

Department of the Taoiseach

MAC Meeting

Monday, 8 October 2012.

Present: Martin Fraser, Geraldine Byrne Nason, John Callinan, Philip Hamell, John Shaw, Lorcan Fullam, Paul McGarry, Anthony Cummins.

There was no MAC meeting last week due to Cabinet Committee meetings.

A number of key priorities were discussed, including:

- EU issues and preparations for the EU Presidency - MAC noted the successful visit by the Taoiseach and a number of Ministers to the European Commission in Brussels last week;
- recent developments in relation to the Croke Park Agreement, including the recent Government decisions on allowances and the need to accelerate implementation of reform across the public service following the Taoiseach's recent letter to all Ministers;
- progress on the implementation of the Programme for Government - particularly issues relating to this Department.

MAC noted:

- the pressures on the Department's budget for 2012 and 2013 in a number of areas which will be monitored closely;
- the leadership development programme for senior managers will commence in November.

Anthony Cummins
Personnel Officer

Department of the Taoiseach

MAC Meeting

Monday, 15 October 2012.

Present: Martin Fraser, Geraldine Byrne Nason, John Callinan, Philip Hamell, John Shaw, Paul McGarry, Anthony Cummins.

Apologies:

Lorcan Fullam.

A number of key priorities were discussed, including:

- preparations for the 2013 Budget;
- EU issues, including the forthcoming EU Council meeting and ongoing preparations for the EU Presidency;
- the Taoiseach's successful visit to Philadelphia and Cleveland last week;
- recent developments in relation to the Croke Park Agreement;
- progress on the implementation of the elements of the Programme for Government for which the Department has responsibility.

MAC noted:

- that the Law Reform Commission has written to the Department (and Departments generally) seeking views in advance of formulating proposals for its Fourth Programme of Law Reform
- the continuing pressures on the Department's budget for 2012 and the need for managers to take responsibility for ensuring that budgetary limits are not exceeded and to remain in contact with the Finance Officer about relevant issues.

MAC agreed:

- Arrangements for a Staff Survey to be carried out in November in line with the commitment in the HR Strategy.

Anthony Cummins
Personnel Officer

Department of the Taoiseach

MAC Meeting

Monday, 22 October 2012.

Present: Martin Fraser, John Callinan, Philip Hamell, John Shaw, Lorcan Fullam, Paul McGarry, Anthony Cummins.

Apologies: Geraldine Byrne Nason.

A number of key priorities were discussed, including:

- EU developments;
- the meeting with the EU/IMF/ECB Troika earlier this morning;
- preparations for the 2013 Budget.

In relation to staffing issues, MAC noted a report on probation prepared by HR and agreed that managers are to arrange for completion of probationary reports for staff without delay and liaise closely with HR on any issues arising.

MAC agreed to discuss the issue of transparency at a meeting in the near future.

Anthony Cummins
Personnel Officer

Department of the Taoiseach

MAC Meeting

Thursday, 8 November 2012.

Present: Martin Fraser, John Callinan, Philip Hamell, John Shaw, Paul McGarry, Anthony Cummins.

Apologies: Geraldine Byrne Nason, Lorcan Fullam.

The following issues were discussed:

- leadership development training for MAC members and POs would be held on Monday next, 12 November. It was agreed that Human Resources would engage further on developmental training opportunities for other grades in addition to existing training activities;
- in line with the commitment in the HR Strategy and the ORP Action Plan, a series of staff consultation workshops have been arranged for 26 and 27 November. The workshops will be facilitated by staff from the Organisational Review Programme team in the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform. HR will circulate staff with details on the workshops shortly.
- MAC considered a report on sick leave and noted a significant reduction in the level of sick leave in the Department this year. An office notice incorporating a new Department of Public Expenditure and Reform circular on revised arrangements in relation to self certified (previously uncertified) sick leave will be circulated to staff shortly;
- the next quarterly general staff meeting will be held on 19 November at 11.00 a.m.

It was noted that preparations are in train for the first meeting of the Constitutional Convention on 1st December 2012. It was noted that Tom Arnold has been appointed by the Government as Chairperson of the Convention.

The Department's estimates for 2013 were discussed and the financial reports for the end of October were noted. It was agreed that expenditure to year end would continue to be monitored closely.

It was also noted that a freedom of information request had been received seeking copies of the minutes of MAC meetings from March 2011 to October 2012.

Anthony Cummins
Personnel Officer

Department of the Taoiseach

MAC Meeting

Monday, 19 November 2012.

Present: Martin Fraser, Geraldine Byrne Nason, John Callinan, Philip Hamell, John Shaw, Lorcan Fullam, Paul McGarry, Anthony Cummins.

The following issues were discussed:

- ongoing preparations for the EU Presidency;
- preparations for Budget 2013 and the Department's 2013 Estimates;
- training and development opportunities for staff. It was noted that a Clerical Officer development training course is taking place in early December.

Anthony Cummins
Personnel Officer

Department of the Taoiseach

MAC Meeting

Monday, 26 November 2012.

Present: Martin Fraser, Geraldine Byrne Nason, John Callinan, Philip Hamell, John Shaw, Lorcan Fullam, Paul McGarry, Anthony Cummins.

Apologies: John Callinan.

The following issues were discussed:

- preparations for Budget 2013;
- the Department's 2013 Estimates, which are being finalised;
- discussions on the EU Budget last week and preparations for the next meeting of the European Council in December;
- preparations for the EU Presidency;
- the Government's invitation to ICTU regarding discussions to improve productivity in the public service;
- the staff consultation workshops taking place this week.

MAC noted that the first meeting of the Constitutional Convention will be held on Saturday next, 1 December in Dublin Castle.

Anthony Cummins
Personnel Officer

Department of the Taoiseach

MAC Meeting

Monday, 3 December 2012.

Present: Martin Fraser, Geraldine Byrne Nason, John Callinan, Philip Hamell, John Shaw, Lorcan Fullam, Paul McGarry, Anthony Cummins.

MAC discussed:

- Preparations for Budget 2013;
- PMDS developments and changes to the system which will be introduced from next year. It was noted that Human Resources will be meeting Heads of Divisions with their teams next week to brief them on the main changes. A series of grade based information workshops will also be held in January.

MAC noted that the first meeting of the Constitutional Convention was held last Saturday, 1 December, in Dublin Castle.

MAC also noted a summary report from the Training Unit on the main training and development activities undertaken by the Department in 2012.

Anthony Cummins
Personnel Officer

Department of the Taoiseach

MAC Meeting

Wednesday, 19 December 2012.

Present: Martin Fraser, Geraldine Byrne Nason, John Callinan, Philip Hamell, Lorcan Fullam, Paul McGarry, Anthony Cummins.

Apologies: John Shaw.

MAC discussed:

- preparations for the EU Presidency, including the event to mark 40 years of Irish EU membership and the start of the Presidency;
- measures to increase transparency. Copies of the minutes of the IFSC Clearing House Group meetings have been made available on the website and further measures for pro-actively publishing information will be implemented in due course;
- progress on the implementation of the Department's HR Strategy;
- the need to for risk management to be covered as part of the business planning process, including updating the Department's Risk Register in the new year;
- the financial outturn for 2012.

MAC noted:

- the Department's Integrated Reform Plan which will be submitted to the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform shortly;
- a Clerical Officer development training course will be held in January.

It was also noted that the report by the Organisational Review Programme team on the recent staff consultation workshops is expected to be received in January.

Anthony Cummins
Personnel Officer