

CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION

BOARD of COMMISSIONERS Meeting MINUTES

Monday 10 June 2024 1.30pm - 5pm
Location: 1 Horse Guards Road, SW1A 2HQ London

Attendees:

Baroness Gisela Stuart	First Civil Service Commissioner	Chair
Kate Owen	Interim Chief Executive Officer	Board Member
Joanna Abeyie	Commissioner	Board Member
Stephen Cohen	Commissioner	Board Member
Sarah Pittam	Commissioner	Board Member
Lea Paterson	Commissioner	Board Member
Paul Gray	Commissioner	Board Member
Elizabeth Walmsley	Commissioner	Board Member
Neil Wooding	Commissioner	Board Member
Tony Poulter	Commissioner	Board Member
Elizabeth Hambley	Commissioner	Board Member
Paul Kernaghan	Commissioner	Board Member
Martin Spencer	Commissioner	Board Member

Apologies: Chris Pilgrim, Commissioner and Board Member.

1) Cat Little, Permanent Secretary, Cabinet Office

1.1) Cat Little outlined her initial impressions on her new role and the wider health of the Civil Service, including from the perspectives of morale, ways of working and size. Cat covered the importance of the Commission and of maintaining its impartiality.

1.2) The discussion covered how to attract people from the private sector into the Civil Service, the future strategic purpose of the CSC, and departmental leadership. The Board also discussed working with a new government, the External by Default policy, and assessment methods.

1.3) Cat and the Board agreed to ongoing future engagement, including on how to

develop a greater consultative relationship between Commissioners and the Cabinet Office.

2) Civil Service Commission strategy

2.1) This was the second in a series of discussions about the Commission's strategy, focusing particularly on the CSC's regulatory role.

2.2) The Board discussed regulatory models and how current CSC functions fit into conventional frameworks. This included the Commission's regulatory levers, the need to define intended impacts, and current levels of departmental compliance.

2.3) The Board discussed the current recruitment landscape and the CSC's role. Commissioners raised a range of levers available to the Commissioners to influence processes. Discussion covered the External by Default policy and the Commission's role in relation to overseeing its implementation and impact. This relates to the thematic review that the CSC has recently launched.

2.4) The Board discussed the scope of the Commission's role in relation to recruitment and the Civil Service Code.

2.5) The Board discussed the Commission's recruitment regulatory scope, including which elements of the process fall into the Commission's sphere of direct regulation and others where it has more of an influencing role.

2.6) The Chief Executive outlined steps ahead of the next meeting, which will include scoping of outputs, outcomes and intended impacts.

3) Chair's update

3.1) The Chair outlined apologies and changes to the register of interest. The Board approved the minutes from the May meeting.

3.2) The Chair provided the following updates:

- Work is ongoing to develop a new CSC communications strategy and updated website.
- Implications for General Election, including competition allocations and work on briefings for incoming ministerial teams.
- Recruitment of the Chief Executive to the Civil Service Commission.
- The new Joint Operations Committee will meet for the first time in September.

4) CEO update

4.1) The CEO updated on secretariat headcount and recruitment. Recruitment is underway for a number of roles and there had been good use of reserve lists to fill vacancies.

4.2) Four departmental audits have taken place so far, with a further four to follow ahead of the first moderation meeting in July. Departments have largely engaged positively with the process. The complaints caseload remains similar to other

months.

4.3) Priorities for the upcoming period included finalisation of the Framework Agreement, ongoing secretariat recruitment, and working through implications of the July election.

5) GDPR

5.1) The Board was reminded about the difference between personal and special category data and how they should process this data as part of their role in chairing competitions and writing the panel report.

5.2) Also covered was the issue of consent and situations where personal information may reveal special category information.

6) Individual Leadership Assessments (ILAs) and Stakeholder Engagement Exercises (SEEs)

6.1) An overview was given on assessments including ILAs and SEEs. Commissioners were interested in how these assessments could be made more accessible for external candidates.

6.2) Commissioners discussed the use of the assessments, and how they should be recorded in their panel reports.