

Department of Public Expenditure and Reform
Management Board Meeting
9 May 2011

Attendance: Minister Howlin, Mr. Watt, Mr. McNally, Mr. Moloney, Mr. O’Connell, Mr. Duggan, Mr. Errity, Ms. Coleman, Mr. Ryan, Mr. Kelly, Ms. Mulvihill, Ms. Loughman.

Apologies: Mr. Connolly

The Secretary General welcomed Mr. Kelly to the meeting and to the Department.

1. **Minutes of last meeting** – There was one change to item 2(b) submitted by Mr. Duggan. The minutes and agenda of each meeting will be circulated to all staff on a weekly basis. **Action:** *Ms. Loughman to circulate the minutes and agenda to all staff.*
2. **Events for Week** –
 - a. **Minister’s Diary:** - The launch of the Job’s Initiative is the key issue this week. The Minister will also address the IMPACT conference. **Action:** *Speech material for the IMPACT conference to be supplied by Mr. Errity.*
 - b. **Dáil Business:** - The Jobs Initiative will be debated over three days. The Minister will speak on the Initiative on Wednesday.
 - c. **Government Meeting:** - A key issue on the agenda for the Department is the Social Welfare and Pensions Bill 2011 which includes PRSI changes from the Jobs Initiative. The Department of Finance response to the Moriarty Tribunal is also of interest. **Action:** *A copy of the response to be given to the Minister.*
 - d. **Economic Council Management Meeting:** - The meeting will be held at 2.30pm on Wednesday from now on. Items of interest on the agenda include EU developments, the launch of the Comprehensive Spending Review and a follow-up on the Jobs Initiative. In relation to the Review of Sectoral Wage Agreements the ERO study needs consideration. **Action:** *Briefing on the ERO study to be prepared for the Minister.* A memorandum in relation to the transfer of functions has been submitted to the Council.
3. **Progress on Establishment of New Department** – Email addresses have been set up and the website is now live. Legislation is advancing and it is hopeful that the timeframe will be met. There will be a Memorandum for Government next week and the legislation will be published as soon as possible thereafter. Some Committee Stage amendments are expected. Thanks were extended to the staff involved in preparation of the legislation.
4. **Political Reform Legislation** – Mr. Errity has prepared a list of possible reforms. Guidance is needed from the Minister in relation to prioritisation of the list. **Action:** *Mr. Watt, Mr. Errity and Ms. Coleman to discuss with the Minister.* The meeting was informed of the Cabinet decision that this Department is to be responsible for drafting the Bill in relation to the Constitutional amendment on the *Abbeylara* judgement ,with a view to holding a referendum within this calendar year. Decisions in relation to the assigning of other proposed reforms to Departments are awaited.
5. **Reorganisation of New Department** – Public Service Modernisation will be integrated into the new Department. Resources will be required for a new unit which will deal with political reform. On the expenditure side admin. budgets and vote sections have been integrated. A number of POs are currently looking at the long term organisation of the Department.
6. **Update on Comprehensive Spending Review:** - A seminar with Secretaries General was held last week. The Minister addressed the group. Department’s were asked to identify “early wins” and are expected to respond this week. The CSR will be a regular item on the agenda.
7. **Reports on Votes 6 and 7:** - Vote reports will be a standing issue from now on. There is some variance currently but no excess or savings is predicted for year end. The 1st July is the proposed date for the division of Vote 6. There was a general discussion regarding Vote 7 and retirements being behind schedule.

8. **Presentation on Policy Issues:** - An update on key policy issues in each area will be given at every second meeting. *Action: A presentation on Public Sector Reform to be given by a PO from that area at the next meeting.*

9. **AOB:** -

- **Croke Park** action plans have been updated to 1st March. *Action: The progress report and the report on savings to be circulated.*
- **PAC** briefing material will be needed from both Departments over the next two weeks. *Action: A PO from each Department will be nominated to liaise.*
- There is a **new organisational chart** for the Department but it is currently in test phase. Decisions are required on structure and layout. *Action: Mr. Duggan to discuss with Mr. Watt.*

Next meeting: Monday, 16th May at 3pm.