

LABOUR RELATIONS AGENCY PUBLICATION SCHEME 2009

Who we are and what we do

Organisational information, structures, locations and contacts.

- *Roles and responsibilities - both outline and detailed information about the NDPB's roles and responsibilities and the roles and responsibilities of those at senior level.*
- *Organisational structure - explanation of the internal structures of the NDPB referring to its functions and how the structure relates to the roles and responsibilities.*

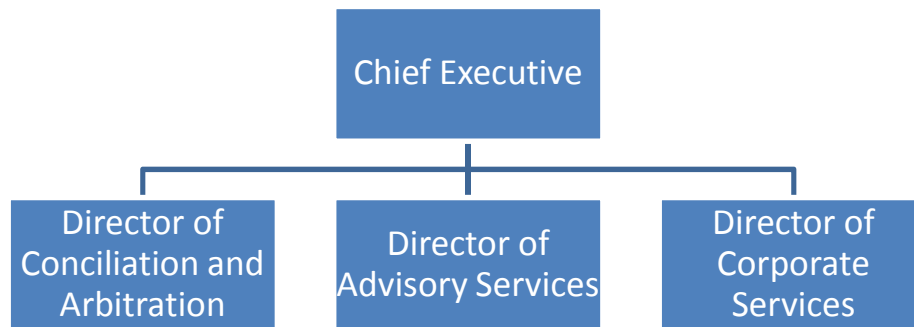
The Labour Relations Agency (the Agency) was established in 1976 as a Non-Departmental Public Body with responsibility for promoting the improvement of employment relations in Northern Ireland. The Agency is independent of Government and is funded mainly in the form of a grant from the Department for Employment and Learning (DEL).

The Agency provides an impartial and confidential employment relations service to those engaged in industry, commerce and the public services. The Agency's services include the provision of advice on good employment practices and assistance with the development and implementation of employment policies and procedures. The Agency is also active in resolving disputes through its conciliation, mediation and arbitration services.

The policy of the Agency is determined by a Board consisting of a part-time Chairman and nine other members appointed by DEL. Members of the Agency's Board are appointed on the basis of their knowledge of, and experience in, employment relations. The Board normally comprises members from employer bodies, trade unions or those who have a relevant academic or employment law background.

The Agency is managed by a Senior Management Team consisting of the Chief Executive, the Director of Corporate Services, the Director of Conciliation and Arbitration and the Director of Advisory Services. Each

Director is supported by staff on grades analogous to the Northern Ireland Civil Service grades, ranging from Clerical Assistant (the Civil Service Administrative Assistant grade) up to Employment Relations Manager (the Civil Services Deputy Principal grade).



- *Information relating to the legislation relevant to the authority's function, including both the basis of the NDPB's activities and any legislation for which it takes the lead*

The Labour Relations Agency was established in 1976 under the provisions of the Industrial Relations (Northern Ireland) Order, and its role and functions were confirmed by the Industrial Relations (Northern Ireland) Order 1992.

The Agency's over-riding remit is its statutory duty to promote the improvement of industrial relations. This includes the following specific functions:

Dispute Resolution - where the Agency anticipates that a dispute may occur it may take all steps which it considers appropriate for its mitigation.

Claims to the Industrial Tribunal or Fair Employment Tribunal – it is the duty of the Agency to endeavour to promote a settlement of a tribunal application without its being determined by a tribunal. A similar duty exists where a person claims that action has been taken in respect of which proceedings could be brought before a tribunal but no application has yet been lodged.

Arbitration - provide arbitration for the settling of disputes including developing schemes providing for arbitration in the case of disputes

involving proceedings, or claims which could be the subject of proceedings, before an industrial tribunal.

Conduct of collective bargaining - the Agency may review existing arrangements for the conduct of collective bargaining and may make recommendations to trade unions, employers and employers' associations concerning the introduction of arrangements for the conduct of collective bargaining or the improvement of existing arrangements.

Notification of procedural agreements - the Agency may request an employer to submit to it copies, or particulars, of procedural agreements to which he or she is a party and may receive and record such procedural agreements or particulars thereof.

Employment relations advice – it may, on request or otherwise, give employers, employers' associations, workers and trade unions such advice as it thinks appropriate on matters concerned with or affecting or likely to affect industrial relations.

Codes of Practice – it may issue Codes of Practice containing such practical guidance as the Agency thinks fit for the purpose of promoting the improvement of industrial relations.

Industrial Relations Training – the Agency may review arrangements for industrial relations training in Northern Ireland and advise employers, trade unions and DEL on training needs.

Industrial Relations Research – it may conduct research into any question relating to industrial relations generally or to industrial relations in any particular industry or in any particular undertaking or part of an undertaking.

- *Lists of and information relating to organisations with which the NDPB works in partnership - this information need be only sufficient for the purposes of identifying the relationship between these bodies and the NDPB, including the identity of the sponsoring government department.*

Department for Learning and Development – sponsoring government department

Northern Ireland Certification Office

Equality Commission

Invest Northern Ireland

Health and Safety Executive

Office of the Industrial Tribunals and Fair Employment Tribunal

NIC-ICTU

CBI

ACAS – Great Britain equivalent of LRA

Labour Relations Commission, Dublin

- *Senior staff and management; board members - identification of, responsibilities of and biographical details of those making strategic and operational decisions about the provision of the NDPB's services; any biographical details that are not work related should be published only with consent.*

THE LRA BOARD

See “About Us” section of website for the names of and biographical information on the current Board Members.

THE SENIOR MANAGEMENT TEAM

Chief Executive

William J Patterson

Directors

Penny Holloway, Director (Conciliation and Arbitration); David McGrath, Director (Advisory Services), Dr Gerry O'Neill, Director (Corporate Services)

- *The locations and contact details for the authority*

Head Office, 2-8 Gordon Street, Belfast BT1 2LG, Tel: 02890 321442

Regional Office, 1-3 Guildhall Street, Londonderry BT48 6BB, 02871 269639

Website address www.lra.org.uk

Email address info@lra.org.uk

Confidential e-mail address secretariat@lra.org.uk

What we spend and how we spend it

Financial information relating to projected and actual income and expenditure, procurement, contracts and financial audit.

We would expect as a minimum that financial information for the current and previous two financial years should be available.

- *Financial statements, budgets and variance reports*

Financial information in sufficient detail to allow the public to see where money is being spent, where it is or has been planned to spend it and the difference between one and the other. Annual, and where practicable shorter timescales, should be used i.e. half yearly or quarterly. We would expect revenue budgets and budgets for capital expenditure to be included.

- *Capital programme*

Information should be made available on major plans for capital expenditure including any public private partnership contracts.

- *Spending reviews*
- *Financial audit reports*
- *Staff and board members' allowances and expenses*

Quarterly budget variance report

Details of the allowances and expenses that can be claimed or incurred. It should include the total of the allowances and expenses, by reference to categories, paid to individual members of senior staff and management board members produced in line with the NDPB's policies. Categories will be such headings as travel, subsistence, accommodation.

- *Pay and grading structures – indicating levels of pay rather than individual salaries.*

Members of staff are employees of the Labour Relations Agency (which is not part of the Civil Service). However, they are appointed on grades analogous to the Northern Ireland Civil Service grades. The listing below shows the Agency's title first and the NICS equivalent in brackets:

Chief Executive (SCS 1)

Director (Grade 7)

Employment Relations Manager (Deputy Principal)

Employment Relations Officer (Staff Officer)

Executive Officer I (EOI)

Senior Personal Secretary (EOII)

Executive Officer II (EOII)

Clerical Officer (Administrative Officer)

Clerical Assistant (Administrative Assistant)

With the exception of claims within the normal NICS Travel and Subsistence rules, they are not in receipt of allowances and expenses.

- *Procurement procedures - details of procedures used for the acquisition of goods and services as well as contracts currently available for public tender.*

Lists of contracts awarded and their value – providing details of those that are of a sufficient size

Contracts over £5,000 for the previous four quarters

- *Financial statements for projects and events*

Where there are identifiable projects, we would expect to be covered by this scheme at least those financial reports which indicate actual expenditure against original project budget. The larger the project, the greater the detail that should be available. Similarly, where events are organised that are publicised, the cost of them should be available through this scheme.

- *Internal financial regulations*

Management Statement and Financial Memorandum

Financial and Operating Procedures Manual (includes Procurement)

Project Budget Performance Outturn (where applicable)

What are our priorities and how are we doing

Strategies and plans, performance indicators, audits, inspections and reviews for the current and previous three years – including reports demonstrating planned or actual performance.

- Strategic plans
- Annual business plan
- Annual report
- Internal and external performance reviews [if current]
- Reports to Parliament [if applicable]
- Inspection reports where the NDPB is subject to formal inspection [if applicable]
- Service standards [in summarised operational guidelines where applicable]
- Statistics produced in accordance with the NDPB's requirements [in Annual Report]
- Public service agreements [Not applicable]

How we make decisions

Decision making processes and records of decisions for the current and previous three years.

- *Major policy proposals and decisions – provided the information can be made available to the public without damaging international relations or internal policy development.*
- *Background information relating to major policy proposals and decisions – including facts, and analyses of facts, relevant and important to the framing of major policy proposals and decisions.*
- *Public consultations – including the consultation papers and the results of consultation exercises.*
- *Minutes of senior level meetings – including board minutes, management minutes, and the minutes of similar meetings where decisions are made about the provision of services, excluding material that is properly considered to be private, to be readily available to the public.*

Minutes of the Board Meetings

Minutes of the Board Sub-Committee Meetings

Minutes of the Senior Management Team Meetings

Reports and papers provided for consideration at senior level meetings

Information presented to those at meetings making executive decisions, excluding those elements properly considered to be private.

- *Internal communications guidance and criteria used for decision making i.e. process systems and key personnel*

Where access to internal instructions, manuals and guidelines for dealing with the business of the NDPB would assist public understanding of the way decisions are made these should be readily available. We would not expect information that might damage the operations of the NDPB to be revealed.

Papers referred to in the minutes

Our policies and procedures

Current written protocols, policies and procedures for delivering our services and responsibilities.

We would expect information in this class to be current information only.

- *Policies and procedures for the conduct of departmental business*
- *Policies and procedures for the provision of services*

Summary Operational Guidelines

Policies and procedures for the recruitment and employment of staff

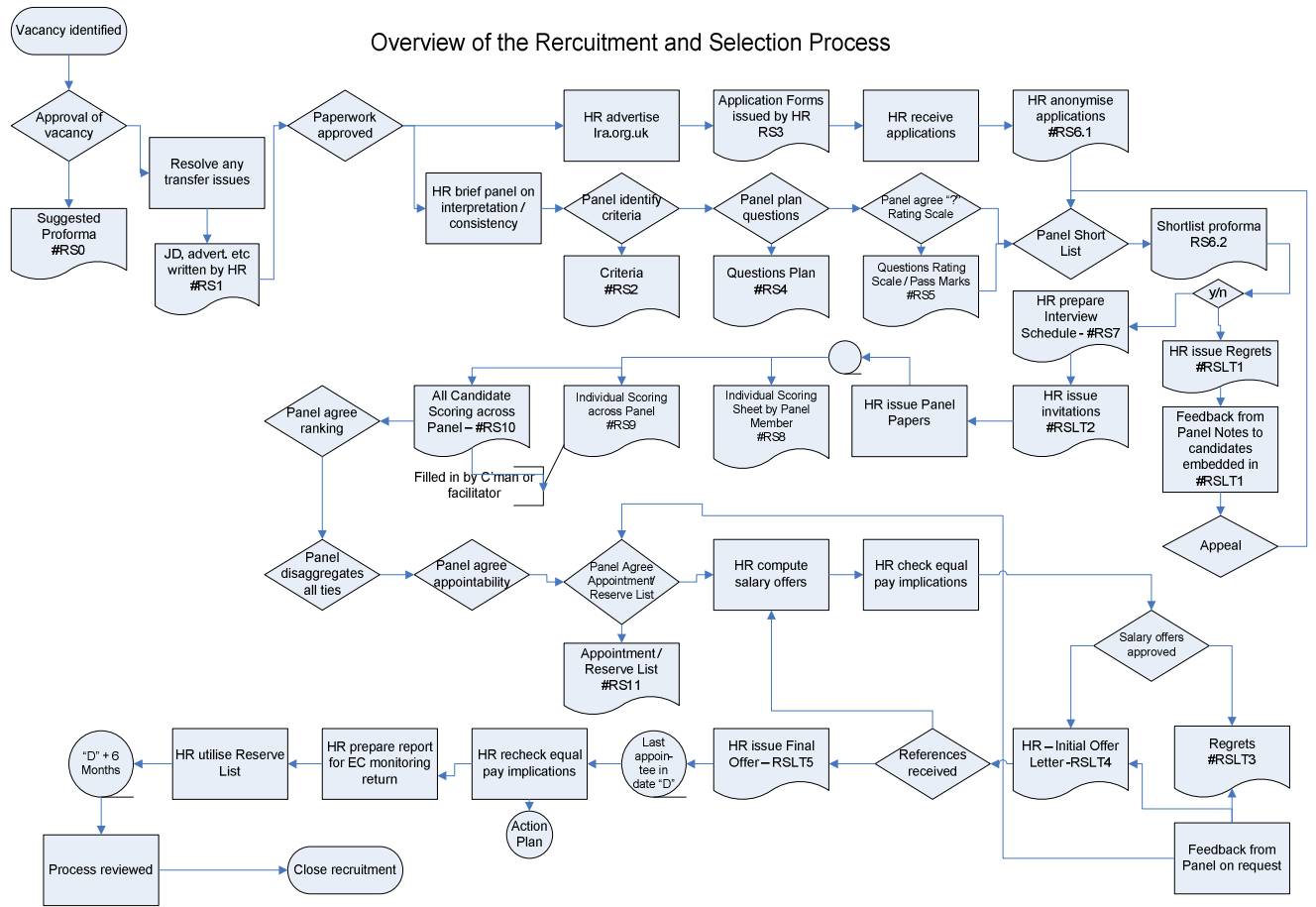
- *Codes of practice, memoranda of understanding and the like should be included. A number of policies, for example equality and diversity, health and safety, will cover both the provision of services and the employment of staff. The Equality Scheme/Statement published in accordance with the Northern Ireland Act 1998 should be included here. If vacancies are advertised as part of recruitment policies, details of current vacancies will be readily available. Policies and procedures for handling information requests should be included.*

Customer service

- *Standards for the provision of services to the NDPB's customers, including the complaint procedure. Complaints procedures will include those covering requests for information and operating the publication scheme.*

Records management and personal data policies

- *This will include information security policies, records retention, destruction and archive policies, and data protection (including data sharing) policies.*



Disability Action Plan

Facilities Agreement

Freedom of Information Policy and Procedures

Guidelines on the Acceptance of Gifts and Hospitality

Whistleblowing Policy

Fraud Policy

Discipline Procedure

Customer Complaints Procedure

Grievance Policy and Procedure

Harassment Policy and Procedure

Equal Opportunities Policy
Code of Conduct for Staff
Code of Best Practice for Board Members
Recruitment Selection and Transfer
Evacuation on Receipt of Fire Warning HQ
Health and Safety Policy
Internet Usage Policy
Equality Scheme
Memorandum of Understanding Certification Office
Data Protection
Training and Development Policy Office
Performance Management System
Flexi System
Time Off for Public Duties
Involvement in Political Activities
Payment for Professional Fees
NIPSA Recognition Agreement

- *Charging regimes and policies*

Details of any statutory charging regimes should be provided. Charging policies should include charges made for information routinely published and clearly state what costs are to be recovered together with the basis on which they are made and how they are calculated.

The services of the Labour Relations Agency are available free of charge.

Lists and registers

We would expect information in this class to be current information only.

- *Public registers and registers held as public records.*

Where an NDPB is obliged to maintain a register and to make the information in it available for inspection by the public, it is accepted that in most circumstances the existing provisions covering access will suffice. We would expect however that NDPBs do publicise which public registers they hold and how the information in them is to be made public. Where registers contain personal information, NDPBs must ensure that this is protected by the data protection principles.

- *Asset registers and Information Asset Register*

We would not expect NDPBs to publish all details from all asset registers. We would expect some information from capital asset registers to be available. If a council has prepared an information asset register for the Re-use of Public Sector Information Regulations 2005, it should publish the contents.

Information Asset Register

- *Disclosure logs*

Where an NDPB produces a disclosure log indicating the information that has been provided in response to request it should be readily available. Disclosure logs are themselves recommended as good practice.

- *Register of gifts and hospitality provided to Board members and senior personnel*
- *Any register of interests kept in the department*
- *Other lists required by law*

Anonymised Register of Gifts and Hospitality

Registers cleared for Data Protection Purposes

Anonymised Register of Staff Interests

The Services we offer

Information about the services currently provided including leaflets, guidance and newsletters produced - including details of the services which are provided by the NDPB, internationally, nationally and locally; list the services that fall within the responsibility of the NDPB, linked to details of the following:

- *Regulatory responsibilities*
- *Services for public authorities*
- *Services for industry*
- *Services for other organisations*
- *Services for members of the public*
- *Services for which the NDPB is entitled to recover a fee together with those fees*
- *Leaflets, booklets and newsletters*
- *Advice and guidance*
- *Media releases*

Note: already in main body of www.lra.org.uk