the Board in September.

A Working Group, chaired by Les Allamby, had been set up and timescales would be agreed. Levels of Service were set out in the paper. A consultation response paper would go before the Access to Justice Committee in August for issue in September.

It was suggested that Criteria should be cross-referenced to the delegated authority paper. This could be incorporated into the Foreword or the Introduction.

The Board suggested that paragraphs 10.2.1 and 10.3.1 should be reviewed and amended.

**ACTION: The Board accepted the draft paper and the recommendations of the Director of Policy & Service Development and the Reform Committee.**

- (b) Comprehensive Spending Review – Forecast Expenditure - This would form the basis of the Commission's Corporate Plan. The figures were recommended to the Board as the interim figures going forward with all caveats set out. The Burke case was mentioned and the difficulty that this high cost case had caused. The Chief Executive stressed that the Board must engage with the CSR. The legal aid service that the Commission funds would be demand led for the foreseeable future. The Board made the following suggested amendments:

Paragraph 13 – ADR – it should be mentioned that this would reduce the budget

Paragraph 13 – change “will” to “could”

Paragraph 4 – Mention ICOS as a check against the forecast

Add an additional caveat which would explain what would happen if everything did go wrong

**ACTION: Subject to the above, the Board accepted the paper.**

- (c) Complaints Procedure and Internal Instructions to Staff – Breidge Gadd introduced the paper and confirmed that this had been through the General Purposes Committee.

**ACTION: The Board approved the draft paper and agreed it would be finalised by the General Purposes Committee**

- (d) NILSC Response to the Proposals on PACE

**ACTION: The Board were content with the proposal**

- (e) Getting it Right when Parents Separate – The Board noted the paper which the Access to Justice Committee would take forward.

- (f) Joint Service Delivery/Reform Committee Abstract – The Board noted the paper.

Legal Need Seminar – This would take place on 6 September when Tony Dignan would provide the Legal Need Survey results.

Big Tent Event – Follow Up Meeting – It was agreed this would take place on **Tuesday 12 September at 5.00pm to 7.00pm in the Waterfront Plaza.**

- (g) Value for Money – Addition to Paper 06/82

**ACTION: The Board noted the paper and requested a copy of the complete document – Rose Jellie to issue**

- 2. Targeting Social Need** – Developing the Financial Strategy and Service Evaluation and Research Strategy

The Chief Executive demonstrated with a drawing to the Board.

The Board discussed the paper. Les Allamby reported on the involvement of the Voluntary Sector who were positive and understood the arguments around the Access to Justice Order. The reforms would be in place by 2008.

The Board agreed there had to be a major communication channel to get the message across on the comprehensive vision which brought in the key parameters of Targeting Social Need.

In relation to Criminal Defence Services, it had to be flagged up in the Commission's Corporate Plan that the Commission had no control over certain issues, eg, new legislation.

The Chairman demonstrated with a drawing to the Board some of the areas of need that would be considered under the Access to Justice Order. He said that early intervention could prevent some cases going to court. The Commission would not be able to solve all the problems but certain areas could be targeted and help provided.

- 3. Review of Mission, Aims and Value Statements, Corporate Governance and Business Assurance Commitments**

The Board noted the paper.

**ACTION: All comments to be with the Chief Executive by 19 July 2006.**

- 4. Review of Corporate Risk Register, Priorities for Corporate Plan 2007/08 to 2009/10, Corporate Plan Format**

**ACTION: The Board adopted the paper and praised the Staff of the Commission for their hard work in preparing the document.**

**Members were asked to provide any comments to the Chief Executive by 19 July 2006.**

**The Board agreed the paper should be independently reviewed in a year's time.**

**The priorities for the Corporate Plan were as agreed and the format would be as the previous Plan.**

**The Value for Money Foreword had been agreed and Les Allamby agreed to provide an article for publication, possibly in The Writ.**

**Jeremy Harbison to draft an article about the Commission's vision for publication.**

Bar Council's Response to the Consultation Paper – The Chairman tabled the Response and his subsequent letter to the Bar Council and reported that he had met with the Bar on 29 June 2006.

**5. Board Members**

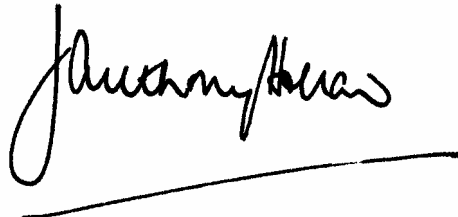
The Chairman made a special thanks to those members who were leaving the Board, Maeve Bell, Jennifer Greenfield, Frank Hewitt and Peter Osborne, for their help and support.

Peter Osborne responded and thanked the Commission and the Chairman for their support.

**6. Corporate Governance Workshop**

Stephen Sproule and Brian Clerkin from ASM Horwath joined the meeting and tabled an Agenda and short paper which was discussed with the Board.

**Meeting ended at 11.50am**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'James H. ...', is written above a solid horizontal line.

**SIGNED:** .....  
**CHAIRMAN**