

## News & Appointments

### First Report of the Local Government Efficiency Review (LGER) Implementation Group published

The Local Government Efficiency Review (LGER) Implementation Group, the group tasked with overseeing and advising on the implementation of the Report of the Local Government Efficiency Review Group in April 2011, has published its first report.

The group, chaired by Pat McLoughlin, Chief Executive of the Irish Payments Services Organisation, found the most significant savings have been made through staffing (€98.1m) and through procurement contracts (€78.8m). Additionally, €10.6m has been saved in relation to consultancies and professional fees; €5m through the consolidation of hazardous waste controls into lead authorities; and a further €3m in savings were made through the shared HR and payroll system.

The group suggest that an assessment be carried out of outstanding efficiency recommendations and that an implementation programme be put in place. A mechanism to independently quality assure the assessment of the efficiency measures should also be created.

The group also suggest that relevant sectoral and technical/professional experts should be consulted as part of the Workforce Planning exercise. A comprehensive study, according to the group, should be carried out on grading structures for middle and senior grades across the whole public sector, with benchmarks for the most efficient span of control in these grades. An evaluation should also be carried out as to whether a cost effective graduate trainee programme could provide a future stream of talent for local authorities while giving training opportunities to new graduates.

Services could potentially be shared on a sector-wide or lead authority basis,

as advocated by the group. Members of the group agree that an ICT Strategy should include provision for assessment of all services to be available via eGovernment channels. A single decision mechanism should be established by the local authority sector to decide how specific procurement elements will be managed to ensure that shared procurement should be targeted to manage at least 80 percent of procurement, but with sufficient safeguards to ensure SMEs have the capacity to participate. Finally, the group suggest that the current methods of revenue collection be examined, along with alternatives, to identify the most efficient agency for revenue collection, including incentivisation of on time and online payments, and the application of interest and penalty charges in respect of late payments.

The Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government, Phil Hogan TD commended the reform programme underway in the local government sector and the savings achieved of over €195m in 2010 and 2011 and savings of €830m since 2008. A further €150m in direct efficiency savings “will be targeted over the next 18 months, while maintaining existing services”. The focus now, according to the Minister, will be on “spreading further cost-saving methods and on developing strong sectoral and shared services approaches. Other savings will be made through procurement, debt collection measures and standardisation of business processes across the sector nationally to streamline efficiency”.

The recommendations will be addressed in the context of the Local Government Reform Package, ‘Putting People First’ which Minister Hogan will announce in autumn. *Continued on page 2*

### Panel appointed to select members of the new Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission

Members of a panel which will select the persons to be recommended to the Oireachtas and the President for appointment to the new Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission have been announced.

The members include: the Ombudsman, Emily O Reilly (chair); Dr Mary Keys, National University of Ireland Galway and member of Mental Health Commission; Sylva Langford, Chair of Citizens Information Board; Professor Gerard Quinn, National University of Ireland Galway; and Professor Gerard Whyte, Trinity College Dublin.

The panel will invite applications from persons interested in serving on the new Commission, run a selection process and make a recommendation to the Government on a number of candidates for appointment by the President in due course. It is anticipated that applications will be invited in early September.

The Committee on Justice, Defence and Equality, is to meet with the members of the panel in September.

Speaking on the appointment of the panel, Minister for Justice and Equality, Alan Shatter TD said “selecting the members of the new Commission in this way is a new departure for us in this state”.

The Minister also noted how the new Commission will seek accreditation with the UN as Ireland’s National Human Rights Institution (NHRI) which is “of crucial importance to ensure that the new body achieves the highest international standing and domestic credibility to its independence and remit”. The new Commission will also comply “unequivocally” with the ‘Paris Principles’ the Minister stressed.

### Bill to implement recommendations of Constituency Commission Report to be drafted

The Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government Phil Hogan TD is to commence the drafting of a Bill to implement the recommendations of the Constituency Commission Report 2012. This was agreed in the final cabinet meeting prior to summer recess, held during the week.

The report recommended that the number of TDs be reduced to 158 from 166. The number of constituencies will be 40 of which 11 will be five-seat, 16 will be four-seat and 13 will be three-seat.

The report also recommended an extensive redrawing of constituency

boundaries.

Minister Hogan, speaking following this agreement, mentioned additional political reform progress including the recent passage of the Electoral Amendment (Political Funding) Bill 2011 through the Houses of the Oireachtas. This Bill will “severely curtail” corporate donations and cut the amounts that can be donated to political parties. It also includes the provision that parties that do not select at least 30 percent women candidates at the next General Election will face losing half of their State funding.

*More News and appointments on page 2*



Public Affairs  
Ireland  
25 Mountjoy  
Square East  
Dublin 1

Tel: 01 8198500  
Fax: 01 8944733  
E: [info@publicaffairsireland.com](mailto:info@publicaffairsireland.com)  
[www.publicaffairsireland.com](http://www.publicaffairsireland.com)  
[twitter.com/publicaffairsir](https://twitter.com/publicaffairsir)



Continued from page 1

Furthermore, speaking at the MacGill summer school this week, the Minister said it is “extremely likely” he will cut the number of councillors and the overall number of local authorities.

He also announced his intention to strengthen the role of the Local Authority Audit Committees to ensure better oversight. In order to eliminate duplication and overlap and to provide entrepreneurs with “strong guidance and speedy answers”, further streamlining and integration in the local authorities sector will take place.

Reform, the Minister continued, is based upon two themes: measurement and communication. End results, as opposed to activities will be measured along with value for money and people, rather than processes. Should one local authority do “something that’s new, or different or better” this must be “spread throughout other local authorities”. Good quality public information must be provided and local authorities must understand exactly what that is i.e. “that every communication is immediately understandable to the citizen”.



Minister Hogan said a cut to the number of councillors is “extremely likely”

Minister Hogan highlighted the savings made by local authorities so far, as outlined above, adding that “this will be pursued vigorously to achieve the highest standards of customer service”. The additional efficiency savings target of €150m will be achieved with the help of a dedicated Programme Management Office, established by the County and City Managers’ Association to deliver Shared Services and support a Work Force Planning process to ensure “we get staffing and organisation right – and cost-effective”.

The Minister concluded his speech by mentioning the ‘Putting People First’ programme, which he said “will empower Local Government in an entirely new way, particularly in relation to economic development, and most importantly, sustaining and creating jobs”. In Autumn, he added, “what I can promise is a focused action programme for reform that puts people first and ensures local authorities operate at the highest professional and ethical standards”.

### New President of Law Reform Commission appointed

The Government has appointed retired High Court Judge, Mr Justice John Quirke as President of the Law Reform Commission.

Furthermore, Ms Marie Baker and Mr Tom O’Malley have been appointed as part-time Commissioners to the Commission and. Mr Donncha O’Connell has been reappointed as a part time Commissioner.

Marie Baker is a practising barrister. She was first called to the Bar in 1984 and to the Senior Counsel in 2004. Her primary areas of practice land law and conveyancing, landlord and tenant, trusts, banking and general chancery and family law. She has also lectured widely on the provisions of the LCLR Act to members of the Bar and solicitors.

Tom O’Malley is a senior law lecturer and a practising barrister specialising in judicial review. Between 1992 and 1993, he was a Visiting Fellow at the Criminology Centre at Oxford University, and in spring 2012 a Visiting Professor of Criminology at Leiden University in the Netherlands. He has also taught at the Law Faculty of Paris V University.

Donncha O’Connell is a lecturer in the school of law NUI Galway. He was Dean of the Faculty of Law at NUI Galway from 2005 to 2008. He has also participated as a Council of Europe expert in several judicial training programmes in Croatia, Georgia and Azerbaijan and has worked in a similar capacity in other countries with the Netherlands Helsinki Federation and INTERIGHTS.

The new President of the Commission, Mr Justice John Quirke, has served a number of roles including on the Board of the Courts Service from 2003 until 2006 and again from 2006 until 2009. He was a member of the Board of the Judicial Studies Institute between 1999 and 2009 and was appointed as a member of the Committee for Court Practice and Procedure by the Minister for Justice in 2002. He served as senior Judge in charge of Judicial Review in the High Court between 2003 and 2007 and senior judge in charge of personal injuries in the High Court from 2007 until 2009.

### Appointments to Parole Board

Mr William Connolly, Mr Eddie Rock, Ms Nora McGarry have been appointed to the Parole Board. Mr Shane McCarthy has been re-appointed to the Board. The Minister for Justice, Equality and Defence, Alan Shatter TD has also this week launched the Annual Report of the Parole Board for 2011.

William Connolly joined the Irish Prison Service, as a Prison Officer in 1974 and served for 38 years being promoted through the ranks to Governor 1 before being appointed as Director of Operations. He also served as Governor in charge of Mountjoy Prison, Wheatfield Prison, Cloverhill Prison and Portlaoise Prison.

Eddie Rock served for over 30 years in An Garda Síochána, working in many areas of An Garda Síochána throughout that period. From 1993 to 1999, he served as a Superintendent at the Garda College and later at the Garda National Drug Squad. In 1999, Eddie was promoted to Chief Superintendent and from 1999 to 2005 he served at a number of locations throughout Dublin, including at the “B Branch” (Garda Headquarters), Crumlin and Store Street. In 2005 he was appointed Assistant Commissioner in charge of the Garda Traffic Corps.

Nora McGarry served as a Staff Nurse with the Eastern Health Board, Child Psychiatric Services from 1985 until 2001. She is currently employed in a part time capacity as a Student Counsellor at St Colmcille’s Community School, Knocklyon and operates a private practice, Imagine Counselling Services, providing psychotherapy and counselling. Nora was appointed to the Mental

Health (Criminal Law) Review Board in 2011.

Shane McCarthy qualified as a solicitor in 1999 and established his own firm a year later. He was appointed to the Parole Board in 2009 and has also served on the Garda Síochána Complaints Board since 2002. He has sat on and chaired Tribunals under the aegis of the Complaints Board. Mr McCarthy also lectured in Cork Institute of Technology on a part time basis for three years on various accounting and business courses.

The Parole Board’s principal function is to advise Minister Shatter on the administration of long term prison sentences in respect of prisoners who are serving sentences greater than eight years. The Board advises of the prisoner’s progress to date, the degree to which the prisoner has engaged with the various therapeutic services and how best to proceed with the future administration of the sentence.

The Parole Board, which replaced the Sentence Review Group, was established on an administrative basis in April 2001. Commenting on the proposed plan to enact legislation to place the Parole Board on a statutory footing, the Minister said the Department of Justice and Equality is “considering exactly what role a statutory Parole Board should play, what powers it should have, and the implications of same with a view to preparing the Heads of a Bill”. He said he will make a further announcement on this matter in due course.

September/October Seminars and Courses - Cormac



# The Future of HR in the Public Sector

## Public Affairs Ireland Annual HR Conference Thursday 27th September 2012

THE WESTIN HOTEL, DUBLIN, 9am - 3.30pm

KEYNOTE SPEAKER: Brendan Howlin TD, Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform

The onset of recession and the role of the ‘Troika’ plunged the Irish public sector into crisis. Pay cuts, a moratorium on appointments and promotions, widespread redeployment of staff, adjustments to premium payments and allowances - all of these have been introduced to a degree that was unthinkable a few years ago. Many organisational changes are taking place in timescales that would have been inconceivable in the past. But are we witnessing lasting changes or temporary adjustments? What does the future hold in store for public sector employees and management? What positive changes of an enduring kind can we expect over the coming years in public sector HR?

The Croke Park implementation body concluded in its recent report that “the Agreement will continue to be measured against its ability to accelerate the pace of change across the public service and its potential for extracting further pay bill and non-pay savings.”

This full-day conference – for managers, employees and union representatives – will address the key themes now emerging in public sector HR:

- The Croke Park Agreement Performance to Date and Future Prospects
- Innovations in Public Sector Industrial Relations
- Innovations in Pay, Promotions, Performance

These and other compelling themes will be discussed at this year’s annual HR Conference for the Public Sector.

### Croke Park, what has it delivered?

Public Service Staff numbers have been reduced by 28,000, or 8.8%, since 2008 from 320,000 to 292,000

Staff numbers have been reduced by over 17,300 during the first two years of the Agreement

Pay and non-pay savings:  
The Exchequer pay bill has been reduced by 17.7% between 2009 and 2012, from €17.5bn to €14.4bn (net of the Pension Related Deduction)

Pay Bill Savings of €650m were achieved during the year under review (Q1 2011 to Q1 2012) driven largely by the reduction in staff numbers

Factoring in an estimate for the maximum possible post-February recruitment over 2012 still yields significant sustainable pay bill savings of €521m. An estimated €810m in sustainable pay bill savings has therefore been achieved during the first two years of the Agreement

Over the period 2009 to 2015, the Exchequer pay bill is expected to reduce by €3.8bn, or €3.3bn net of expected increases in public service pensions costs

Administrative efficiency (or “non-pay”) savings totalling €370m were reported for the review period. Adding the examples of non-pay savings presented in last year’s Report totalling €308m, gives a total of €678m in non-pay savings in the first two years of the Agreement

Sponsored by: **ARTHUR COX**

Please click here to register your interest or call us on 01 819 8500 for more