

Action Plan - Public Service Agreement - Local Authority Sector – 28 March, 2012.

This document should be read in conjunction with the collated action plan for local authorities. In this regard, following on from the finalisation of this overarching plan each local authority is drawing up its own individual action plan and will engage in a consultative process at local level. Local authority plans will be finalised by end April 2012 at which point the collated plan for all 34 local authorities will be prepared and will accompany this plan.

The Public Service Agreement 2010 – 2014 (PSA) is an agreement between management and trade unions representing public sector workers and is designed to ensure the delivery of excellent public services in the context of the reduction in public sector numbers. It has been accepted by the parties that efficiencies will need to be maximised and productivity in the use of resources greatly increased through revised work practices, innovations and other initiatives, in return for commitments in relation to pay and security of employment.

This next phase of the Action Plan represents the specific efficiencies and productivity measures which local authority management will be implementing at sectoral level under the second reporting period of the Agreement. Again the Action Plan is designed to take into account the dynamic feature of the process under the PSA and, as with the previous Action Plan, this Plan will include the revision, addition to and expansion of the change/reform/ modernisation proposals, particularly, but not limited to decisions taken in the context of public sector/local government reform and the Local Government Efficiency Review Implementation Group.

As previously, it is intended that this Action Plan will be submitted to the Implementation Body following consultation with the trade unions representing the sector through the Local Authority Implementation Committee. Where disagreement on implementation on any element of the Plan arises, the matter will be dealt with in accordance with paragraphs 1.23 and 1.24 of the PSA.

Where disagreement on implementation on any element of the Plan arises at local level, the matter will be dealt with in accordance with paragraphs 1.23 and 1.24 of the PSA.

Restructuring	Paragraph of Agreement	Benefits	Timeframe
Delivery of services and implementation of necessary measures / efficiencies in service delivery in the context of the significant reduction in staff levels across the sector.	1.1 5.4	1.4 Ensure delivery of services in the context of reduced staff levels	Throughout the duration of the agreement
Implementation of revised staffing structures, which take account of the reduction in staff numbers and the recommendations of the Local Government Efficiency Review Group Report, additional Local Government reforms, including the broadening of the local tax base, e.g. household charge. This will be achieved by, <i>inter alia</i> , the rationalisation of services and service delivery through shared services, joint approaches or other collaborative arrangements, the use of National Procurement Service arrangements and redeployment.	1.1 1.10 5.12	1.4 5.4 Ensure delivery of services in the context of a progressive reduction in staff numbers	Throughout the duration of the Agreement
<i>NB See also reference to work force planning under productivity and performance below.</i>			
Implementation of the Government's decisions in relation to local government structures, at regional, county, and sub county level, including merger of certain county/ city councils already determined by government. Consultation will take place on the effects for staff at local or national level, as appropriate.	1.3	1.9 Greater efficiencies in the delivery of services	Throughout the duration of the Agreement
The Department of Environment, Community and Local government now incorporates the "Community" function while Heritage function has been transferred out. A steering Group was established to oversee the alignment of functions in the Community Division of the Department with local authorities. Its interim report was published in December 2011 and the final report is due in early 2012.			

<p>Decisions have so far been made in respect of revised local authority structures in Limerick and Tipperary and consideration of Waterford. As further decisions are made they will be incorporated into the plan as appropriate. The latest position in relation to decisions already made is as follows:</p> <p>Limerick - The Implementation Group is due to complete their deliberations by mid 2012 with the production of an Implementation Plan leading to the establishment of the unitary authority in 2014.</p> <p>Tipperary - The Implementation Group submitted a Progress Report on 29 November 2011. The Group has been asked to complete its deliberations by 31 May 2012 with the production of an Implementation Plan to direct the completion of the implementation process up to the establishment of the unified authority in mid-2014.</p> <p>Waterford - A Local Government Committee was established to carry out a review of local government arrangements in Waterford its report is expected before end April 2012.</p>			
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<p>The rationalisation of State agencies / functions in, and or with, the local government sector to maximise the potential to deliver services through the local authority structures and infrastructures, and using innovative collaborative models.</p> <p>The Local Government Management Agency (which amalgamates the Local Government Management Services Board and the Local Government Computer Services Board) will assume some functions of An Chomhairle Leabharlanna.</p> <p>County Enterprise Boards – The Governments Jobs Strategy contains a new approach for small and micro enterprises. New One Stop Shops will mean dissolution of CEBs, the creation of a new dedicated unit for small and micro businesses in Enterprise Ireland and the creation of Local Enterprise Offices in each local authority.</p>	5.3	5.7	<p>Greater efficiencies in the delivery of services</p> <p>Throughout the duration of the Agreement</p>
<p>Implementation of the Government decision on establishment of a water utility and all associated measures and requirements.</p> <p>The six week period of the public consultation on water sector reforms ended on 24 February 2012. The submissions received will be considered in developing the implementation plan for the transition of water services functions from the city and county councils to the public water utility, Irish Water, as recommended in the independent assessment provided for in the agreement with the EU/IMF/ECB. It is expected that this implementation plan will be finalised in April 2012. The views will also inform the further development of the approach to water metering and charging.</p>	5.6	Service Delivery Options	<p>Greater efficiencies in the delivery of services</p> <p>Throughout the duration of the Agreement</p>
<p>The National Directorate for Fire and Emergency Management and local authorities will bring forward a framework for keeping communities safe which will set out principles and national standards for fire services operations, together with other measures to improve effectiveness and efficiency. Consultation will take place on the effects for staff at local or national level, as appropriate. It is expected that national consultation will commence in qtr 1 2012 and be completed by qtr 2 2012.</p>	1.4 5.4	Greater efficiencies in the delivery of services	<p>Throughout the duration of the Agreement</p>

Shared Services	Paragraph of Agreement	Benefits	Timeframe
<p>It is acknowledged that there will be a more efficient use of resources through the use of shared services. It is recognised that some of these efficiencies will be achieved within the short to medium term. It is accepted that the use of shared services will have implications for staff, including, but not limited to, office and staff relocations, reassignments and/or redeployment.</p> <p>An initial feasibility study in a number of areas will take place in order to ascertain areas/services where efficiencies may best be achieved. Where management decide to proceed, implementation will take place in accordance with the provisions of the Agreement.</p> <p>This List of projects is illustrative but not exhaustive:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internal Audit; • Occupational Health/Staff welfare; • Planning specialisation – heritage – Appropriate Assessment – Strategic Environmental Assessment etc.; • Library – purchasing – or HQ functions of ordering, distribution and stock control; • Public lighting; • Septic tanks – once legislative position is clarified; • Housing assessment; • Housing related inspections – PTRB – RAS – etc.; • Bring banks – operation and servicing; • Debt management; • Paid parking – meter maintenance – cash collection – fine management; • Irish officers; • Veterinary services. • National Waste Permit Office (Qtr 1 2012). <p>Initial scoping reports will be completed and evaluated in quarter 1 2012 following which an implementation plan identifying lead authorities and timeframes will be agreed in quarter 2 2012 for immediate progression.</p>	<p>1.11 5.4</p> <p>5.5 5.8</p>	Enhanced and fully co-ordinated delivery of services by local authorities.	Initial studies to be completed by end January, 2012, and roll-out during 2012
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Rationalisation of Motor Taxation Offices, including within and between local authorities and alternative means of service delivery. The greater use of on-line payments and the reduction in paper based transactions with resultant savings.	1.10 5.12	Maximise productivity and more efficient use of resources in the sector	Throughout the duration of the Agreement and taking account of decisions of government as appropriate
	Paragraph of	Benefits	Timeframe

Procurement	Agreement		
<p>Implementation of projects aimed at maximising economies of scale in procurement and purchasing at local, regional, national and cross sectoral levels, including as appropriate, the use of National Procurement Service arrangements (for example, energy saving, public lighting, print management, equipment and advertising) and including, but not restricted to the areas identified in the report of the Local Government Efficiency Review Group.</p> <p>Specifically in the context of this Action Plan, the County and City Manager's Association (CCMA) has established a National Local Authority Procurement Group (NLAPG) to oversee the implementation of a local authority procurement strategy. A national co-ordinator has been appointed to lead a small dedicated unit that has been put in place in the LGMA to assist the implementation of the Strategy.</p> <p>The objectives of this national group include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the roll-out of regional procurement networks; • investigate and identify opportunities for procurement aggregation at regional and national level; • to co-ordinate the response of the sector to policy/regulatory developments in the area of procurement; • to oversee work on the quantification of savings achieved across the sector in the area of procurement; • to represent the sector in dealings with national agencies (incl. Govt Departments, NPS, NPPPU, SEAI etc); • to maximise the use of NPS Framework Agreements, where appropriate, by local authorities. • to continue to develop and roll out streamlined procurement initiatives e.g. Low Value Purchase Cards. <p>The Strategy will promote increased co-operation between local authorities at regional level by establishing a number of Regional Procurement Networks in order to realise administrative savings in the area of procurement, exploit the potential for economies of demand aggregation between local authorities at a regional level, where this is appropriate and not in conflict with use of NPS Framework Agreements and to promote best practice at regional level.</p> <p>Implementation of the strategy will have implications for staff, including, but not limited to, office staff relocations, reassignments and/or redeployment.</p>	5.10	Maximising economies of scale in procurement and purchasing	Throughout the duration of the Agreement and taking account of decisions of government as appropriate

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e-Government	Paragraph of Agreement	Benefits	Timeframe
In order to reduce costs and increase efficiencies, the sector will move to open source software and engage in government-level cloud computing. In addition, Line Of Business applications (e.g. Electoral Register, Housing, Planning, Pavement Management System, e-invoicing, Low Value Purchase Cards, Financial Management System, Core HPS, etc) will be common across the sector, be centrally hosted and use common data sets where technically and economically appropriate. Data harvested will be spatially enabled to a common standard and made open where feasible. Social media will continue to be harnessed as a tool with which to interact with the public. An implementation plan will to be formulated by end qtr 3 2012. Benefits will accrue throughout the duration of the agreement and taking account of decisions of government as appropriate.	1.10 5.12	Reduction in ICT capital and operating costs, the adoption of common standards across the sector and the creation of value from the data captured in the course of the sector's activities.	Implementation Plan 2012 with implementation throughout the duration of the Agreement.
The development of a shared payroll service in the local authority sector. A shared service payroll process arrangement will be in place by qtr 2 2012 and a detailed evaluation of the possibility of moving to a unified payroll system for the sector will be completed examining the legal,, taxation/Revenue and HR/IR implications by the end of 2012 .	1.11 5.5	Create efficiencies and cost savings, increased productivity and better use of resources	Throughout the duration of the agreement
Redeployment	Paragraph of Agreement	Benefits	Timeframe
<p>Redeployment will take place in accordance with the Agreement. <i>(Note: It is not intended that the redeployment scheme should supersede or in any way restrict or hinder normal reassignment/transfer of staff within an individual local authority. The assignment of staff remains a matter for the Manager and staff will cooperate fully with local mobility procedures and/or existing practices.)</i></p> <p>Implementation of the use of shared services and the advancement of procurement initiatives will have implications for staff, including, but not limited to, office and staff relocations, reassignments and/or redeployment.</p>	6.5.1 - 6.5.18 1.7 1.8	Facilitate the meeting of staffing requirements by absorbing surplus staff within the sector and across the public service	Throughout the duration of the Agreement

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Productivity & Performance					Paragraph of Agreement	Benefits	Timeframe
Review traditional working arrangements i.e. hours of duty/attendance with a view to introducing new flexible working arrangements that suit the customer and the organisation and reduce the requirement for overtime payments.					1.4 5.16 5.18	Create efficiencies and cost savings, increased productivity and better use of resources	Throughout the duration of the Agreement
Amalgamation and relocation of local authority facilities and resources including maintenance depots and other local authority outlets or operational facilities, for operational reasons. Implementation of this action will have implications for staff, including, but not limited to, office and staff relocations, reassignments and/or redeployment. More details will be available in the collated local authority plan in April 2012.					1.10 5.4	Create efficiencies and better use of resources	Throughout the duration of the Agreement
Reductions in staffing levels envisaged through the Employment Control Framework.					1.5 5.4 1.10	Ensure delivery of services in the context of a progressive reduction in staff numbers	Throughout the duration of the Agreement and taking account of decisions of government as appropriate
	ECF (WTE)	Staff per quarterly return (WTE)	Incentivised career Break per quarterly return.	Total (WTE)			
December 2011	30,250	29,470.32	273.8	29,744.12			
March 2012							
June 2012							
September 2012							
December 2012	29,980						
December 2013	29,980						
December 2014	29,730						
December 2015	29,480						
A work force planning process is underway which in the first instance concentrates on the implementation of the recommendations of the LGERG in respect of senior management in local authorities. The initial report will be completed in qtr. 1 2012.							
Standardisation of annual leave across the sector (grade specific).					1.8 5.16	Create equity, facilitate redeployment, increase productivity and cost savings	To be advised
Standardisation of payment systems, methods etc for Retained Fire-fighters, to ensure the most efficient and effective use of resources.					1.4 5.18	To deliver greater efficiencies and provide for the better use of fire service	July, 2012

		resources	
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Standardisation of 35 hour working week across clerical/admin/engineering/technical and related grades (this does not apply to grades who already are required to work in excess of 35 hour week as part of their current conditions of employment).	1.4	5.18	Ensure standard working arrangements across the sector April 2012
Better management and standardisation of flexitime in order to manage continuity of service and peak demands and to effect pay bill savings.	5.16	Better management of continuity of service and peak demands and to effect pay bill savings	Throughout the duration of the agreement
National Performance Management and Development initiatives: Modify existing PMDS process in line with recommendations of the National PMDS review. Implement Local Authority Competency Framework Link to other HR policies, including the linking of incremental progression and promotion to PMDS, providing a methodology for recognising staff who perform well and handling underperformance.	5.17	Create a more effective performance management system which enables staff to deliver corporate objectives, promotes individual accountability and improves service delivery	Dec 2011 Dec2012 Model to be designed by end Q2. 2012 and roll out to follow.