

Meeting of the Public Service Pay Commission
19th December 2017 at 8.30am, St. Stephen's Green House.

In attendance

Mr. Kevin Duffy (Chair)
Ms. Marian Corcoran
Mr. Ultan Courtney
Mr. Noel Dowling
Mr. Michael Kelly
Mr. Seán Lyons
Mr. Peter McLoone

Ms. Aine Stapleton (Secretary)
Mr. Tony Cleary (Secretariat)
Mr. Evan Coady (Secretariat)
Mr. James Maher (Secretariat)
Ms. Susan McKiernan (Secretariat)
Ms. Karen Murphy (Secretariat)
Mr. Turlough O'Brien (Secretariat)
Mr. Stephen Owens (Secretariat)

The Chair thanked the Secretary and wished her well in her new role. The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed. The Secretary provided an update on the submissions received from employee representative associations, explaining how the module one grades generally met the submission criteria and how the next step for the Secretariat is to check references and compare with employer data.

The Commission discussed the importance of having clarity over what is meant by a vacancy and the need for detailed data on staff age ranges, type of hospital, and trends over time. The Commission agreed that vacancies only involve situations where the organisation have actively sought to fill the position. The Commission spoke about creating the survey after there has been sufficient time to absorb all the various information, but the Secretary clarified that there would be overlap between the data collection and survey design due to time constraints.

The Secretariat provided an update on the requests for employer data. There was discussion on time lines, information held and possible gaps in the information held and provided, particularly from the CHO areas and Hospital Groups. The Commission reiterated the clear responsibility for DPER to ensure requested employer data is provided. The Secretary updated the Commission on the module two data collection, which is expected to be more straightforward given the smaller number of staff involved.

The Secretary briefed the Commission on RACO's acceptance of the pay agreement, and PDFORRA's upcoming ballot result. The Secretariat provided progress reports in respect of the pay comparisons RFT and the survey/interview RFT, highlighting associated risks. The pay comparisons RFT will be reissued to the OGP after the domestic private sector pay comparison has been decoupled. No bids were initially received for the research RFT and the Secretariat are to follow up with the OGP.

Sean McHugh, Chair of the INMO/SIPTU agreement implementation group, joined the meeting. Mr McHugh provided an update on the progress made since the agreement in April.


Mr McHugh discussed some of the differences of opinion regarding figures, including the way student nurses are counted as 0.5 WTE. Mr McHugh set out the 3 parts of the agreement. The first focus was specific increases in particular specialties and converting agency staff to permanent contracts. Recruitment and retention in midwifery was highlighted.

Mr McHugh described how the second focus was to increase nursing staff numbers to an overall target WTE of 37,043. While the significant proportion of students availing of permanent job offers (approximately 800 out of 900) helped in 2017, the unions have suggested that this is being counteracted by staff leaving in their second year due to the availability of early career breaks. Mr McHugh described how the third focus was a series of individual initiatives, which were progressing well. The Commission thanked Mr McHugh, who agreed to meet with the members again in the new year following the end year report.

The Secretariat provided a brief update on meetings held with supply side and regulatory bodies. A project management overview was provided to the Commission, which illustrated progress on the various tasks and flagged potential risks. The Commission agreed to change the next meeting to 16th January 2018, when the Secretariat would have a more complete picture of the employer data returns.

Action points

- Secretariat to follow up with OGP regarding RFT for survey/interview research.
- Secretariat to issue international pay comparisons RFT.
- Secretariat to liaise with HSE and DPER regarding employer data returns.
- Secretariat to continue examining employee representative submissions.
- Sean McHugh to meet Commission again after end year report in January.


16th January 2018