

Meeting of the Public Service Pay Commission
26th October 2017 at 8.30am, St. Stephen's Green House.

In attendance

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

Ms. Aine Stapleton (Secretary)
Mr. Tony Cleary (Secretariat)
Mr. Evan Coady (Secretariat)
Ms. Angelena Hollingsworth (Secretariat)
Mr. James Maher (Secretariat)
Ms. Susan McKiernan (Secretariat)
Ms. Karen Murphy (Secretariat)

The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed. The Secretary updated the Commission on the actions taken since the last meeting. There was discussion regarding the need to develop a clear set of criteria for determining if a grade is experiencing recruitment and/or retention challenges. It was agreed that the Secretariat would prepare these draft criteria. The Commission emphasised the importance of clearly setting out the modular approach to Phase 2 and the requirement for evidence based submissions from staff representative associations. The templates for submissions were also discussed, especially the need to include definitions for vacancy, turnover, etc.

The Secretariat provided an update on project management and staffing. The draft report structure was discussed and the Secretariat spoke about some of the strategies emerging from the literature review. It was agreed that there should be an additional chapter focusing on other non-pay causal factors. The Commission agreed to remove any references to NCHDs (Psychiatry), so as not to limit the examination of NCHDs to one specialist area only.

The Secretariat updated the Commission on the RFQ process for engaging academic advisors and agreed to circulate the criteria by which the quotes would be evaluated. The Secretariat updated the Commission on the survey/interview research RFT. The Commission spoke about the importance of having a very clear specification of who would be surveyed and the desired sample size for each grade. It was agreed that the Commission would sign off on the evaluation of the survey/interview research tender given the likely expenditure involved.

The Secretariat updated the Commission on the international comparisons RFT. The Commission requested that EMTs/paramedics and radiographers be included in the research specification. The inclusion of some comparison on working conditions was also raised. The Commission discussed the challenges of ensuring a like-for-like comparison. The Secretary updated the Commission regarding proposals to meet with health sector experts. The Secretariat also provided an update on data requests from the regulatory bodies and supply

side organisations. A draft schedule of future meetings was noted by the Commission. The Commission briefly discussed the approach to the meeting with the Minister and Secretary General.

11.30 am

Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform, Paschal Donohoe, TD

Mr. Robert Watt (Secretary General)

Mr. Colin Menton (Assistant Secretary General)

The Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform, the Secretary General of DPER, and the Assistant Secretary of the RIRP division joined the meeting. The Chair of the Commission welcomed the Minister and spoke about the new Terms of Reference, and acknowledged the Commission's statement on their approach to Phase 2. The Minister thanked the Commission for their work on the initial report in May. The Minister emphasised the importance of an evidence based approach to Phase 2. The Minister outlined that the pay horizon for the public service had been reset under the Public Service Stability Agreement, which involved over €880m in additional pay expenditure over the next 3 years and that by next year overall numbers in the public service will be close to 2008 peak. The Department's position remains that there is no general recruitment and retention problem, but there may be localised challenges, in addition to the challenges and opportunities posed by Brexit. The Minister spoke about the need to consider international comparisons in this context and the importance of protecting the new public service pay agreement.

The Chair acknowledged the necessity for tangible evidence of recruitment/retention issues. The Chair stressed the tight timeframe for the interim report by end June 2018, which is contingent on the Commission being able to proceed with modular 1 unfettered by having to consider additional grades. The Commission emphasised the need for employer data requests to be given priority. The Secretary General assured the Commission that data requests would be prioritised. The Secretary General reiterated the departmental position that there is no general problem with recruitment and retention, but there may be issues in the health sector and in specialist grades in the civil and public service.

Action points

- Secretariat to draft criteria for establishing if there are recruitment and retention issues for a particular cohort.
- Secretariat to request evidence-based submissions from staff representative associations.
- Secretariat to update draft report structure.
- Secretariat to circulate evaluation criteria for academic advice RFQ.
- Secretariat to update specification for RFT on international comparisons.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'John', written in a cursive style.