

Management Board Meeting Minutes

(Held by Webex)

Monday 07 February 2022 at 10.30pm

Attendance: Secretary General (Kevin McCarthy); Bernie McNally; Dermot Ryan; Carol Baxter; Laura McGarrigle and Anne-Marie Brooks.

Miriam Kenna reporting.

1. Minutes of Last Meeting

The minutes of meeting of 24 January 2022 were agreed with minor amendments.

2. Matters Arising

It was noted that, with regard to Justice taking responsibility for DSGBV, a joint memo for information would go to Government on the 15 Feb 2022 on the publication of Tusla's Accommodation Review.

3. Spending Review proposal

Anna Visser joined the meeting for this item. Papers had been circulated prior to the meeting. She asked the MB for their approval for a Spending Review focusing on Tusla funding for community and voluntary sector Family Support services.

She outlined the key points of such a spending review, including: engagement with Tusla;; and to consider framing the review according to the government's 'Well-being Framework for Ireland' (published July, 2021).

The next steps if approved are: to meet with the relevant policy colleagues; to meet with the Vote Section (DPER) and Central IGEES Unit regarding project scope; prepare a scoping document; to establish a mechanism to ensure ongoing engagement with the relevant policy officials in the DCEDIY and Tusla throughout the development of the Review. AV also reported on a separate pilot review of government wide spending on children which REU are progressing and which could potentially also be included as a formal spending review proposal.

After a discussion MB agreed to the proposals as set out.

MB thanked Anna and her team for their work on this.

4. Return to the Workplace/blended working update

DR said that staff had received communications containing FAQ's and arrangements with regard to returning to the office from today on a one day a week basis which would increase to 2 days from March. The department's blended working policy is being developed. A framework paper is due to be issued from DPER shortly.

Ergonomic assessments are continuing for staff working at home.

It was noted that there would be challenges involved, accountability will be crucial.

L&D training and support would be available for managers.

KMcC gave an update from the CSMB on "Flexi Accrual for Blended workers".

He said that there were 3 options proposed:

- 1: No flexitime accrual for staff with a blended working arrangement
- 2: Flexitime accrual for all staff, irrespective of location (either full or partial accrual)
- 3: Flexitime accrual for staff in the office only.

CSMB had agreed that as part of their blended working policy, each department would opt for one of these approaches for a twelve month trial and would commit to sharing learnings with the centre with a view to agreeing a single long term civil service wide approach for the long term.

MB discussed the merits of each option, and agreed on the importance of not distinguishing between work performed in remote and office settings. The importance of positioning the department as an employer of choice was noted as was the importance of signals relating to trust in staff and the value attributed to their work irrespective of location.

It was agreed that further consideration would be given when finalising the department's blended working policy which will be the subject of an in depth MB discussion with HR in the near future.

5. For noting

The papers circulated under this heading were noted, including the brief updates supplied by MB members.

MB outlined some of the key issues:

CB said that there would be a meeting with DoH and the HSE with regard to health services for people coming into the refugee system.

CB said that Ireland has been selected with seven other EU Member States to participate in a EU-funded programme to strengthen the Government's capacity to undertake gender mainstreaming. The programme called TSI will run from June 2022 for two years. DCEDIY will coordinate Ireland's participation in the programme.

It was noted that Minister will attend the Select Committee on 8th February accompanied by Dermot Ryan, Laura McGarrigle, Carol Baxter, Anne-Marie Brooks and Gordon Gaffney.

6. AOB

No AOB at this time.

7. Next Meeting

The next MB meeting was confirmed for Monday 21 February 2022 at 10.30pm. It is proposed that this meeting take place in person.