

Civil Service Management Board – 28th September 2018

Discussion

1. Whole-of-Government strategic issues

- **Brexit**

MF gave a short update on Brexit negotiations.

MF referred to the existing arrangements for planning and briefing across Government. He noted the establishment of a Brexit Preparedness and Contingency Planning team within the Department of the Taoiseach. This team will support ongoing integration of cross-government planning and implementation activities.

A central case scenario is the focus of current planning. The team will develop a model of the economy with capacity to simulate variations as negotiations further advance. MF emphasised the importance of the Northern Ireland situation in the context of discussions and negotiations.

- **Justice Reform**

OMcP attended the meeting to provide an update on the implementation of the Report of the Effectiveness and Renewal Group (ERG). Communications with staff has been ongoing. External support is in the process of being procured. It was noted that the change involved is transformational and, as implementation progresses, this model may well be seen as a template for wider Civil Service reform.

Colleagues commented on the potential governance implications of certain proposals. It was noted that the Organisational Capability Review Process might include consideration of the principles put forward in the ERG report and learnings from the DJE experience in the context of future reviews.

As regards the Commission on the Future of Policing Report, MF emphasised the cross-government nature of the Commission's recommendations regarding policing into the future. It was emphasised that a range of Ministers and Government Departments will need to consider the implications of the report.

- **Project Ireland 2040**

JMcC updated the meeting in general terms on the governance arrangements to support implementation of Project Ireland 2040 including the Delivery Board; the establishment of the Land Development Agency; and the preparation of Regional Strategies for publication and consultation. It was noted that the Delivery Board will be reverting to Government by November with an update on progress including the regional planning process.

The CSMB noted that a number of these cross-government oversight arrangements are placing considerable pressure on senior level resources across the system. In addition, the sharing/linking of project management, procurement and communications expertise needs to be maximised.

It was agreed that the Secretariat would review current SG cross-government commitments.

Update

1. Organisational Capability Reviews –department schedule (Action 20)

SO'F provided an update on progress on the OCR programme.

It was noted that (a) the review of the Courts Service has been completed and the final report will be presented to the Courts Service Board on 12th October; (b) the first iteration of the DBEI report has been completed and is expected to be submitted to the SG in DBEI in the first week in October; and (c) DHPLG and DCHG are currently scheduled and preliminary work is beginning.

It was agreed that there needs to be a further pipeline of departments on an ongoing basis. K McC indicated that DRCD would be ready to be scheduled for a review commencing in 2020.

SO'F also noted that the membership of the external review panel had been refreshed and it is considered this should be done on a continuous basis.

KL noted that from experience so far, it would be worthwhile having a pre-commencement round of communications with Departments in advance of the process getting underway. It was agreed that the process would be formally adjusted to reflect this period of preparation.

An update on progress on the implementation of the DTTS response to the OCR was also provided.

2. Mobility - Phase 1A rollout (Action 15)

Update was provided on the Phase 1A roll-out which is happening in advance of the IT solution. It was noted that the issue of sick leave is being managed locally in line with agreed processes.

It is anticipated that the IT solution will be in place by end November.

The CSMB was asked to note that revised/new internal mobility policies should now be in place in all Departments in line with the previous commitments with an effective date of 10th September 2018.

3. Talent Management - 2018/2019 programme (Action 10)

Progress on Tranche 2 of the SPS and PO Executive Leadership Programmes was noted including a summary of the numbers and gender balance across Departments/Agencies. In particular the higher rate of application for the A/Sec level programme was mentioned. Those involved in the SPS Management Committee made the following observations:-

- There was a very high calibre of candidates - more candidates could have been brought through if there had been more places.

- Application process may be a bit cumbersome.
- Timing of the application process may be examined given it is holiday time.
- The mobility aspects/requirements of the programme should be emphasised and followed through as part of the process

There was a general discussion on whether there was a need to be more ambitious for the PO group i.e. the numbers are very small given the size of the cohort, particularly in larger departments.

It was agreed that, in advance of next year's programme, there should be clarity on the purpose and message associated with the programme. In addition, the availability of a range of other leadership development programmes for the A/Sec and PO level groups should be clear and consistent across departments.

It was also noted that the "Talent Management" approach is to be extended to a wider variety of grades over time.

It was agreed that the issues arising in the discussion will be considered prior to next year's programme and in the context of further extensions of the programme.

4. CS Excellence and Innovation Awards update (Action 13)

LFB advised that the process is well underway with 70 applications already received.

The shortlist of 30 entries will be announced on 22nd October. Winners will be announced at the Awards ceremony on 22 November in St. Patrick's Hall Dublin Castle (the change of venue for 2018 was noted).

The PMO also noted the OECD Call for Innovations Awards for 2018 was also currently open. A note of current Irish applications was provided. The closing date has been extended until the 5th of October. An application in respect of the CSMB initiative will be submitted. The CSMB will be circulated.

MF also advised colleagues that the OECD Centre of Government meeting is being hosted in Dublin in November.

5. Communications (Action 23)

A short update was provided: The transition to the reformed Government Information Service is now complete with the team reporting to EC.

MF asked that SGs provide a response regarding the adoption of the Government of Ireland identity by agencies and other bodies as replies are still outstanding for some departments. The GIS team will analyse responses and revert to CSMB as soon as responses are received. The importance of supporting early adopters by ensuring consistency of approach and maintaining momentum on the roll-out was acknowledged.

CSMB also noted that as part of the Capacity Building programme, the team will be working with CSCHRO and One Learning in respect of both professionalisation and the development of structured CPD for staff involved in communications across Departments.

EC advised that the A/Sec Group had met and been briefed on progress, the Communications Network is also up and running. Items to note included the internal “just-in-time” resource requirements for migration to Gov.ie. The content and transition guides are currently being tested in the context of Department of the Taoiseach migration and will be revised based on experience. D/PER and D/Fin are scheduled for migration next but it was noted that D/RCD might be able to advance with this group and would provide a good test for more public facing Departments.

6. Employee Engagement Survey - working group report (Action 25)

The CSEES Working Group proposed focusing on three priority areas to address involvement climate, innovative climate and performance standards for Civil Service-wide consideration. The CSMB agreed that the Public Perception of the Civil Service measure should also be included. Although this indicator is difficult to unpack, it was agreed that there are issues relating to public perception. A number of suggestions were made including (i) using Department –specific customer service results which tend to be far more positive than the perception, (ii) the potential for communications about the CSR programme, its successes and positives to be more widely and effectively communicated. This is something that might also be considered in the context of the launch of the new CSR plan.

At Departmental level – in both focus groups and workshops – performance standards and effective management of underperformance has been a key issue. It was agreed Departments/Offices will convene focus groups under CSHRD guidance and that a series of Town Hall style events will be organised centrally by the PMO.

CSMB agreed to the recommendation to commission additional academic research on the findings of 2017 CSEES particularly to better understand differences in the responses of different grades within the same Departments.

7. Programme Director's Monthly Report

LFB updated on the development of the refreshed CSR Plan which has been underway over the summer months. The new plan will respond to the feedback from our away day meeting in May.

Updates on the individual actions and planning ongoing with the PMs. This will also highlight priorities and the resources that might be required to advance some of the priorities.

It was agreed that the next meeting will be focused on finalising the plan in a one item agenda.

8. AOB

Nil.

28th September 2018

Attendance

Jim Breslin, D\Health
Maurice Buckley, OPW
Niall Cody, Revenue
Pádraig Dalton, CSO
Graham Doyle, D\TTS
Martin Fraser, D\Taoiseach (Chair)
Katherine Licken, D\CHG
Fergal Lynch, D\CYA
John McCarthy, D\HPLG
Kevin McCarthy, D/R&CD
John McKeon, D\EASP
Damien Moloney, AGO
Derek Moran, D\Finance
Kevin Smyth, D\AFM
Seán Ó Foghlú, D\ES
Maurice Quinn, D\Defence
Orlaigh Quinn, D\BEI

Apologies

Robert Watt, D\PER
Niall Burgess, D\FA&T
Mark Griffin, D\CCA
Shirley Comerford PAS
Aidan O'Driscoll D/JE

Other/Secretariat

Liz Canavan, D\Taoiseach
Lucy Fallon-Byrne, D\PER
David Cagney, D\PER
Oonagh McPhillips, D\JE