

8 September 2016

Mr David Denny
Remuneration, Industrial Relations and Pensions Division
Department of Public Expenditure and Reform
Government Buildings
Upper Merrion Street
Dublin 2

Dear Mr Denny

I refer to your letter of 28 July inviting proposals on the role and methodology of a proposed new Public Service Pay Commission (PSPC).

Not having a policy-making role in this area it would not be appropriate for the Low Pay Commission (LPC) to put forward specific proposals regarding the operation of the proposed new Public Service Pay Commission. However, in the light of the lessons learned from the first year of operation of the Low Pay Commission, a body with not dissimilar interests, I put forward the following brief observations for your consideration.

1. Independence of the new Commission

I believe it is important that the legislation should provide for the PSPC to be independent in relation to the performance of its functions, and, like the LPC, the PSPC should bring forward proposals on foot of evidence-based analysis of designated criteria relevant to pay matters.

2. Common interest in data gathering

While the remit of the proposed PSPC may be both broader (in terms of its reach across a wider pay range than that of the LPC) and narrower (insofar as its recommendations apply to Public Service Employees only, rather than the entire workforce) than that of the LPC, it would appear to me that much of the baseline data relied on in the decision-making process will be common to both. In this regard I consider it would be appropriate to provide for a degree of co-operation and data-sharing between the two bodies, which may be beneficial to the work of both. Judicious co-operation could also avoid duplication of effort in terms of the collation of similar data.

3. Appropriate skill sets within the organisation

From a practical point of view, I consider it would be useful for the new PSPC, in order to allow it to carry out its duties to the fullest extent, to have at its disposal, in-house, appropriate skill sets, including that of statistical and economic analysis.

Please note that, as I have not had the opportunity to consult with my colleagues on the Low Pay Commission, the views expressed in this letter are my responsibility.

The Secretary to the Commission, Ms Máire Ní Chuiric, would be happy to meet with you or your officials should you wish to have further discussions when the planning for the new PSPC is more advanced. She can be contacted at 01-631 3055 or by email at maire.nichuirc@djei.ie.

Yours sincerely

Máire Ní Chuiric

PP

Donal de Buitléir
Chairman