

**Department of Finance and
Personnel**

**Departmental Management
Board**

Terms of Reference

Index

	Page
Introduction	3
Membership	3
Remit of the Board	4
Meetings	5
Conduct	5
Review / Evaluation	6
Annex A – The Seven Principles of Public Life	7

1. Introduction

- 1.1. The functions of the Department of Finance and Personnel are exercised at all times subject to the direction and control of the Minister
- 1.2. The Responsibilities of the Permanent Secretary as Accounting Officer are set out in Managing Public Money NI which provides that he/she has personal responsibility for the overall organisation, management and staffing of the Department and for Departmental wide procedures, where these are appropriate, in financial and other matters. As part of the overall organisation, and in order to support the Minister, the Permanent Secretary as the Principal Accounting Officer has the assistance of the Departmental Management Board (the Board).
- 1.3. The Board exists to develop the Department's strategic plans and to assist the Permanent Secretary to meet his responsibilities. The Board is a core element of corporate governance arrangements, agreeing the range of other governance elements and, through its scrutiny role, overseeing the policies, plans and effectiveness of those other elements.
- 1.4. The policy of the Department is determined by the Minister. The Board is responsible for supporting the Permanent Secretary in ensuring that the Department's resources and corporate governance arrangements are directed towards the delivery of the policy objectives and priorities as determined by the Minister.

2. Membership

- 2.1 The Board is chaired by the Permanent Secretary of the Department, who is responsible for the appointment of all Board Members and the appraisal of their performance. Membership will normally comprise:
 - Permanent Secretary (Chair)
 - Corporate Services Group Director
 - Central Personnel Group Director
 - Central Procurement Division Director
 - Public Spending Director
 - Financial Management and Accountability Director
 - Departmental Solicitor
 - Chief Executive of the Land and Property Services
 - Chief Executive of the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency
 - Director of Finance
 - Director of Personnel
 - Two Independent Board Members

The Head of the Central Support Team, the Principal Information Officer and the Board Secretary will normally attend all meetings.

- 2.2 There should be a formal, rigorous and transparent procedure for appointing new non-executive members of the Board (officials are appointed by virtue of their post). Appointments should be made on merit and against objective criteria, in line with guidance in Corporate Governance in central government departments: Code of Good Practice. On joining the Board, all new members should receive proper induction in the Board's responsibilities and procedures.

3. Remit of the Board:

- 3.1. Under the general direction and control of the Minister, the Board's remit will be to:
- develop the strategic direction for the Department, including its mission, vision, values and strategic objectives and oversee the implementation of the Department's strategic and business plans, including its contribution to the Programme for Government, Budget, Public Service Agreements. Investment Strategy and NI Public Service reforms;
 - develop, promote and oversee the implementation of the Minister's policies and programmes in line with the Department's strategic direction;
 - monitor performance against corporate plans, budgets and targets and assessing and managing the strategic risk to delivery;
 - oversee the strategic management of the Department's staff, finance, information, and physical resources, including setting training and health and safety priorities;
 - establish and oversee the implementation of the Department's corporate governance arrangements, including risk management.
 - consider any other matters as deemed appropriate.
- 3.2 The Board should discuss issues that have departmental wide implications, or are cross cutting in nature, or are novel and/or contentious. The range of matters reserved for the Board's consideration include:
- Annual resource allocations (priorities and budget/spending reviews);
 - Efficiency Plans
 - Departmental resource monitoring/Financial Control Reports;
 - Corporate risks;
 - Resource accounts and annual report;
 - Corporate human resources/planning;
 - Corporate accommodation matters;

- Matters affecting corporate accountability;
- Corporate business plans;
- Corporate performance (Public Service Agreements and other Business Plan targets);
- Corporate communications/public relations issues;
- Corporate governance arrangements/issues;
- Department-wide or major initiatives;
- Cross-departmental issues;
- Assembly/Executive Committee Business.

3.3 Day-to-day operational matters will be the responsibility of the Directors and Heads of Division. The Board will not usually direct any of its Executive Members on how their business areas should be run.

4. Meetings

4.1 The Board will normally meet once a month.

4.2 In the absence of a Board Member, a deputy is not to be substituted. If the Permanent Secretary is absent, he or she will nominate another member of the Board to chair that particular meeting.

4.3 Meetings normally take place on the first Monday of each month. The Permanent Secretary agrees the agenda in advance with input from individual Board Members. The DFP Operational Plan is the primary tool for determining the issues to which the Board should devote its attention.

4.4 The Board Secretary maintains a Business Diary which is used to plan the agendas for future Board meetings. This Business Diary is circulated among Board members periodically for them to update, and is reviewed regularly at the weekly Stocktake meeting.

4.5 Guidance on the correct formatting of Board papers is available (see Annex B). It is the responsibility of individual Board Members to ensure that all papers they bring to the Departmental Board comply fully with this guidance.

4.6 Papers for consideration by the Board are required to be with the Board Secretary five working days prior to a meeting for distribution to attendees.

4.7 If, exceptionally, urgent decisions are required between Board meetings, the issue may be dealt with by correspondence.

4.8 The business conducted at the Board, together with decisions reached and actions required, are recorded in minutes prepared by the Board Secretary.

- 4.9 Approved minutes are published under the publication scheme on the Department's website

5. Conduct

- 5.1 When discussing issues that affect the whole Department, each member of the Board has a responsibility to act in the best interests of the Department as a whole.
- 5.2 Executive Members are be expected to take a corporate view of issues ahead of their specific business area interests, insofar as this is not inconsistent with Accounting Officer responsibilities, to rigorously examine and challenge all corporate issues before the Board and to do so in a constructive way.
- 5.3 Independent Members are expected to:
- provide constructive challenge across the Board's business;
 - provide a fresh, objective perspective and new ideas;
 - seek to improve the rigour of Board processes;
 - bring their specific expertise and experience to board discussions;
- 5.4 Board members are expected to act in accordance with the principles of public service as set out in the Seven Principles of Public Life (Annex A).

6. Review/ Evaluation

- 6.1 The Board will formally consider its remit, constitution and operating procedures every three years, unless an earlier review is considered necessary.
- 6.2 Membership will be reviewed annually in relation to the balance of skills, training needs, succession management and talent development.
- 6.3 The Permanent Secretary is responsible for reviewing the performance of the non- Executive Board Members.

ANNEX A

The Seven Principles of Public Life

Selflessness

Holders of public office should take decisions solely in terms of the public interest. They should not do so in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends.

Integrity

Holders of public office should not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might influence them in the performance of their official duties.

Objectivity

In carrying out public business, including making public appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards and benefits, holders of public office should make choices on merit.

Accountability

Holders of public office are accountable for their decisions and actions to the public and must submit themselves to whatever scrutiny is appropriate to their office.

Openness

Holders of public office should be as open as possible about all the decisions and actions that they take. They should give reasons for their decisions and restrict information only when the wider public interest clearly demands.

Honesty

Holders of public office have a duty to declare any private interests relating to their public duties and to take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interests.

Leadership

Holders of public office should promote and support these principles by leadership and example.

Administration of DFP Departmental Board

Setting the Agenda

- The Board Secretary maintains a business diary which is used for planning the Board agenda. The Department's Balanced Scorecard is the primary tool for identifying areas on which the Board should focus.. In addition, items can be added to the agenda at the Permanent Secretary's request or at the request of an individual Board member.
- The business diary will be circulated to Board members periodically to allow them to review its contents and add additional items.
- The agenda for forthcoming Board meetings will also be discussed regularly at Stocktake meetings.
- The agenda for each meeting will be agreed by the Permanent Secretary in advance of each meeting

Board Papers

- Board Papers should be as succinct as possible.
- The purpose of a Board paper should be clearly stated, including whether the paper is for information, or if it will require discussion.
- Key points of papers should be summarised in the "Issues" section on the front of the paper, or in an Executive Summary if appropriate. Additional/ supplementary information should be included in Annexes where possible rather than in the body of the paper.
- Papers should include recommendations which make clear what action is required from the Board.
- The "FOI Implications" field on the front of each paper must be accurately filled in. If necessary, Board papers should be referred to the Business Area Information Manager (BAIM) to ensure that this is properly completed.
- All Board papers must be stored in the correct TRIM container – Strategic Management – Meetings – Departmental Board – Papers. Readership of papers should be restricted to GRP_DB Members. The Board Secretary should have readership and editorship of all papers.
- The Board Secretary will assign paper numbers to each Board Paper.

- Papers should be provided to the Board Secretary at least 5 working days before Board meeting. The Board Secretary will circulate papers at least three working days before the meeting.

A template for the formatting of Board Papers is included at Appendix 1

Follow- up from Board meetings

- The Board Secretary will take the minutes of each Board meeting.
- Immediately after each meeting, the Board Secretary will circulate a list summarising the actions arising to Board members.
- One week before the next meeting Board members will be invited to update the list of actions. This updated list of actions will be included in the draft minutes circulated with the Board papers.
- Draft minutes will be approved by Board members at the Board meeting. Approved minutes will be declared final by the Board Secretary and published on the DFP website on the Department's publication scheme.

FROM: NAME
 BRANCH

DATE:

TO: DB MEMBERS

Copy Circulation Below

HEADING IN CAPITAL AND BOLD TYPE *(for text use Arial font, single line spacing, and number paragraphs)*

Summary

Objective: A statement detailing the overall objective of the paper.

Issue: Normally one sentence outlining the key issues.

Relationship to DFP Operational Plan Indicate here how this paper contributes to the Department's strategic aims as articulated in the Operational Plan

Timescale: Reply needed by [date]/For discussion at DB on [date].

FOI Implications: The submission is fully disclosable. / An exemption should be sought for all the information in the submission. / See status report.

Other Presentational Issues: A short statement of likely presentational issues not covered under "FOI Implications".

Recommendation: Normally one sentence giving clear recommendation(s).

Executive Summary

1.

Background

2. Summarise background material. Do not refer to previous papers unless they are included with the submission. Be as brief as possible whilst clearly explaining the context of the submission.

Advice

3. Provide advice or detail proposed course of action as appropriate.
4. The main body of the submission should contain only the salient points, with supporting material presented as appendices. The Board would appreciate the main body of a submission being as short and succinct as possible.

Recommendation(s)

5. Provide clear recommendation(s). Where there are options to be considered set out clearly what you consider to be the best course of action.

[Signature]

NAME

List of Annexes

Annex A – []

Annex B – []

Copy Distribution