



*Achieving Excellence Through People*

# Management and Dissolution Plan

01 April 2019 – 31 March 2021

- Agreed by the Commission at its meeting held on 24<sup>th</sup> July 2018.
- Supplementary information included on Pages 9 & 10 and agreed at the Commission meeting held on 21<sup>st</sup> August 2018.
- While this operational plan relates to the period 01 April 2019 to 31 March 2021, it may be that the Commission will be dissolved at some time during this period, in which case the action to be taken in the various areas of operation will be re-scheduled to coincide with the dissolution date.



**The Local Government Staff Commission  
for Northern Ireland**

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## **SECTION 1 – INTRODUCTION**

The Local Government Staff Commission for Northern Ireland  
*“Achieving Excellence Through People”*

### **Status of the Commission**

The Local Government Staff Commission for Northern Ireland (The Commission) is an Executive Non-Departmental Public Body established under the Local Government Act (NI) 1972. The Commission's powers were later extended under the Housing Orders 1976 and 1981 and the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) (NI) Order 1992.

The Commission is an Arm's Length Body of the Department for Communities (DfC), and the Department determines the Staff Commission's performance framework in light of the Department's wider strategic aims and current key commitments. The areas of operation, timeline and actions required by the Commission are set out in this Management and Dissolution Plan, which is approved by the Minister. The Minister is accountable to the Assembly for the activities and performance of the Staff Commission. The Departmental Accounting Officer has designated the Chief Executive of the Staff Commission as the Staff Commission's Accounting Officer.

In general, the terms of reference for the Commission are to exercise:

***‘general oversight of matters connected with the recruitment, training and terms and conditions of employment of officers of councils and the Northern Ireland Housing Executive and of making recommendations to councils and the Northern Ireland Housing Executive on such matters.’***

[Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 1972 as amended by the Housing Orders (NI) 1976 and 1981]

Appendix 1 provides further details of the Commission's statutory remit and specific functions.

### **Planned Dissolution of Local Government Staff Commission**

In October 2013, following consultation on the future of the Commission, the then Environment Minister announced that the Commission would be wound up at 31 March 2017. This decision was subsequently agreed by the Executive Committee, at their meeting on 19 June 2014.

As the NI Assembly is currently suspended, it has not been possible to have the necessary Dissolution Order in place to wind up the Commission as planned. On this basis, the DfC reconstituted the Commission membership w.e.f. 01 April 2017 (up to the final dissolution date), therefore, this Management and Dissolution Plan has been developed to enable the Commission to continue to implement its statutory duties and for staff to be made compulsory redundant on a phased basis as the non-statutory work of the Commission is gradually passed to councils.

### **Purpose of the Management and Dissolution Plan**

This document has been developed as a 2-year plan to guide the Commission's work for the period 01 April 2019 to 31 March 2021. Plans had already been put in place to wind up the Commission at 31 March 2017 and a number of functions had already transferred, by agreement, to councils before the collapse of the Assembly. Therefore, this Management and Dissolution Plan is based on the key requirements necessary to:

- ensure delivery in the interim period of essential statutory functions, and
- ensure a smooth handover at dissolution.

### **Reporting Mechanisms**

Progress on meeting the actions detailed within the Management and Dissolution Plan will be monitored on a monthly basis at officer level and reported periodically at Commission meetings.

## **SECTION 2 – MANAGEMENT AND DISSOLUTION PLAN FOR 01 APRIL 2019 TO 31 MARCH 2021**

### **Management and Dissolution Plan Actions**

This section details the Management and Dissolution Actions for 01 April 2019 to 31 March 2021.

The Actions are set out in three main Key Performance Areas as follows:

#### **KEY PERFORMANCE AREA 1 – ESSENTIAL STATUTORY FUNCTIONS**

The delivery of the Commission's statutory functions during the management and dissolution period and the integration of designated functions within councils, including:

- Advisory Appointments Panels
- Code of Procedures on Recruitment & Selection
- Code of Conduct for Local Government Officers
- Negotiating Machinery

#### **KEY PERFORMANCE AREA 2 – OVERSIGHT OF THE FUNCTIONS TO BE TRANSFERRED TO COUNCILS ON DISSOLUTION**

To maintain oversight of the functions already transferred to councils in line with the planned 31 March 2017 dissolution date and in addition continue to provide:

- Advisory and support services
- Monitoring of Fair Employment Practices

This oversight ensures the proper discharge of the Commission's functions during the pre-dissolution period.

#### **KEY PERFORMANCE AREA 3 – CORPORATE GOVERNANCE**

To ensure continuing good governance, accountability and operational management of the Commission as a statutory body, including:

- Provision & maintenance of a sound system of control (audit, risk etc.)
- Finance and Administration
- Orderly Dissolution Arrangements

**KEY PERFORMANCE AREA 1  
ESSENTIAL STATUTORY FUNCTIONS**

**(Chief Executive – Adrian Kerr and Director - Recruitment & Diversity – Lorna Parsons)**

**1. ADVISORY AND APPOINTMENT PANELS and CODE OF PROCEDURES ON RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION**

AREAS OF OPERATION	TIMELINE - APRIL 2019 TO MARCH 2021	ACTIONS
<p><b>Advise councils and the NIHE in relation to the implementation of the Code of Procedures on Recruitment and Selection, and on best practice in recruitment and selection, including:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Assist councils to recruit Chief Executives and other senior officers, as detailed in the Code of Procedures on Recruitment and Selection</b></li> <li>• <b>Provide Observers to attend selection panels for senior posts in councils and the NIHE</b></li> <li>• <b>Advise on best practice in the use of assessment centres and how recruitment exercises can be made more objective and transparent</b></li> </ul> <p><b>Issue a new Code of Procedures to councils to coincide with the dissolution order</b></p>	<p>Assist councils to implement the Code of Procedures on Recruitment &amp; Selection, and provide advice on best practice in recruitment and selection as required</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to provide assistance to councils to recruit senior posts in line with agreed procedures</li> <li>• Review Observer reports on selection panels and make recommendations to councils</li> <li>• Ensure continuity in the application of best practice in assessment testing</li> </ul> <p>Provide familiarisation sessions for council officers on the provisions of the new Code prior to dissolution</p> <p>Assist the smooth transition in accordance with the dissolution order for new arrangements post dissolution</p>	<p>Provide advice on best practice recruitment and selection training on an ongoing basis.</p> <p>Provide assistance with recruitment exercises for senior posts in councils and the NIHE, as required.</p> <p>Attend meetings of the recruitment working group when appropriate and provide assistance, as required.</p> <p>Advise councils and the NIHE on the use of assessment centres and situational judgement tests, as required.</p> <p>Host two familiarisation sessions for councils on the revised Code of Procedures on Recruitment and Selection prior to dissolution.</p>

**KEY PERFORMANCE AREA 1  
ESSENTIAL STATUTORY FUNCTIONS**

**(Chief Executive – Adrian Kerr and Director - Recruitment & Diversity – Lorna Parsons)**

**2. CODE OF CONDUCT FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES**

AREAS OF OPERATION	TIMELINE - APRIL 2019 TO MARCH 2021	ACTIONS
<p><b>Maintain the Code of Conduct for Local Government Employees as adopted by councils and the Commission on 01 April 2015</b></p>	<p>Provide advice and assistance in relation to any queries in relation to the Code, as required</p> <p>Assist with the smooth transition in accordance with the dissolution order for new arrangements post dissolution</p> <p>Update the Code of Conduct for Local Government Employees to take account of other public sector best practice models</p>	<p>Provide professional advice and assistance regarding HR matters including complaints, grievance and disciplinary matters.</p> <p>Provide and/or recommend independent expert consultancy support, as required.</p> <p>Update the Code of Conduct by March 2020.</p>

**3. NEGOTIATING MACHINERY**

AREAS OF OPERATION	TIMELINE - APRIL 2019 TO MARCH 2021	ACTIONS
<p><b>Support the implementation of a new regional industrial relations framework</b></p> <p><b>Provide an Independent Secretariat service to any interim negotiating machinery</b></p>	<p>Advise and assist with any new regional IR Framework, as required</p> <p>Provide advice, assistance and independent secretariat facilities, as required</p>	<p>Attend meetings relating to the regional IR Framework and provide advice and assistance, as required. Provide regular updates on progress (following consultation with the Labour Relations Agency) to Commission meetings.</p>

**KEY PERFORMANCE AREA 2**  
**OVERSIGHT OF STATUTORY FUNCTIONS TO BE TRANSFERRED TO COUNCILS ON DISSOLUTION**  
(Director - Recruitment & Diversity – Lorna Parsons, and Policy Officer – Lisa O’Neill)

**4. ADVISORY AND SUPPORT SERVICES**

AREAS OF OPERATION	TIMELINE - APRIL 2019 TO MARCH 2021	ACTIONS
<b>Provide advice and assistance on HR and OD matters</b>	Assist with queries relating to the transferred ‘Call Off Framework for Consultancy Support/ Independent expert consultancy  Provide advice and assistance as required and provide regular reports to the Commission	Provide and/or recommend independent expert consultancy support, as required.  Attend meetings of PPMA and provide advice and assistance, on an ongoing basis.
<b>Support the agreed People &amp; Organisation Development Strategic Framework</b>	Provide advice on, review and support the development of a continuity plan in relation to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Leadership Academy</li> <li>• The Coaching and Mentoring Network</li> </ul>	Assist in the establishment of a coaching and mentoring network and provide advice and assistance on its implementation. Host an HR Conference on an annual basis.

**5. MONITORING OF FAIR EMPLOYMENT PRACTICES**

AREAS OF OPERATION	TIMELINE - APRIL 2019 TO MARCH 2021	ACTIONS
<b>Advise and assist councils and the NIHE to implement their Section 75 duties and Disability Action Plans</b>  <b>Advise and assist councils to implement best practice in equality and diversity</b>	Provide advice and assistance in relation to any queries on equality and diversity  Assist with the smooth transition of the work of the Equality and Diversity Group in accordance with the Local Government Staff Commission (Dissolution) Order (NI) 2017 (currently in draft form) for new arrangements post dissolution	Ensure that the Statutory Duty Network meets on a regular basis to address common issues and collaborate on sector wide initiatives.  Attend meetings of the Equality & Diversity Working Group and assist as required.  Host a meeting(s) of the Diversity Champions’ Network to encourage networking, disseminating best practice.  Arrange an Equality & Diversity Seminar on an annual basis.

**KEY PERFORMANCE AREA 3  
CORPORATE GOVERNANCE**

**(Chief Executive – Adrian Kerr, Policy Officer – Lisa O’Neill and Dissolution Officer – Gerry McCourt)**

**6. SOUND SYSTEM OF CONTROL**

AREAS OF OPERATION	TIMELINE - APRIL 2019 TO MARCH 2021	ACTIONS
<p><b>Continue to implement a sound system of control to support the Commission’s objectives in accordance with Government Accounting Northern Ireland</b></p>	<p>Comply with any equality reporting arrangements in accordance with the Commission’s status as a public body</p> <p>Arrange Audit Committee meetings, as required</p> <p>Prepare responses to FOI and Data Protection enquiries</p> <p>Facilitate Local Government Audit, as required</p> <p>Prepare and Publish 2017/18 Annual Report and Accounts</p> <p>Review and update the Commission’s Risk Register as required</p> <p>Provide a secretariat service to all meetings of the Commission</p>	<p>Complete Annual Progress Report for ECNI. Complete all monitoring returns.</p> <p>Arrange and facilitate Audit Committee meetings (in line with Commission meetings). Schedule meetings for May, August and October of each year.</p> <p>Implement all governance arrangements relating to the Commission’s dissolution as agreed by the DfC-LGSC Dissolution Project Board.</p> <p>Update policies and procedures as per Department of Finance &amp; DfC instruction.</p> <p>Continue to liaise with the Public Records Office NI to ensure that special circumstances are agreed to enable PRONI to take delivery of files less than 20 years old.</p>



**KEY PERFORMANCE AREA 3  
CORPORATE GOVERNANCE**

**(Chief Executive – Adrian Kerr, Policy Officer – Lisa O’Neill and Dissolution Officer – Gerry McCourt)**

**7. FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION**

AREAS OF OPERATION	TIMELINE - APRIL 2019 TO MARCH 2021	ACTIONS
<p><b>Ensure the efficient and effective day to day management of the Commission’s Financial Affairs in accordance with Government Accounting Practice and Accounts Directions issued by the Department for Communities/Local Government Auditor</b></p>	<p>Prepare Financial Schemes and ensure Budgetary Control</p> <p>Ensure adequate working capital to fund Commission Activities</p> <p>Prepare the Commission Accounts</p> <p>Process salaries and allowances</p> <p>Process receipts and payments</p> <p>Bank Account Management including the preparation of bank reconciliations and monitoring balances</p> <p>General Administration – Attend to all queries in a timely manner and make arrangements for the audit of internal systems and final accounts</p>	<p>Budget reports presented at Commission and Audit Committee meetings on a bi-annual basis.</p> <p>Prepare budgetary performance reports on a monthly basis for scrutiny by the Chief Executive.</p> <p>Ensure compliance with the timeline defined by DfC.</p> <p>Process salaries and allowances on a monthly basis.</p> <p>Ensure proper report management and prompt payment targets are met.</p> <p>Bank reconciliations to be prepared on a monthly basis and monitored by the Chief Executive.</p>

**KEY PERFORMANCE AREA 3  
CORPORATE GOVERNANCE**

**(Chief Executive – Adrian Kerr, Policy Officer – Lisa O’Neill and Dissolution Officer – Gerry McCourt)**

**8. DISSOLUTION ARRANGEMENTS**

AREAS OF OPERATION	TIMELINE - APRIL 2019 TO MARCH 2021	ACTIONS
<p><b>Progress necessary governance and resource actions to ensure the efficient and orderly dissolution of the Commission</b></p>	<p>Review Assets and update Asset Register, as necessary</p> <p>Implement all governance arrangements relating to the Commission’s dissolution as agreed by the DfC-LGSC Dissolution Project Board:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dispose of Commission House and all furniture and equipment</li> <li>• Draft final accounts and handover of server, etc., to DfC</li> <li>• Prepare and finalise Annual Report for 01 April 2019 to March 2020</li> </ul>	<p>Develop appropriate procedures for disposal of assets.</p> <p>Ensure Commission records are managed in line with the Disposal Schedule.</p> <p>Prepare for handover to DfC Dissolution Group and Public Records Office.</p> <p>Prepare one month in advance of dissolution for completion of contract for sale and handover of Commission House.</p>

## **SECTION 3 – WORK REQUIREMENTS AND SEVERANCE** **STAFFING IMPLICATIONS**

### **Third Phase Severance Arrangements**

The Commission at its meeting of 08 August 2017 agreed that current permanent staff would continue working in order to facilitate dissolution and that this was a voluntary agreement which may alter as future career opportunities/life choices become available in the time to dissolution. Staff in this category were to be made redundant w.e.f. 31 March 2017 and were served with their notice of redundancy and terms accordingly. They voluntarily agreed to the extension of their redundancy notice period beyond 31 March 2017 and will be made redundant at a future date based on the following circumstances:

- Staff indicate that they do not wish to continue to extend their redundancy date beyond a specific period.
- Staff are no longer required to implement the Commission’s continuing workplan.
- A final dissolution date is determined by statutory regulations to dissolve the Commission on a specific date.

Adrian Kerr, Chief Executive (part time)

Lorna Parsons, Director – Recruitment & Diversity (part time)

Lisa O’Neill, Policy Officer

(i.e. 2.44 whole time equivalents)

In line with the above agreement and following consultation with staff it is proposed that the third phase severance arrangement is implemented as follows:

- Adrian Kerr, Chief Executive to be made redundant on 31 July 2019
- Lorna Parsons, Director – Recruitment & Diversity to be made redundant on 31 March 2021
- Lisa O’Neill, Policy Officer to be made redundant on 31 July 2019

On this basis the work requirements to this plan are as follows:

<b>AREAS OF OPERATION</b>	<b>LEAD OFFICER – CURRENT RESOURCE</b>	<b>FUTURE REQUIREMENTS</b>
<b>Essential Statutory Functions</b> including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advisory and Appointment Panels</li> <li>• Recruitment of Senior Staff</li> <li>• Code of Procedures</li> <li>• Code of Conduct for Local Government Officers</li> <li>• Negotiating Machinery</li> </ul>	<b>Lorna Parsons, Director – Recruitment &amp; Diversity</b> (Up to 31 March 2021)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Commission intends to seek approval from Lorna Parsons to postpone her redundancy date to 31 March 2021 in order to provide continuity and implement the Management Plan</li> </ul>
<b>Oversight of functions transferred prior to 31 March 2017</b> including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advisory and Support Services</li> <li>• Monitoring of Fair Employment Practices</li> </ul>	<b>Lorna Parsons, Director – Recruitment &amp; Diversity</b> (Up to March 2021) <u>Support officers for</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adrian Kerr, Chief Executive (Up to 31 July 2019)</li> <li>• Lisa O’Neill, Policy Officer (Up to 31 July 2019)</li> </ul>	<b>See Over</b>

<p><b>Governance, Accountability &amp; Operational Management</b> including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sound System of Control (audit, risk etc.)</li> <li>• Finance and Administration</li> <li>• Dissolution Arrangements</li> </ul>	<p><b>Adrian Kerr, Chief Executive</b> (Up to 31 July 2019)</p> <p><u>Support officers</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lisa O’Neill, Policy Officer (Up to 31 July 2019)</li> <li>• Gerry McCourt, Dissolution Officer (Up to 30 September 2019)</li> <li>• Gerry McCourt, Management Accountant <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monthly management accounts &amp; budget report.</li> <li>• Financial Scheme preparation in line with business plan.</li> <li>• Year end accounts. (from 01 October 2019 to September 2021 if required)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p><b>From August 2019 – March 2021</b></p> <p>The Commission intends to recruit a post (preferably through Interchange) at LGSC Director level (JD1) to fulfil the duties currently carried out by the Chief Executive as listed under “Oversight of functions transferred prior to 31 March 2017 and Governance, Accountability and Operational Management”.</p> <p>Similarly it is the intention to recruit a post (preferably through Interchange) at LGSC 3<sup>rd</sup> tier level (JD2) to fulfil the duties currently carried out by the Policy Officer as listed under “Oversight of functions transferred prior to 31 March 2017 and Governance, Accountability and Operational Management”.</p>
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**Action Plan to Implement Resourcing Arrangements August 2019 – March 2021**

**October 2018**

1. Prepare a job specification for post JD1 to implement the current Chief Executive duties. This post to be redesignated “Director – Corporate Services” who will also have responsibility as “Winding Up” Officer.
2. Prepare a job specification for the post JD2 to implement the current Policy Officer duties. The post to be redesignated “Administration and Finance Officer.

**November 2018**

3. Prepare and circulate these job opportunities, utilising the Interchange mechanism available to the Northern Ireland Public Service.

**December 2018/January 2019**

4. Shortlist and interview prospective applicants.

**December 2018/January 2019**

5. Seek to appoint to both posts with overlap, working 2 days per week from 01 May 2019 to 31 July 2019.
6. Both posts take up full time duties (3 days per week) with effect from 01 August 2019.

In the event of the Interchange mechanism not providing a sufficient field of applicants at step 3, which will be known by December 2018/January 2019, the Commission will seek to fill the posts by the following mechanisms:-

- Other potential secondment arrangements
- Use of job search/agency providers
- Direct “fixed term/flexible” recruitment
- Outsourcing and consultancy support provision

## **SECTION 4 – APPENDIX**

### **Legislation**

### **Appendix 1**

In addition to the Commission's general oversight role as detailed in the introduction of this document, the following specific functions are detailed in the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 1972, as amended by the Housing Orders (NI) 1976 and 1981 and the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) (NI) Order 1992.

The functions of the Staff Commission shall include: -

- a) *Establishing in such a manner as the Staff Commission thinks fit, bodies (to be known as “advisory appointment panels”) for the purpose of giving advice to councils on the suitability of applicants for appointment to the office of clerk and to other offices for which qualifications are prescribed under section 41 (including the making of a selection of persons who may be treated as eligible for such appointments);*
- b) *Establishing a code of procedure for securing fair and equal consideration of applications to councils and to the Executive<sup>1</sup> by persons seeking to be employed by them as officers, and fair and equal treatment of persons who are so employed;*
- c) *Assessing the probable future requirements of councils and of the Executive for the recruitment of officers and securing publicity for the opportunities that are available to persons who may seek employment as such officers;*
- d) *Promoting co-operation between councils, the Executive, public bodies, government departments and educational institutions in matters connected with the recruitment, training and terms and conditions of employment of officers, and promoting the temporary transfer of officers (with their consent) in pursuance of arrangements made between councils, between councils and the Executive or between councils or the Executive and any such bodies, departments or institutions;*
- e) *Promoting or assisting the development of, or providing, facilities for the training of officers;*
- f) *Promoting or assisting the establishment of, or establishing, procedures for the negotiation between councils, the Executive and officers of councils or the Executive or associations representing any of them, of standard rates of remuneration, or other terms and conditions of employment, for officers of councils or the Executive and recommending the adoption by councils and the Executive of rates, terms and conditions so negotiated.*

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<sup>1</sup> The term 'Executive' refers to the Northern Ireland Housing Executive.



**THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT STAFF COMMISSION  
FOR NORTHERN IRELAND**

**Commission House  
18-22 Gordon Street  
Belfast BT1 2LG**

**Tel: 028 9031 3200  
Fax: 028 9031 3151  
Typetalk: 18001 028 9031 3200  
Web: [www.lgsc.org.uk](http://www.lgsc.org.uk)**

