

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 13 December 2022 17:12
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: [REDACTED]
Attachments: Nolan queries [REDACTED].docx; [REDACTED] 25 april (004).docx;
Responses issued Nolan [REDACTED].docx

[REDACTED]

www.daera-ni.gov.uk
Twitter: @daera_ni

All media queries for DAERA should be sent to pressoffice.group@daera-ni.gov.uk

[REDACTED]

From:

Sent:

[REDACTED]
14 December 2022 08:53

To:

Subject:

Attachments:

[REDACTED]
Document1.docx

Hi [REDACTED]

The [REDACTED] stuff Im thinking of date order and laid out like this – is this ok?

DATE	MEDIA OUTLET	QUERY	RESPONSE
23 September 2021	Irish News	<p>The newsdesk has received a press release in relation to a tribunal case taken against DAERA by ██████████ in which she has won. Her legal team say she highlighted not only serious issues within the DAERA relating to animal welfare, but also detrimental implications for traceability within the supply chain.</p> <p>They say it is a landmark case in respect of the Office of the Industrial Tribunals and Fair Employment Tribunal and could result in a total award to the claimant of an estimated £1million. The details of the case, her legal team say, are embargoed to midnight tonight.</p> <p>Please can I check if there is a statement from the department in relation to this tribunal case?</p>	<p>A DAERA Spokesperson said: "The Department has noted the judgment by the Tribunal and cannot comment any further at this stage."</p>

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 14 December 2022 10:12
To: McFlynn, Sharon; McNabb, Chris [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: lines for DEARA
Attachments: Media queries.docx

Hi all, these are all the media responses I can find.

If you need anything else please let me know.

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 13 December 2022 20:42
To: McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>; McNabb, Chris <Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk> [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: lines for DEARA

Will do Sharon

Sent with BlackBerry Work
(www.blackberry.com)

From: McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>
Date: Tuesday, 13 Dec 2022, 8:24 pm
To: McNabb, Chris <Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk> [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: lines for DEARA

[REDACTED]

Please include [REDACTED] in the distribution list when sending the lines to me. Thanks.

Sharon

From: McNabb, Chris <Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>
Sent: 13 December 2022 15:39
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>
Subject: lines for DEARA

[REDACTED]

Can you ask someone in the office to dig out all the lines we issued from TEO in relation to the [REDACTED] case and send them to Sharon McFlynn. I don't think there's a lot

Chris

Media queries

18 May 2022

From: [REDACTED] Belfast Telegraph

Jayne Brady said in her letter to civil servants last month that she would publish the terms of reference for the rapid independent review of the [REDACTED] case.

If she has done so, can you point me to where they are published?

If not, why have they not been published?

Response

A spokesperson for TEO said: "Dealing with this issue is a priority for the Head of the NI Civil Service who has commissioned an external review by an independent third party with the Permanent Secretaries of DAERA and the Department of Finance (DoF).

The review will establish the facts and ensure that lessons are learned.

The terms of reference for the review will be published before the end of May. The first phase of the review is scheduled to be completed by the end of June 2022."

25 April 2022

From: [REDACTED] – Belfast Telegraph

Hi [REDACTED]

Hope you're well. Just getting in touch to see if the Head of the Civil Service, Ms Brady would like to respond to below comments made by SDLP's Nichola Mallon in relation to concerns raised by [REDACTED]?

The article will be going online on the Belfast Telegraph website, so any response as soon as is convenient would be much appreciated.

Could you also please CC in digital.editorial@belfasttelegraph.co.uk in your reply as well?

"SDLP Deputy Leader Nichola Mallon has said serious questions remain unanswered over the case of a DAERA whistleblower.

Ms Mallon said: "I would also call on Head of the Civil Service to address the concerns raised as a result of this case. She has promised a fresh approach to

how our civil service operates in the wake of the RHI scandal and if this is not a case that requires her involvement then I don't know what is."

Response

"The Northern Ireland Civil Service Code of Ethics sets out explicitly the standards that are expected of civil servants and these must be met in all cases.

"This case highlights a number of significant concerns and the Head of the Civil Service is committed to improving how these are dealt with right across the civil service.

"Work is underway on a wide-scale review, so that staff, no matter where they work, are confident in both raising and responding to concerns.

"As investigatory processes are being taken forward by DAERA in relation to this particular case it would not be appropriate to comment further at this time."

21 April 2022

From: [REDACTED] - BBC 028 903 38612

Query

I'm writing to request an interview with Jayne Brady today for BBC NI News with [REDACTED]. It would be with regards to the [REDACTED] tribunal story. If this is not the right email for this request, I'd really appreciate if you could forward this on or let me know who to contact.

Response

A spokesperson for The Executive Office said: "The Head of the Civil Service reiterates her unreserved apology to [REDACTED] as well as her commitment to improving how any concerns are dealt with across all departments.

"The Northern Ireland Civil Service Code of Ethics sets out very explicitly the standards that are expected of civil servants. The Head of the Civil Service is crystal clear in her expectations that these must be met in all cases and is already driving action to review and update the processes for raising concerns across the NICS so that, no matter where they work, staff know both how to raise and how to respond to concerns.

"This case highlights a number of significant concerns and the Head of the Civil Service welcomes the investigatory processes being undertaken by DAERA into this matter. This case underlines the need to drive forward the important work we have

committed to at pace and consistently across all departments.

"As the employer Department this is a matter for DAERA. It has initiated investigatory processes in which the Head of the Civil Service may be engaged at a later stage. For these reasons, it would not be appropriate to comment further whilst those processes are ongoing as it may prejudice any outcome or decisions taken on foot of those processes.

"The NICS will progress this matter as expeditiously as possible."

21 April 2022

From: [REDACTED] - BBC

Enquiry:

I am co-presenting the BBC Radio Ulster programme Evening Extra today from 4pm to 6pm.

I writing to request an interview with the Head of the Civil Service Jayne Brady on the treatment of [REDACTED] while working as a civil servant.

Failing that, please forward any statements she has made on the matter.

Response

A spokesperson for The Executive Office said: "The Head of the Civil Service reiterates her unreserved apology to [REDACTED] as well as her commitment to improving how any concerns are dealt with across all departments.

"The Northern Ireland Civil Service Code of Ethics sets out very explicitly the standards that are expected of civil servants. The Head of the Civil Service is crystal clear in her expectations that these must be met in all cases and is already driving action to review and update the processes for raising concerns across the NICS so that, no matter where they work, staff know both how to raise and how to respond to concerns.

"This case highlights a number of significant concerns and the Head of the Civil Service welcomes the investigatory processes being undertaken by DAERA into this matter. This case underlines the need to drive forward the important work we have committed to at pace and consistently across all departments.

"As the employer Department this is a matter for DAERA. It has initiated investigatory processes in which the Head of the Civil Service may be engaged at a later stage. For these reasons, it would not be appropriate to comment further whilst those processes are ongoing as it may prejudice any outcome or decisions taken on foot of those processes.

“The NICS will progress this matter as expeditiously as possible.”

10 March 2022

From: [REDACTED] - Newsletter

Query

The NICS has claimed to have learned the lessons of the RHI scandal and has claimed to have moved to protect and value whistleblowers.

However, DAERA is using public money to attempt to overturn a devastating judgment about its sacking of someone [REDACTED] because [REDACTED] blew the whistle on alleged fraud, animal suffering and the incorrect recording of animal movements which facilitate the spread of disease.

As Head of the Civil Service, has Jayne Brady anything to say about whether on her watch this is acceptable?

And has she any message to other whistleblowers?

Response

“It is not appropriate to comment on an ongoing legal issue which is a matter for DAERA.”

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 14 December 2022 11:30
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: G_DAERA PressOffice.Group, DAERA
Subject: re [REDACTED] queries - updated December 2022.docx
Attachments: [REDACTED] queries - updated December 2022.docx

H [REDACTED] great job see my slight tweaks for typos – otherwise reads well.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

From:

Sent:

14 December 2022 11:34

To:

Cc:

Subject:

queries - updated December 2022

Attachments:

queries - updated December 2022.docx

Hi [REDACTED]

Please see attached.

Do you want them numbered?

Thanks

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 14 December 2022 12:10
To: McFlynn, Sharon
Cc: G_DAERA PressOffice.Group, DAERA
Subject: [REDACTED] queries - updated December 2022
Attachments: [REDACTED] queries - updated December 2022.docx

Hi Sharon, with thanks to the team for pulling this together, please find attached [REDACTED] queries and responses as requested.

Hope this is what you were after. Want me to send to [REDACTED] etc or do you want to review?

Thanks

[REDACTED]

[Redacted]

From: [Redacted]
Sent: 14 December 2022 15:59
To: McFlynn, Sharon
Cc: [Redacted] McLaughlin, Mark (DOF); McNabb, Chris; Sayee, Natasha; [Redacted]
Subject: Previous media queries
Attachments: Previous media queries.docx

Hi Sharon,

As discussed, please find attached previous media queries as requested.

Best wishes

[Redacted]

Previous DoF media queries and responses issued

Media outlet, Journalist, Date of query	Query	Response
Belfast Telegraph, [REDACTED] 20/04/2022	<p>Can DoF clarify whether at any point any of your officials were involved in any way in the decision to spend public funds to fight DAERA whistleblower [REDACTED] at an employment tribunal, then to fight her to the court of appeal, and finally to agree to make a huge pay-off to her?</p> <p>If so, was the minister made aware of this?</p> <p>If not, who authorised the expenditure on first the decision to fight her legally and then the decision to settle the case?</p>	<p>Decisions around court proceedings were a matter for DAERA as the legal entity responsible for the case and the DAERA Permanent Secretary, as Accounting Officer, took the decision on settlement.</p> <p>Having received legal advice on this matter, in line with normal processes DAERA sought approval from the Department of Finance (DoF) for this compensation payment which was subsequently approved by DoF officials.</p>
BBC, [REDACTED] 21/04/2022	<p>As the Department of Finance, and given your responsibilities towards the Civil Service, are you reviewing in any way the treatment of [REDACTED] at DAERA?</p> <p>Can the Department provide any details on the legal expenditure involved in the case?</p>	<p>The Department of Finance welcomes the internal review being undertaken by DAERA into this matter, learning from this will be shared across the Northern Ireland Civil Service. Work is also underway to improve processes for dealing with concerns raised both internally and externally. This will be taken forward at pace and consistently across all departments.</p>
Belfast Telegraph, [REDACTED] 24/08/2022 These queries relate to FOI - DOF/022-0200	<p>Why on 24 May did special adviser Eoin Rooney remove the words “impartial and objective” from Conor Murphy’s draft answer to an AQW from Patsy McGlone in which he asked about the review of the [REDACTED] scandal?</p> <p>What does DoF have to say about the fact that one of your civil servants (in HR) praised [REDACTED] evidence to the [REDACTED] telling them that “although this decision is a bitter pill to swallow, rest assured you were both individually and collectively a credit to your profession throughout this hearing”?</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. As neither the Special Adviser or the Minister were personally involved in commissioning the review they did not consider it appropriate to comment on how the review would be carried out. 2. As a review is ongoing it would be inappropriate to comment.

<p>BBC - Farming Matters, [REDACTED] 28/10/2022</p>	<p>I have a query in relation to the independent review of the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs' (DAERA's) handling of concerns raised by former department [REDACTED] Jointly commissioned by the Department of Finance (DoF) Permanent Secretary Neil Gibson.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Has PWC completed the review?2. Has the commissioners received the review?3. Has the review been published?	<p>Journalist advised DAERA will respond. DoF inputted to DAERA response and it was agreed to deploy line previously issued on 05 October.</p> <p>A Spokesperson for DAERA said: "The NICS received the final draft report from PwC on Friday 30th September.</p> <p>"Any report received goes through a quality assurance process to ensure it meets the agreed Terms of Reference.</p> <p>"We are currently considering its contents to ensure publication would not prejudice any potential internal processes.</p> <p>"After this process is complete the outcome of the review will be published."</p>
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[Redacted]

From: [Redacted]
Sent: 14 December 2022 17:09
To: [Redacted]
Cc: [Redacted]
Subject: Revised doc
Attachments: Document1.docx

Hi [Redacted]

Please see attached revised in categories. Tried my nest but feel free to change some could go into several categories

[Redacted]

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 14 December 2022 17:47
To: McFlynn, Sharon
Subject: revised [REDACTED] queries
Attachments: Document1 (003).docx

Hi Sharon, as requested. Tried to put them into themes, but as you know, some of them aren't a neat fit with queries across multiple themes.

Thanks

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 15 December 2022 14:07
To: McFlynn, Sharon; G DAERA PressOffice.Group, DAERA
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: FW: Internal Review response DAERA 22-140
Attachments: Internal Review response DAERA 22-140.pdf

Sharon, [REDACTED]

For your information.

Please see the attached Internal Review response issued to [REDACTED] last night.



Department of
**Agriculture, Environment
and Rural Affairs**
www.daera-ni.gov.uk

*Sustainability at the heart of a
living, working, active landscape
valued by everyone.*

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 14 December 2022 18:24
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED] DAERA Informationmanager
<daera.informationmanager@daera-ni.gov.uk>
Subject: Internal Review response DAERA 22-140

Dear [REDACTED]

Please find attached [REDACTED] response to the Internal Review of your Freedom Of Information Request.

Yours sincerely

[REDACTED]

Data Protection and Information Management
Branch



Department of
**Agriculture, Environment
and Rural Affairs**

www.daera-ni.gov.uk

Our Ref: DAERA/22/140

Your Ref:

Data Protection and Information
Management Branch,

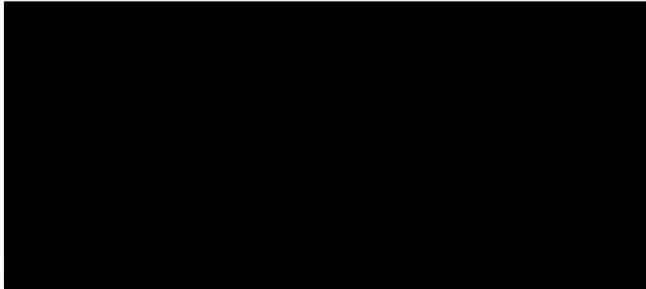
Jubilee House

111 Ballykelly Road
Ballykelly

Co. Londonderry

BT49 9HP

Records.NI@daera-ni.gov.uk



14 December 2022

Dear 

Internal Review of DAERA/22-140

Thank you for your request for an Internal Review of 19 April 2022 of the decision to withhold some information from your request under Section 40(2) – Personal Data.

You had initially requested:-

“Under the Freedom of Information Act, please provide me with all material returned after a search of  email account for the word 

The business area responded on 25 May 2022 that:-

“I can advise that the Department has completed its search and can confirm that it does hold information falling within the scope of your request. However, the Department has decided not to disclose some of the information as it is considered to be third-party personal data, of which you are not the data subject.

The Department has therefore determined Section 40(2) of the FOIA - third party personal to be engaged. In these instances, the Department is required to consider if disclosure would breach the first Data Protection Principle, which states that processing must be lawful, fair and transparent. The Department has carried out a Lawful, Fairness and Transparency test, attached at Annex A.

A copy of the information which can be disclosed is attached as Documents 1-13."

The Lawfulness, Fairness and Transparency test concluded that:-

"Consideration of Legitimate Interests

1. PURPOSE

As the disclosure of personal data under FOIA is a disclosure to the world at large, doing so on the strength of a requester's private interests alone could constitute a disproportionate and unwarranted level of interference with the data subject(s) rights and freedoms, particularly their right to privacy and family life under the Human Rights Act 1998.

2. NECESSITY

The right of access under FOI/EIR does not in itself constitute a **pressing social need**.

The Department has considered and not identified any such need for the data subject's right to privacy to be interfered with.

CONCLUSION

Having considered all of the information contained within this test, the Department has established that, on balance, there is no lawful basis for the disclosure of third party personal data falling within the scope of the request."

You then requested an Internal Review on the basis that:-

"Thanks for this response, but I would like the decision not to release some of this information to be reviewed.

I would draw to the reviewer's attention the decision alluded to here to exclude some material which was initially considered relevant to this case from being considered. Can you clarify why this was so and take your own view on whether it should be released?

If there is any doubt about whether I am interested in certain material, feel free to check with me, but I would ask that in line with the principles of FOI you adopt a broad approach to this request. For instance, if there was an email where [REDACTED] was misspelt but clearly referred to [REDACTED] then under a common sense interpretation of my request that would clearly be relevant to what I am requesting."

In terms of the handling of your request for information, I find that the Veterinary Service and Animal Health Group acted correctly in addressing the matter under the

Freedom of Information Act and, allowing for the extension letter of 13 May sent to you while they sought legal advice, that their response was reasonably timely.

Having reviewed the documents both released and withheld, I can categorically assure you that no dubious practices like not releasing documents where the name [REDACTED] was misspelt took place. 13 e-mails were released with the names of junior staff acting in a clerical capacity redacted in accordance with the above section 40(2), as is normal practice, and those of senior decision makers retained. The redaction of the names of junior staff does not in any way obscure or conceal the essential content and meaning of these documents.

In addition, 8 e-mails were not released at all on the basis that the section 40 (2) exemption applied to the entire content of these e-mails. Having reviewed these personally, I can confirm that these e-mails did not relate to personal data considerations in respect of [REDACTED] or directly to [REDACTED] constructive dismissal case but related to personal data of another third party and are only tangentially connected with the matter.

Taking into account the Human Rights Act 1998, the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and various judgements of the Information Commissioner's Office and Information Tribunal thereafter, I find that the Department's Veterinary Service and Animal Health Group acted correctly both in redacting the names of junior staff who were not operating in an executive decision-making capacity and in not releasing the 8 e-mails which dealt with the personal data of a third party. I also find that there was no overriding public interest in release as the third party data withheld would not have had any material bearing on the management of [REDACTED] or the constructive dismissal case.

If you remain unsatisfied with this response, you can make a further appeal by writing to the Information Commissioner, FoI/EIR Complaints, Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, CHESHIRE SK9 5AF, who will undertake an independent review.

Yours sincerely

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 20 December 2022 15:48
To: DOF PressOffice; G_DAERA PressOffice.Group, DAERA; TEO Press Office
Subject: Report into treatment of [REDACTED]

Caution – This email has been received from outside the NICS network. Please ensure you can verify the sender's name and email address. Treat all attachments and links with caution.
FOR INTERNAL NICS STAFF ONLY - If you have any concerns regarding the email please forward to spam@finance-ni.gov.uk.

Good afternoon,

In April, when Jayne Brady set up the external investigation into the [REDACTED] case, she said that "it is a personal priority for me to deal with it promptly".

It's now eight months since that promise and six months since the relevant part of the external report was received by the NICS. Not a single action has been taken to deal with behaviour which has been so costly both for taxpayers and the collective reputation of the good civil servants with the NICS. There has not been any public explanation of what is happening, despite the NICS's claims that it has been reformed.

As the three departments who jointly commissioned this investigation, can you please explain why the PwC report remains unpublished, when the taxpayers who paid for it can expect to see it, and whether any disciplinary action has been taken against anyone who treated [REDACTED] so appallingly?

I don't need a response to this until lunch time tomorrow.

Thanks,

[REDACTED]

Belfast Telegraph



Tell it like it is.

MEDIAHUIS

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[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 20 December 2022 16:16
To: [REDACTED] G_DAERA PressOffice.Group, DAERA
Subject: RE: Report into treatment of [REDACTED]

Thanks for your query [REDACTED]

Leave that with me.

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 20 December 2022 15:48
To: DOF PressOffice <dof.pressoffice@finance-ni.gov.uk>; G_DAERA PressOffice.Group, DAERA <PressOffice.Group@daera-ni.gov.uk>; TEO Press Office <press.office@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>
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[REDACTED]



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United Kingdom

Switchboard +44 (0)28 90264000

Registered in the United Kingdom No: 01908967

This footnote also confirms that this email message has been swept by Microsoft Exchange Online Protection for the presence of computer viruses.

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 20 December 2022 16:19
To: DOF PressOffice; G_DAERA PressOffice.Group, DAERA
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: FW: Report into treatment of [REDACTED]

Hi all,

We will take a look at this given reference to HOCS.
I will share line asap for consideration.

Thanks
[REDACTED]

Sent with BlackBerry Work
(www.blackberry.com)

From: [REDACTED]
Date: Tuesday, 20 Dec 2022 at 3:48 pm
To: DOF PressOffice <dof.pressoffice@finance-ni.gov.uk>, G_DAERA PressOffice.Group, DAERA <PressOffice.Group@daera-ni.gov.uk>, TEO Press Office <press.office@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>
Subject: Report into treatment of [REDACTED]

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As the three departments who jointly commissioned this investigation, can you please explain why the PwC report remains unpublished, when the taxpayers who paid for it can expect to see it, and whether any disciplinary action has been taken against anyone who treated [REDACTED] so appallingly?

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Thanks,
[REDACTED]


Belfast Telegraph**Tell it like it is.**

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United Kingdom

Switchboard +44 (0)28 90264000

Registered in the United Kingdom No: 01908967

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[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 20 December 2022 16:20
To: [REDACTED] DOF PressOffice; G_DAERA PressOffice.Group, DAERA
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Report into treatment of [REDACTED]

Much appreciated [REDACTED]
Thanks
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 20 December 2022 16:19
To: DOF PressOffice <dof.pressoffice@finance-ni.gov.uk>; G_DAERA PressOffice.Group, DAERA <PressOffice.Group@daera-ni.gov.uk>
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: FW: Report into treatment of [REDACTED]

Hi all,

We will take a look at this given reference to HOCS.
I will share line asap for consideration.
Thanks
[REDACTED]

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(www.blackberry.com)

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Date: Tuesday, 20 Dec 2022 at 3:48 pm
To: DOF PressOffice <dof.pressoffice@finance-ni.gov.uk>, G_DAERA PressOffice.Group, DAERA <PressOffice.Group@daera-ni.gov.uk>, TEO Press Office <press.office@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>
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Good afternoon,

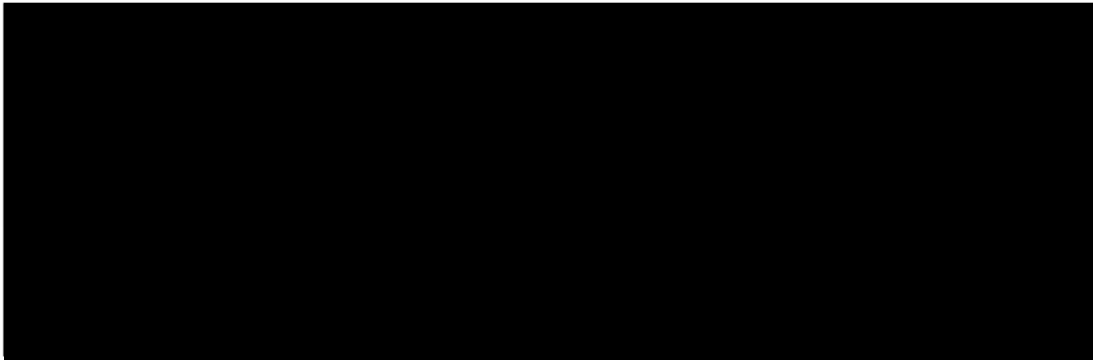
In April, when Jayne Brady set up the external investigation into the [REDACTED] case, she said that "it is a personal priority for me to deal with it promptly".

It's now eight months since that promise and six months since the relevant part of the external report was received by the NICS. Not a single action has been taken to deal with behaviour which has been so costly both for taxpayers and the collective reputation of the good civil servants with the NICS. There has not been any public explanation of what is happening, despite the NICS's claims that it has been reformed.

As the three departments who jointly commissioned this investigation, can you please explain why the PwC report remains unpublished, when the taxpayers who paid for it can expect to see it, and whether any disciplinary action has been taken against anyone who treated [REDACTED] so appallingly?

I don't need a response to this until lunch time tomorrow.

Thanks,



Belfast Telegraph



Tell it like it is.



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Belfast, BT1 3BG
United Kingdom

Switchboard +44 (0)28 90264000

Registered in the United Kingdom No: 01908967

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[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 20 December 2022 17:45
To: [REDACTED] G_DAERA PressOffice.Group, DAERA; [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED] McNabb, Chris
Subject: RE: Report into treatment of [REDACTED]

Hi all,

Please see suggested response below from HOCS.
Can you please check this with officials and come back to me.
Thanks,

[REDACTED]

Response:

The final report was received today. Preparations are being made for the publication of the external review in the new year.

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 20 December 2022 16:19
To: DOF PressOffice <dof.pressoffice@finance-ni.gov.uk>; G_DAERA PressOffice.Group, DAERA <PressOffice.Group@daera-ni.gsi.gov.uk>
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: FW: Report into treatment of [REDACTED]

Hi all,

We will take a look at this given reference to HOCS.
I will share line asap for consideration.
Thanks

[REDACTED]

Sent with BlackBerry Work
(www.blackberry.com)

From: [REDACTED]
Date: Tuesday, 20 Dec 2022 at 3:48 pm

Hi all,

We will take a look at this given reference to HOCS.
I will share line asap for consideration.

Thanks

Sent with BlackBerry Work
(www.blackberry.com)

From: [REDACTED]
Date: Tuesday, 20 Dec 2022 at 3:48 pm
To: DOF PressOffice <dof.pressoffice@finance-ni.gov.uk>, G_DAERA PressOffice.Group, DAERA <PressOffice.Group@daera-ni.gov.uk>, TEO Press Office <press.office@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>
Subject: Report into treatment of [REDACTED]

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Good afternoon,

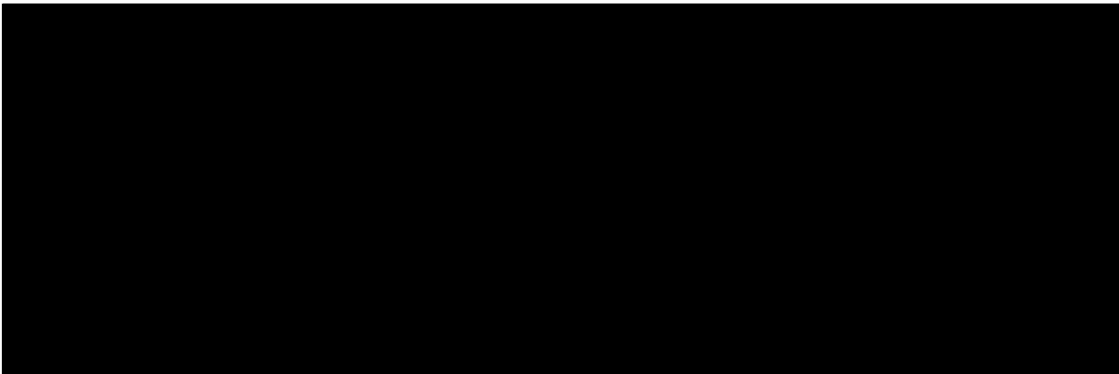
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United Kingdom

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Registered in the United Kingdom No: 01908967

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[Redacted]

From: [Redacted]
Sent: 20 December 2022 18:01
To: [Redacted] G_DAERA PressOffice.Group, DAERA; [Redacted]
Cc: [Redacted] McNabb, Chris
Subject: RE: Report into treatment of Tamara Bronckaers

Hi [Redacted]

I understand DAERA Perm Sec has already replied.

Thanks

[Redacted]

From: [Redacted]
Sent: 20 December 2022 17:45
To: [Redacted] G_DAERA PressOffice.Group, DAERA
<PressOffice.Group@daera-ni.gov.uk>; [Redacted]
Cc: [Redacted] McNabb, Chris <Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>
Subject: RE: Report into treatment of [Redacted]

Hi all,

Please see suggested response below from HOCS.
Can you please check this with officials and come back to me.
Thanks,

[Redacted]

Response:

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[Redacted]

From: [Redacted]
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To: DOF PressOffice <dof.pressoffice@finance-ni.gov.uk>; G_DAERA PressOffice.Group, DAERA
<PressOffice.Group@daera-ni.gsi.gov.uk>

Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: FW: Report into treatment of [REDACTED]

Hi all,

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Thanks
[REDACTED]

Sent with BlackBerry Work
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From: [REDACTED]
Date: Tuesday, 20 Dec 2022 at 3:48 pm
To: DOF PressOffice <dof.pressoffice@finance-ni.gov.uk>, G_DAERA PressOffice.Group, DAERA <PressOffice.Group@daera-ni.gov.uk>, TEO Press Office <press.office@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>
Subject: Report into treatment of [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED]

From: McNabb, Chris <Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>
Sent: 20 December 2022 18:10
To: [REDACTED] G_DAERA PressOffice.Group, DAERA; [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Report into treatment of Tamara Bronckaers

[REDACTED] Can we check against what was said previously as we said before we have received the reports

Chris

Sent with BlackBerry Work
(www.blackberry.com)

From: [REDACTED]
Date: Tuesday, 20 Dec 2022 at 5:44 pm
To: [REDACTED] G_DAERA PressOffice.Group, DAERA
<PressOffice.Group@daera-ni.gsi.gov.uk>, [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED] McNabb, Chris <Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>
Subject: RE: Report into treatment of [REDACTED]

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Thanks,

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Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: FW: Report into treatment of [REDACTED]

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Date: Tuesday, 20 Dec 2022 at 3:48 pm

To: DOF PressOffice <dof.pressoffice@finance-ni.gov.uk>, G_DAERA PressOffice.Group, DAERA <PressOffice.Group@daera-ni.gov.uk>, TEO Press Office <press.office@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>

Subject: Report into treatment of [REDACTED]

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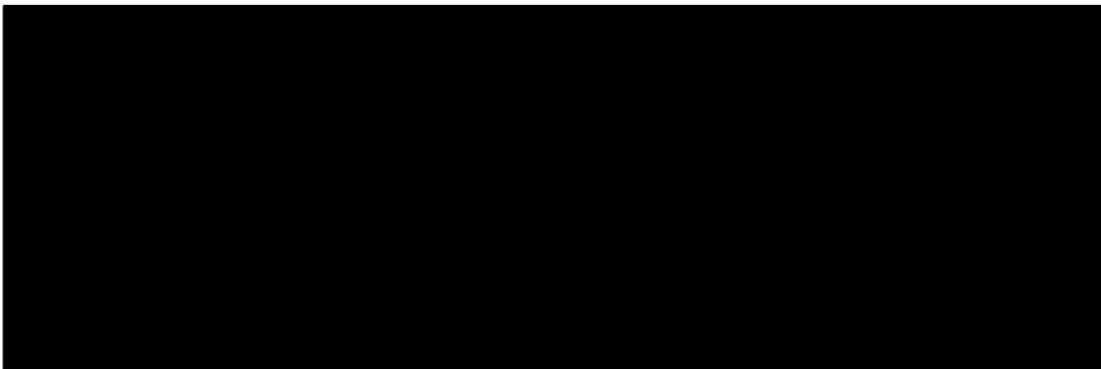
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Belfast Telegraph

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[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 21 December 2022 08:44
To: McFlynn, Sharon
Cc: G_DAERA PressOffice.Group, DAERA
Subject: FW: Report into treatment of [REDACTED]

Sharon

Spoke to TEO on this one last night.

They have asked for our most recent LTT on this one and are seeking clarification on the difference between the final report and the final draft reports.

A DAERA spokesman said: "We received the final draft reports from PwC on Friday 30th September and are working through the relevant quality control processes to ensure the reports are as complete and accurate as they can be. This is important for various reasons, including to ensure that the right learning is captured and applied and that the findings are evidence-based. The Department is committed to ensuring that the NICS learns and applies all lessons from this case.

"DAERA has already committed to publishing the outcomes of the external review as soon as practicable and fully intends to abide by that commitment. When it comes to the full reports, the position remains that decisions on publication will need to take account of the responsibilities of all Departments involved to protect any personal information they may contain and to ensure appropriate confidentiality relating to any relevant HR or other processes.

"The External Review costs will be finalised following completion of all stages of the reports.

"We are unable to comment further until the review is published."

END

[REDACTED]

From: McNabb, Chris <Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>

Sent: 20 December 2022 18:10

To: [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] G_DAERA PressOffice.Group, DAERA <PressOffice.Group@daera-ni.gov.uk>; [REDACTED]

Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Report into treatment of [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Can we check against what was said previously as we said before we have received the reports

Chris

Sent with BlackBerry Work
(www.blackberry.com)

From: [REDACTED]
Date: Tuesday, 20 Dec 2022 at 5:44 pm
To: [REDACTED] G DAERA PressOffice.Group, DAERA <PressOffice.Group@daera-ni.gsi.gov.uk>
Cc: [REDACTED] McNabb, Chris <Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>

Subject: RE: Report into treatment of [REDACTED]

Hi all,

Please see suggested response below from HOCS.
Can you please check this with officials and come back to me.
Thanks,

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[REDACTED]

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Sent: 20 December 2022 16:19
To: DOF PressOffice <dof.pressoffice@finance-ni.gov.uk>; G_DAERA PressOffice.Group, DAERA <PressOffice.Group@daera-ni.gsi.gov.uk>
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: FW: Report into treatment of [REDACTED]

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From [REDACTED]
Date: Tuesday, 20 Dec 2022 at 3:48 pm
To: DOF PressOffice <dof.pressoffice@finance-ni.gov.uk>, G_DAERA PressOffice.Group, DAERA <PressOffice.Group@daera-ni.gov.uk>, TEO Press Office <press.office@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>
Subject: Report into treatment of [REDACTED]

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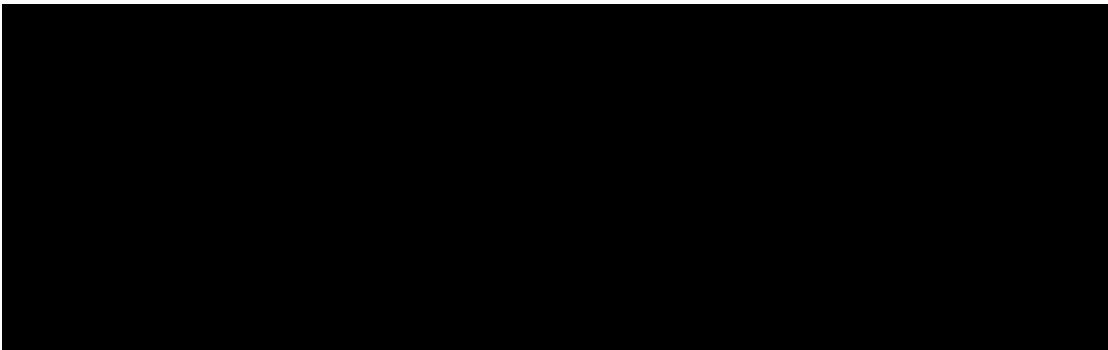
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Belfast Telegraph



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[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 21 December 2022 09:27
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: G_DAERA PressOffice.Group, DAERA; McNabb, Chris [REDACTED]
Subject: FW: Report into treatment of [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

See clarification on final report and our previous line.

Speak soon.

[REDACTED]

From: McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>
Sent: 21 December 2022 09:19
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: Godfrey, Katrina (DAERA – Perm Sec) <Katrina.Godfrey@daera-ni.gov.uk>
Subject: RE: Report into treatment of [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

As per the line below, the final draft reports were subject to relevant quality control processes. This stage has been completed and the final reports were received on Monday 19 September. The latest line is as follows:

The final reports were received on Monday 19th December. Preparations are now being made for the publication of the external review early in the new year.

Sharon

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 21 December 2022 08:44
To: McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>
Cc: G_DAERA PressOffice.Group, DAERA <PressOffice.Group@daera-ni.gov.uk>
Subject: FW: Report into treatment of [REDACTED]

Sharon

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"DAERA has already committed to publishing the outcomes of the external review as soon as practicable and

fully intends to abide by that commitment. When it comes to the full reports, the position remains that decisions on publication will need to take account of the responsibilities of all Departments involved to protect any personal information they may contain and to ensure appropriate confidentiality relating to any relevant HR or other processes.

"The External Review costs will be finalised following completion of all stages of the reports.

"We are unable to comment further until the review is published."

END

[REDACTED]

From: McNabb, Chris <Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>

Sent: 20 December 2022 18:10

To: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] G_DAERA PressOffice.Group, DAERA <PressOffice.Group@daera-ni.gov.uk>; [REDACTED]

Cc: [REDACTED]

Subject: RE: Report into treatment of [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Can we check against what was said previously as we said before we have received the reports

Chris

Sent with BlackBerry Work
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From: [REDACTED]

Date: Tuesday, 20 Dec 2022 at 5:44 pm

To: [REDACTED] G_DAERA PressOffice.Group, DAERA
<PressOffice.Group@daera-ni.gsi.gov.uk>

Cc: [REDACTED] McNabb, Chris <Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>

Subject: RE: Report into treatment of [REDACTED]

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Can you please check this with officials and come back to me.

Thanks,
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Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: FW: Report into treatment of Tamara Bronckaers

Hi all,

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Thanks
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Subject: Report into treatment of [REDACTED]

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Good afternoon,

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Belfast Telegraph



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Switchboard +44 (0)28 90264000

Registered in the United Kingdom No: 01908967

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[REDACTED]

From: McNabb, Chris
Sent: 21 December 2022 09:30
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: G_DAERA PressOffice.Group, DAERA [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Report into treatment of [REDACTED]

Ok. Thanks for checking. The line is ok given the previous DAERA line

Chris

Sent with BlackBerry Work
(www.blackberry.com)

From: [REDACTED]
Date: Wednesday, 21 Dec 2022, 9:26 am
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: G_DAERA PressOffice.Group, DAERA <PressOffice.Group@daera-ni.gov.uk>, McNabb, Chris <Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>, [REDACTED]
Subject: FW: Report into treatment of [REDACTED]

See clarification on final report and our previous line.

Speak soon.

From: McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>
Sent: 21 December 2022 09:19
To: [REDACTED]
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They have asked for our most recent LTT on this one and are seeking clarification on the difference between the final report and the final draft reports.

A DAERA spokesman said: "We received the final draft reports from PwC on Friday 30th September and are working through the relevant quality control processes to ensure the reports are as complete and accurate as they can be. This is important for various reasons, including to ensure that the right learning is captured and applied and that the findings are evidence-based. The Department is committed to ensuring that the NICS learns and applies all lessons from this case.

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"The External Review costs will be finalised following completion of all stages of the reports.

"We are unable to comment further until the review is published."

END

From: McNabb, Chris <Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>

Sent: 20 December 2022 18:10

To: [REDACTED]; G_DAERA PressOffice.Group, DAERA <PressOffice.Group@daera-ni.gov.uk>; [REDACTED]

Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Report into treatment of [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Can we check against what was said previously as we said before we have received the reports

Chris

Sent with BlackBerry Work
(www.blackberry.com)

From: [REDACTED]
Date: Tuesday, 20 Dec 2022 at 5:44 pm
To: [REDACTED] G DAERA PressOffice.Group, DAERA <PressOffice.Group@daera-ni.gsi.gov.uk>
Cc: [REDACTED] McNabb, Chris <Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>
Subject: RE: Report into treatment of [REDACTED]

Hi all,

Please see suggested response below from HOCS.
Can you please check this with officials and come back to me.

Thanks,

Response:

The final report was received today. Preparations are being made for the publication of the external review in the new year.

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 20 December 2022 16:19
To: DOF PressOffice <dof.pressoffice@finance-ni.gov.uk>; G_DAERA PressOffice.Group, DAERA <PressOffice.Group@daera-ni.gsi.gov.uk>
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: FW: Report into treatment of [REDACTED]

Hi all,

We will take a look at this given reference to HOCS.
I will share line asap for consideration.

Thanks

Sent with BlackBerry Work
(www.blackberry.com)

From: [REDACTED]
Date: Tuesday, 20 Dec 2022 at 3:48 pm
To: DOF PressOffice <dof.pressoffice@finance-ni.gov.uk>, G_DAERA PressOffice.Group, DAERA <PressOffice.Group@daera-ni.gov.uk>, TEO Press Office <press.office@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>
Subject: Report into treatment of [REDACTED]

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Good afternoon,

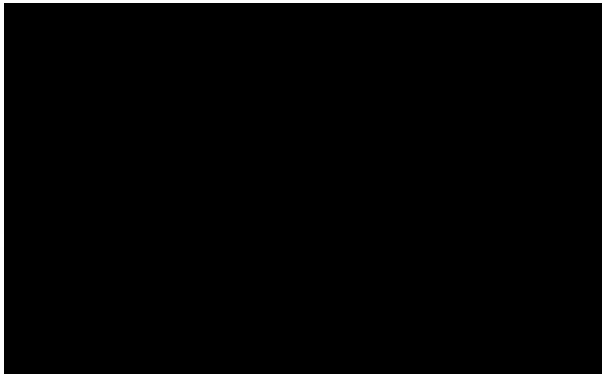
In April, when Jayne Brady set up the external investigation into the [REDACTED] she said that "it is a personal priority for me to deal with it promptly".

It's now eight months since that promise and six months since the relevant part of the external report was received by the NICS. Not a single action has been taken to deal with behaviour which has been so costly both for taxpayers and the collective reputation of the good civil servants with the NICS. There has not been any public explanation of what is happening, despite the NICS's claims that it has been reformed.

As the three departments who jointly commissioned this investigation, can you please explain why the PwC report remains unpublished, when the taxpayers who paid for it can expect to see it, and whether any disciplinary action has been taken against anyone who treated [REDACTED] so appallingly?

I don't need a response to this until lunch time tomorrow.

Thanks,



Belfast Telegraph



Tell it like it is.



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Belfast, BT1 3BG
United Kingdom

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Registered in the United Kingdom No: 01908967

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 21 December 2022 09:41
To: McNabb, Chris; [REDACTED]
Cc: G_DAERA PressOffice.Group, DAERA; [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Report into treatment of [REDACTED]

Thanks for that.

Assuming TEO will issue response to Bel Tel?

[REDACTED]

From: McNabb, Chris <Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>
Sent: 21 December 2022 09:30
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: G_DAERA PressOffice.Group, DAERA <PressOffice.Group@daera-ni.gov.uk>
[REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Report into treatment of [REDACTED]

Ok. Thanks for checking. The line is ok given the previous DAERA line

Chris

Sent with BlackBerry Work
(www.blackberry.com)

From: [REDACTED]
Date: Wednesday, 21 Dec 2022, 9:26 am
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: G_DAERA PressOffice.Group, DAERA <PressOffice.Group@daera-ni.gov.uk>, McNabb, Chris <Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk> [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
Subject: FW: Report into treatment of [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

See clarification on final report and our previous line.

Speak soon.

From: McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>
Sent: 21 December 2022 09:19
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: Godfrey, Katrina (DAERA – Perm Sec) <Katrina.Godfrey@daera-ni.gov.uk>
Subject: RE: Report into treatment of [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

As per the line below, the final draft reports were subject to relevant quality control processes. This stage has been completed and the final reports were received on Monday 19 September. The latest line is as follows:

The final reports were received on Monday 19th December. Preparations are now being made for the publication of the external review early in the new year.

Sharon

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 21 December 2022 08:44
To: McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>
Cc: G_DAERA PressOffice.Group, DAERA <PressOffice.Group@daera-ni.gov.uk>
Subject: FW: Report into treatment of [REDACTED]

Sharon

Spoke to TEO on this one last night.

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"The External Review costs will be finalised following completion of all stages of the reports.

"We are unable to comment further until the review is published."
END

From: McNabb, Chris <Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>
Sent: 20 December 2022 18:10
To: [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] <G_DAERA PressOffice.Group, DAERA <PressOffice.Group@daera-ni.gov.uk>>; [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Report into treatment of [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Can we check against what was said previously as we said before we have received the reports

Chris

Sent with BlackBerry Work
(www.blackberry.com)

From: [REDACTED]
Date: Tuesday, 20 Dec 2022 at 5:44 pm
To: [REDACTED] G_DAERA PressOffice.Group, DAERA
<PressOffice.Group@daera-ni.gsi.gov.uk>,
Cc: [REDACTED], McNabb, Chris <Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>
Subject: RE: Report into treatment of [REDACTED]

Hi all,

Please see suggested response below from HOCS.
Can you please check this with officials and come back to me.
Thanks,
[REDACTED]

Response:

The final report was received today. Preparations are being made for the publication of the external review in the new year.

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 20 December 2022 16:19
To: DOF PressOffice <dof.pressoffice@finance-ni.gov.uk>; G_DAERA PressOffice.Group, DAERA
<PressOffice.Group@daera-ni.gsi.gov.uk>
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: FW: Report into treatment of [REDACTED]

Hi all,

We will take a look at this given reference to HOCS.
I will share line asap for consideration.
Thanks
[REDACTED]

Sent with BlackBerry Work
(www.blackberry.com)

From: [REDACTED]
Date: Tuesday, 20 Dec 2022 at 3:48 pm

To: DOF PressOffice <dof.pressoffice@finance-ni.gov.uk>, G_DAERA PressOffice.Group, DAERA <PressOffice.Group@daera-ni.gov.uk>, TEO Press Office <press.office@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>

Subject: Report into treatment of [REDACTED]

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Good afternoon,

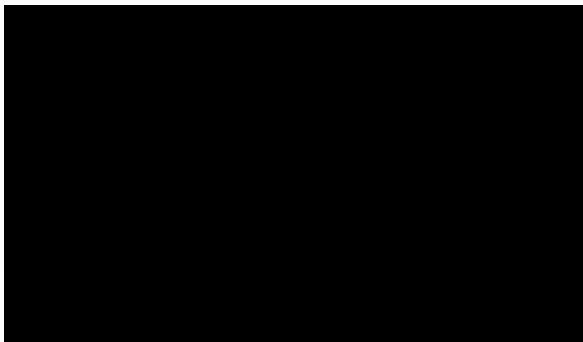
In April, when Jayne Brady set up the external investigation into the [REDACTED] case, she said that "it is a personal priority for me to deal with it promptly".

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United Kingdom

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Registered in the United Kingdom No: 01908967

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[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 21 December 2022 09:56
To: McFlynn, Sharon
Cc: Godfrey, Katrina (DAERA – Perm Sec); G DAERA PressOffice.Group, DAERA
Subject: RE: Report into treatment of [REDACTED]

Thanks Sharon

TEO content.

[REDACTED]

From: McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>
Sent: 21 December 2022 09:19
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: Godfrey, Katrina (DAERA – Perm Sec) <Katrina.Godfrey@daera-ni.gov.uk>
Subject: RE: Report into treatment of [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

As per the line below, the final draft reports were subject to relevant quality control processes. This stage has been completed and the final reports were received on Monday 19 September. The latest line is as follows:

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Sharon

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 21 December 2022 08:44
To: McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>
Cc: G DAERA PressOffice.Group, DAERA <PressOffice.Group@daera-ni.gov.uk>
Subject: FW: Report into treatment of [REDACTED]

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other processes.

"The External Review costs will be finalised following completion of all stages of the reports.

"We are unable to comment further until the review is published."

END

From: McNabb, Chris <Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>

Sent: 20 December 2022 18:10

To:

[REDACTED]; G DAERA PressOffice.Group, DAERA <PressOffice.Group@daera-ni.gov.uk>; [REDACTED]

Cc:

Subject: RE: Report into treatment of [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Can we check against what was said previously as we said before we have received the reports

Chris

Sent with BlackBerry Work
(www.blackberry.com)

From: [REDACTED]

Date: Tuesday, 20 Dec 2022 at 5:44 pm

To: [REDACTED]; G DAERA PressOffice.Group, DAERA <PressOffice.Group@daera-ni.gsi.gov.uk>

Cc: [REDACTED]; McNabb, Chris <Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>

Subject: RE: Report into treatment of [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED]

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Sent: 20 December 2022 16:19
To: DOF PressOffice <dof.pressoffice@finance-ni.gov.uk>; G_DAERA PressOffice.Group, DAERA <PressOffice.Group@daera-ni.gsi.gov.uk>
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: FW: Report into treatment of [REDACTED]

Hi all,

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Thanks
[REDACTED]

Sent with BlackBerry Work
(www.blackberry.com)

From: [REDACTED]
Date: Tuesday, 20 Dec 2022 at 3:48 pm
To: DOF PressOffice <dof.pressoffice@finance-ni.gov.uk>, G_DAERA PressOffice.Group, DAERA <PressOffice.Group@daera-ni.gov.uk>, TEO Press Office <press.office@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>
Subject: Report into treatment of [REDACTED]

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Good afternoon,

In April, when Jayne Brady set up the external investigation into the [REDACTED] case, she said that "it is a personal priority for me to deal with it promptly".

It's now eight months since that promise and six months since the relevant part of the external report was received by the NICS. Not a single action has been taken to deal with behaviour which has been so costly both for taxpayers and the collective reputation of the good civil servants with the NICS. There has not been any public explanation of what is happening, despite the NICS's claims that it has been reformed.

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Thanks,
[REDACTED]


Belfast Telegraph**Tell it like it is.**

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United Kingdom

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[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 21 December 2022 10:03
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: G_DAERA PressOffice.Group, DAERA
Subject: RE: Report into treatment of [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Here you go. Issued in Oct.

[REDACTED]

A DAERA spokesman said: "The NICS received the final draft report from PwC on Friday 30th September.

"Any report received goes through a quality assurance process to ensure it meets the agreed Terms of Reference.

"We are currently considering its contents to ensure publication would not prejudice any potential internal processes.

"After this process is complete the outcome of the review will be published."

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 21 December 2022 09:58
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Report into treatment of [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Sorry to be a pain but can you send me the last line that went to [REDACTED] please.
It was in October.
Thanks
[REDACTED]

Sent with BlackBerry Work
(www.blackberry.com)

From: [REDACTED]
Date: Wednesday, 21 Dec 2022 at 9:40 am
To: McNabb, Chris <Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk> [REDACTED]
Cc: G_DAERA PressOffice.Group, DAERA <PressOffice.Group@daera-ni.gov.uk> [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Report into treatment of [REDACTED]

Thanks for that.

Assuming TEO will issue response to Bel Tel?

[REDACTED]

From: McNabb, Chris <Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>

Sent: 21 December 2022 09:30

To: [REDACTED]

Cc: G_DAERA PressOffice.Group, DAERA <PressOffice.Group@daera-ni.gov.uk>

Subject: RE: Report into treatment of [REDACTED]

Ok. Thanks for checking. The line is ok given the previous DAERA line

Chris

Sent with BlackBerry Work
(www.blackberry.com)

From: [REDACTED]

Date: Wednesday, 21 Dec 2022, 9:26 am

To: [REDACTED]

Cc: G_DAERA PressOffice.Group, DAERA <PressOffice.Group@daera-ni.gov.uk>, McNabb, Chris <Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>, [REDACTED]

Subject: FW: Report into treatment of [REDACTED]

See clarification on final report and our previous line.

Speak soon.

From: McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>

Sent: 21 December 2022 09:19

To: [REDACTED]

Cc: Godfrey, Katrina (DAERA – Perm Sec) <Katrina.Godfrey@daera-ni.gov.uk>

Subject: RE: Report into treatment of [REDACTED]

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Sharon

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 21 December 2022 08:44

To: McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>

Cc: G_DAERA PressOffice.Group, DAERA <PressOffice.Group@daera-ni.gov.uk>

Subject: FW: Report into treatment of [REDACTED]

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"The External Review costs will be finalised following completion of all stages of the reports.

"We are unable to comment further until the review is published."

END

From: McNabb, Chris <Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>

Sent: 20 December 2022 18:10

To: [REDACTED]
ni.gov.uk>; G_DAERA PressOffice.Group, DAERA <PressOffice.Group@daera-ni.gov.uk>

Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Report into treatment of [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Can we check against what was said previously as we said before we have received the reports

Chris

Sent with BlackBerry Work
(www.blackberry.com)

From: [REDACTED]
Date: Tuesday, 20 Dec 2022 at 5:44 pm
To: [REDACTED] G_DAERA PressOffice.Group, DAERA <PressOffice.Group@daera-ni.gsi.gov.uk>
Cc: [REDACTED] McNabb, Chris <Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>
Subject: RE: Report into treatment of [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED]

Response:

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[REDACTED]

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To: DOF PressOffice <dof.pressoffice@finance-ni.gov.uk>; G_DAERA PressOffice.Group, DAERA <PressOffice.Group@daera-ni.gsi.gov.uk>
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: FW: Report into treatment of [REDACTED]

Hi all,

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Thanks
[REDACTED]

Sent with BlackBerry Work
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From: [REDACTED]
Date: Tuesday, 20 Dec 2022 at 3:48 pm
To: DOF PressOffice <dof.pressoffice@finance-ni.gov.uk>, G_DAERA PressOffice.Group, DAERA <PressOffice.Group@daera-ni.gov.uk>, TEO Press Office <press.office@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>
Subject: Report into treatment of [REDACTED]

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Good afternoon,

In April, when Jayne Brady set up the external investigation into the [REDACTED] case, she said that "it is a personal priority for me to deal with it promptly".

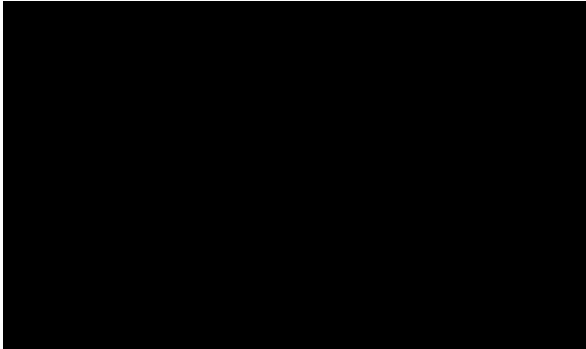
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Belfast Telegraph

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United Kingdom

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[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]

Sent:

21 December 2022 10:34

To:

G_DAERA PressOffice.Group, DAERA

Subject:

FW: For clearance: [REDACTED] query

For info

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 21 December 2022 10:22

To: Brady, Jayne <Jayne.Brady@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; McCavigan, Tracey <Tracey.McCavigan@finance-ni.gov.uk>; Godfrey, Katrina (DAERA – Perm Sec) <Katrina.Godfrey@daera-ni.gov.uk>; Gibson, Neil <Neil.Gibson@finance-ni.gov.uk>; Byrne, Jayne <Jayne.Byrne@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; Crilly, Louise <Louise.Crilly@finance-ni.gov.uk>; Hughes, David (DoF) <David.Hughes@finance-ni.gov.uk>; McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>; McLaughlin, Mark (DOF) <Mark.McLaughlin@finance-ni.gov.uk>

Cc: McNabb, Chris <Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; [REDACTED]

Subject: For clearance: [REDACTED] query

Hi all,

Thanks for your input on this.

For info, the last response which went to [REDACTED] in October was as follows:

A DAERA spokesman said: *"The NICS received the final draft report from PwC on Friday 30th September. Any report received goes through a quality assurance process to ensure it meets the agreed Terms of Reference. We are currently considering its contents to ensure publication would not prejudice any potential internal processes. After this process is complete the outcome of the review will be published."*

Given this, are you content to give him the line as agreed last night?

A TEO spokesperson said:

The final reports were received on Monday 19th December. Preparations are now being made for the publication of the external review early in the new year.

Thanks,
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 21 December 2022 11:17
To: G_DAERA PressOffice.Group, DAERA
Subject: FW: For clearance [REDACTED] query

For info

From: Brady, Jayne <HOCS@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>
Sent: 21 December 2022 11:01
To: [REDACTED] Brady, Jayne <Jayne.Brady@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; McCavigan, Tracey <Tracey.McCavigan@finance-ni.gov.uk>; Godfrey, Katrina (DAERA – Perm Sec) <Katrina.Godfrey@daera-ni.gov.uk>; Gibson, Neil <Neil.Gibson@finance-ni.gov.uk>; Byrne, Jayne <Jayne.Byrne@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; Crilly, Louise <Louise.Crilly@finance-ni.gov.uk>; Hughes, David (DoF) <David.Hughes@finance-ni.gov.uk>; McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>; McLaughlin, Mark (DOF) <Mark.McLaughlin@finance-ni.gov.uk>
Cc: McNabb, Chris <Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
Subject: RE: For clearance: [REDACTED] query

Thanks [REDACTED] very helpful.

I suggest the following:

We have now completed the *quality assurance process to ensure the outcomes report meets the agreed Terms of Reference*. On Monday the 19th Dec we received both the final outcomes and lessons learnt report. Preparations are now being made for the publication of the external review early in the new year.

Jayne Brady
Head of the Northern Ireland Civil Service
The Executive Office | Room FD34 | Stormont Castle | Stormont | BELFAST | BT4 3TT
E-mail: HOCS@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk
Tel: 028 9037 88147 | Network: 88147 | www.executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk

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From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 21 December 2022 10:22
To: Brady, Jayne <Jayne.Brady@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; McCavigan, Tracey <Tracey.McCavigan@finance-ni.gov.uk>; Godfrey, Katrina (DAERA – Perm Sec) <Katrina.Godfrey@daera-ni.gov.uk>; Gibson, Neil <Neil.Gibson@finance-ni.gov.uk>; Byrne, Jayne <Jayne.Byrne@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; Crilly, Louise

<Louise.Crilly@finance-ni.gov.uk>; Hughes, David (DoF) <David.Hughes@finance-ni.gov.uk>; McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>; McLaughlin, Mark (DOF) <Mark.McLaughlin@finance-ni.gov.uk>
Cc: McNabb, Chris <Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk> [REDACTED]

Subject: For clearance: [REDACTED] query

Hi all,

Thanks for your input on this.

For info, the last response which went to [REDACTED] in October was as follows:

A DAERA spokesman said: *"The NICS received the final draft report from PwC on Friday 30th September. Any report received goes through a quality assurance process to ensure it meets the agreed Terms of Reference. "We are currently considering its contents to ensure publication would not prejudice any potential internal processes. "After this process is complete the outcome of the review will be published."*

Given this, are you content to give him the line as agreed last night?

A TEO spokesperson said:

The final reports were received on Monday 19th December. Preparations are now being made for the publication of the external review early in the new year.

Thanks,
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 21 December 2022 14:15
To: G_DAERA PressOffice.Group, DAERA
Subject: FW: For clearance: [REDACTED] query

For our records

From: McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>
Sent: 21 December 2022 13:16
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: For clearance [REDACTED] query

[REDACTED]

Katrina is content.

Sharon

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 21 December 2022 12:09
To: McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk> [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: FW: For clearance: [REDACTED] query

Hi both,

Can you please check with Katrina that she is happy with this amended line.

Thanks,
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

From: Brady, Jayne <HOCS@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>
Sent: 21 December 2022 11:01
To: [REDACTED] Brady, Jayne <Jayne.Brady@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; McCavigan, Tracey <Tracey.McCavigan@finance-ni.gov.uk>; Godfrey, Katrina (DAERA – Perm Sec) <Katrina.Godfrey@daera-ni.gov.uk>; Gibson, Neil <Neil.Gibson@finance-ni.gov.uk>; Byrne, Jayne <Jayne.Byrne@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; Crilly, Louise <Louise.Crilly@finance-ni.gov.uk>; Hughes, David (DoF) <David.Hughes@finance-ni.gov.uk>; McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>; McLaughlin, Mark (DOF) <Mark.McLaughlin@finance-ni.gov.uk>
Cc: McNabb, Chris <Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk> [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
Subject: RE: For clearance [REDACTED] query

Thanks [REDACTED] very helpful.

I suggest the following:

We have now completed the *quality assurance process to ensure the outcomes report meets the agreed Terms of Reference. On Monday the 19th Dec we received both the final outcomes and lessons learnt report.* Preparations are now being made for the publication of the external review early in the new year.

Jayne Brady

Head of the Northern Ireland Civil Service

The Executive Office | Room FD34 | Stormont Castle | Stormont | BELFAST | BT4 3TT

E-mail: HOCS@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk

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From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 21 December 2022 10:22

To: Brady, Jayne <Jayne.Brady@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; McCavigan, Tracey <Tracey.McCavigan@finance-ni.gov.uk>; Godfrey, Katrina (DAERA – Perm Sec) <Katrina.Godfrey@daera-ni.gov.uk>; Gibson, Neil <Neil.Gibson@finance-ni.gov.uk>; Byrne, Jayne <Jayne.Byrne@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; Crilly, Louise <Louise.Crilly@finance-ni.gov.uk>; Hughes, David (DoF) <David.Hughes@finance-ni.gov.uk>; McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>; McLaughlin, Mark (DOF) <Mark.McLaughlin@finance-ni.gov.uk>
Cc: McNabb, Chris <Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk> [REDACTED]

Subject: For clearance: [REDACTED] query

Hi all,

Thanks for your input on this.

For info, the last response which went to [REDACTED] in October was as follows:

A DAERA spokesman said: *"The NICS received the final draft report from PwC on Friday 30th September. Any report received goes through a quality assurance process to ensure it meets the agreed Terms of Reference. "We are currently considering its contents to ensure publication would not prejudice any potential internal processes. "After this process is complete the outcome of the review will be published."*

Given this, are you content to give him the line as agreed last night?

A TEO spokesperson said:

The final reports were received on Monday 19th December. Preparations are now being made for the publication of the external review early in the new year.

Thanks,

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 21 December 2022 14:36
To: G_DAERA PressOffice.Group, DAERA
Subject: FW: For clearance: [REDACTED] query

For records

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 21 December 2022 14:33
To: Brady, Jayne <HOCS@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; Brady, Jayne <Jayne.Brady@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; McCavigan, Tracey <Tracey.McCavigan@finance-ni.gov.uk>; Godfrey, Katrina (DAERA – Perm Sec) <Katrina.Godfrey@daera-ni.gov.uk>; Gibson, Neil <Neil.Gibson@finance-ni.gov.uk>; Byrne, Jayne <Jayne.Byrne@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; Crilly, Louise <Louise.Crilly@finance-ni.gov.uk>; Hughes, David (DoF) <David.Hughes@finance-ni.gov.uk>; McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>; McLaughlin, Mark (DOF) <Mark.McLaughlin@finance-ni.gov.uk>
Cc: McNabb, Chris <Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk> [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: For clearance: [REDACTED] query

Hi Jayne,

Both Neil and Katrina are content with the updated line so I will issue to [REDACTED] this afternoon.

Thanks,
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

From: Brady, Jayne <HOCS@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>
Sent: 21 December 2022 11:01
To: [REDACTED] Brady, Jayne <Jayne.Brady@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; McCavigan, Tracey <Tracey.McCavigan@finance-ni.gov.uk>; Godfrey, Katrina (DAERA – Perm Sec) <Katrina.Godfrey@daera-ni.gov.uk>; Gibson, Neil <Neil.Gibson@finance-ni.gov.uk>; Byrne, Jayne <Jayne.Byrne@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; Crilly, Louise <Louise.Crilly@finance-ni.gov.uk>; Hughes, David (DoF) <David.Hughes@finance-ni.gov.uk>; McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>; McLaughlin, Mark (DOF) <Mark.McLaughlin@finance-ni.gov.uk>
Cc: McNabb, Chris <Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk> [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: For clearance: [REDACTED] query

Thanks [REDACTED] very helpful.

I suggest the following:

We have now completed the *quality assurance process to ensure the outcomes report meets the agreed Terms of Reference*. On Monday the 19th Dec we received both the final outcomes and lessons learnt report. Preparations are now being made for the publication of the external review early in the new year.

Jayne Brady

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From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 21 December 2022 10:22

To: Brady, Jayne <Jayne.Brady@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; McCavigan, Tracey <Tracey.McCavigan@finance-ni.gov.uk>; Godfrey, Katrina (DAERA – Perm Sec) <Katrina.Godfrey@daera-ni.gov.uk>; Gibson, Neil <Neil.Gibson@finance-ni.gov.uk>; Byrne, Jayne <Jayne.Byrne@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; Crilly, Louise <Louise.Crilly@finance-ni.gov.uk>; Hughes, David (DoF) <David.Hughes@finance-ni.gov.uk>; McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>; McLaughlin, Mark (DOF) <Mark.McLaughlin@finance-ni.gov.uk>

Cc: McNabb, Chris <Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk> [REDACTED]

Subject: For clearance: [REDACTED] query

Hi all,

Thanks for your input on this.

For info, the last response which went to [REDACTED] in October was as follows:

A DAERA spokesman said: *"The NICS received the final draft report from PwC on Friday 30th September. Any report received goes through a quality assurance process to ensure it meets the agreed Terms of Reference. "We are currently considering its contents to ensure publication would not prejudice any potential internal processes. "After this process is complete the outcome of the review will be published."*

Given this, are you content to give him the line as agreed last night?

A TEO spokesperson said:

The final reports were received on Monday 19th December. Preparations are now being made for the publication of the external review early in the new year.

Thanks,
[REDACTED]



[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 21 December 2022 15:12
To: [REDACTED] DOF PressOffice; G_DAERA PressOffice.Group, DAERA; TEO Press Office
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Report into treatment of [REDACTED]

H [REDACTED]

Please see response below as promised.

Thanks,
[REDACTED]

A TEO spokesperson:

"We have now completed the quality assurance process to ensure the outcomes report meets the agreed Terms of Reference. On Monday 19th December, we received both the final outcomes and lessons learnt reports. "Preparations are now being made for the publication of the external review early in the new year."

From [REDACTED]
Sent: 20 December 2022 15:48
To: DOF PressOffice <dof.pressoffice@finance-ni.gov.uk>; G_DAERA PressOffice.Group, DAERA <PressOffice.Group@daera-ni.gov.uk>; TEO Press Office <press.office@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>
Subject: Report into treatment of [REDACTED]

Caution – This email has been received from outside the NICS network. Please ensure you can verify the sender's name and email address. Treat all attachments and links with caution.
FOR INTERNAL NICS STAFF ONLY - If you have any concerns regarding the email please forward to spam@finance-ni.gov.uk.

Good afternoon,

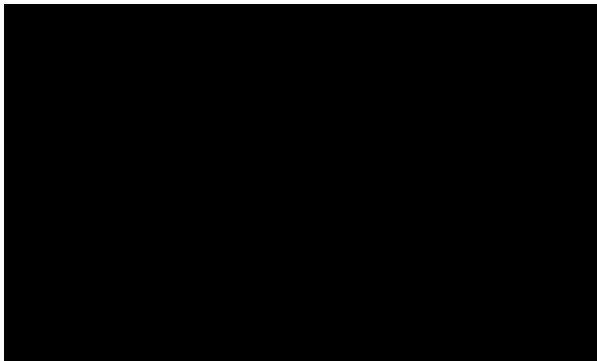
In April, when Jayne Brady set up the external investigation into the [REDACTED] case, she said that "it is a personal priority for me to deal with it promptly".

It's now eight months since that promise and six months since the relevant part of the external report was received by the NICS. Not a single action has been taken to deal with behaviour which has been so costly both for taxpayers and the collective reputation of the good civil servants with the NICS. There has not been any public explanation of what is happening, despite the NICS's claims that it has been reformed.

As the three departments who jointly commissioned this investigation, can you please explain why the PwC report remains unpublished, when the taxpayers who paid for it can expect to see it, and whether any disciplinary action has been taken against anyone who treated [REDACTED] so appallingly?

I don't need a response to this until lunch time tomorrow.

Thanks,



Belfast Telegraph



Tell it like it is.



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33 Clarendon Road,

Belfast, BT1 3BG

United Kingdom

Switchboard +44 (0)28 90264000

Registered in the United Kingdom No: 01908967

This footnote also confirms that this email message has been swept by Microsoft Exchange Online Protection for the presence of computer viruses.

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 02 January 2023 15:27
To: Brady, Jayne; Brady, Jayne; McCavigan, Tracey; Godfrey, Katrina (DAERA – Perm Sec); Gibson, Neil; Byrne, Jayne; Crilly, Louise; Hughes, David (DoF); McFlynn, Sharon; McLaughlin, Mark (DOF)
Cc: McNabb, Chris; [REDACTED]
(DAERA); [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: For clearance: [REDACTED] query
Attachments: Bel Tel 0201 p1.jpg; Bel Tel 0201 p4.jpg

Hi all,

Please see article from this morning's Belfast Telegraph attached for info.

Thanks,
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 21 December 2022 14:33
To: Brady, Jayne <HOCS@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; Brady, Jayne <Jayne.Brady@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; McCavigan, Tracey <Tracey.McCavigan@finance-ni.gov.uk>; Godfrey, Katrina (DAERA – Perm Sec) <Katrina.Godfrey@daera-ni.gov.uk>; Gibson, Neil <Neil.Gibson@finance-ni.gov.uk>; Byrne, Jayne <Jayne.Byrne@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; Crilly, Louise <Louise.Crilly@finance-ni.gov.uk>; Hughes, David (DoF) <David.Hughes@finance-ni.gov.uk>; McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>; McLaughlin, Mark (DOF) <Mark.McLaughlin@finance-ni.gov.uk>
Cc: McNabb, Chris <Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
Subject: RE: For clearance [REDACTED] query

Hi Jayne,

Both Neil and Katrina are content with the updated line so I will issue to [REDACTED] this afternoon.

Thanks,
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

From: Brady, Jayne <HOCS@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>

Sent: 21 December 2022 11:01

To: [REDACTED] Brady, Jayne <Jayne.Brady@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; McCavigan, Tracey <Tracey.McCavigan@finance-ni.gov.uk>; Godfrey, Katrina (DAERA – Perm Sec) <Katrina.Godfrey@daera-ni.gov.uk>; Gibson, Neil <Neil.Gibson@finance-ni.gov.uk>; Byrne, Jayne <Jayne.Byrne@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; Crilly, Louise <Louise.Crilly@finance-ni.gov.uk>; Hughes, David (DoF) <David.Hughes@finance-ni.gov.uk>; McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>; McLaughlin, Mark (DOF) <Mark.McLaughlin@finance-ni.gov.uk>

Cc: McNabb, Chris <Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; [REDACTED]

Subject: RE: For clearance: [REDACTED] query

Thanks [REDACTED] very helpful.

I suggest the following:

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Jayne Brady

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From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 21 December 2022 10:22

To: Brady, Jayne <Jayne.Brady@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; McCavigan, Tracey <Tracey.McCavigan@finance-ni.gov.uk>; Godfrey, Katrina (DAERA – Perm Sec) <Katrina.Godfrey@daera-ni.gov.uk>; Gibson, Neil <Neil.Gibson@finance-ni.gov.uk>; Byrne, Jayne <Jayne.Byrne@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; Crilly, Louise <Louise.Crilly@finance-ni.gov.uk>; Hughes, David (DoF) <David.Hughes@finance-ni.gov.uk>; McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>; McLaughlin, Mark (DOF) <Mark.McLaughlin@finance-ni.gov.uk>

Cc: McNabb, Chris <Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; [REDACTED]

Subject: For clearance: [REDACTED] query

Hi all,

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 06 January 2023 16:10
To: McFlynn, Sharon; [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: DAERA Oversight Board - Monday 9 January @ 4.30pm
Attachments: [REDACTED] queries - updated December 2022.docx

Sorry when she says media pack, is she referring to the big doc of previously issued media lines ? If so, I have attached same! I wasn't sure what media pack meant but might be this

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED] On Behalf Of McFlynn, Sharon
Sent: 06 January 2023 15:55
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: FW: DAERA Oversight Board - Monday 9 January @ 4.30pm
Importance: High

Good afternoon,

Would either of you have this media pack in advance of Sharon's meeting or is this something she already has?

Thanks,

[REDACTED]

From: Byrne, Jayne <Jayne.Byrne@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>
Sent: 06 January 2023 15:41
To: Sayee, Natasha <Natasha.Sayee@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>; McLaughlin, Mark (DOF) <Mark.McLaughlin@finance-ni.gov.uk>; McNabb, Chris <Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>
Cc: Crilly, Louise <Louise.Crilly@finance-ni.gov.uk>; McCavigan, Tracey <Tracey.McCavigan@finance-ni.gov.uk>
Subject: RE: DAERA Oversight Board - Monday 9 January @ 4.30pm
Importance: High

Natasha, thanks for your update below. Hopefully Sharon can share the previous media pack on Monday and will there be an updated Comms Plan?

We can pick up the timeline of events with Louise and Tracey on Monday.

Have a good weekend.

Regards
Jayne

From: Sayee, Natasha <Natasha.Sayee@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>
Sent: 06 January 2023 09:55

To: Byrne, Jayne <Jayne.Byrne@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>; McLaughlin, Mark (DOF) <Mark.McLaughlin@finance-ni.gov.uk>; McNabb, Chris <Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>

Subject: RE: DAERA Oversight Board - Monday 9 January @ 4.30pm

Hi Jayne,

Thanks for chat just now.

Sharon has gathered the pack of previous media and our responses relating to DAERA.

However, comms could use that timeline of events which was previously requested from legal/audit. We just need a high level look back and what happened when.

Kind regards,

Natasha

From: Sayee, Natasha

Sent: 05 January 2023 17:36

To: Byrne, Jayne <Jayne.Byrne@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>; McLaughlin, Mark (DOF) <Mark.McLaughlin@finance-ni.gov.uk>; McNabb, Chris <Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>

Subject: RE: DAERA Oversight Board - Monday 9 January @ 4.30pm

Hi Jayne,

All other comms colleagues are off until Monday.

I just wanted to say that the chronology shouldn't come from comms colleagues – there may be some confusion here – as we did ask for it – as we need it to assist us. It should come from the policy lead please. Can this be remedied and requested please?

Apologies I am just picking up on this oversight now, as I was off.

Meanwhile Mark has kindly put together some questions, I will feed into that tomorrow and Chris will do the same next week, but we will not have a Q&A completed by Monday. We will need the policy leads to answer the questions for us, which we will plain English.

I hope this is helpful, happy to discuss tomorrow.

Many thanks,

Natasha

From: Byrne, Jayne <Jayne.Byrne@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>

Sent: 05 January 2023 16:17

To: McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>; McLaughlin, Mark (DOF) <Mark.McLaughlin@finance-ni.gov.uk>; McNabb, Chris <Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; Sayee, Natasha <Natasha.Sayee@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>

Subject: DAERA Oversight Board - Monday 9 January @ 4.30pm

Importance: High

Good afternoon all and a happy new year to you.

Can you help me please?

The action for the Comms leads from the last Oversight Board is as follows (and contained in the attached).

Would it be possible to get an update on these actions by lunch time tomorrow (Friday) so I can provide an update for Jayne in her briefing pack for the weekend?

Please let me know what you think.

Many thanks

Jayne

	Action	Lead	Comments	Timeframe
(3)	Comms Action Plan			
	Chronology of events from instigation of review to be prepared	Comms Leads		Immediate
	To review final report and prepare lines to take and potential media questions.	Comms Leads		

Jayne Byrne

Chief of Staff

Office of the Head of the Civil Service

The Executive Office, Stormont Castle

Stormont, Belfast BT4 3TT

Tel: 028 90 379 810 (Internal extension 89810)

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I work flexibly and sometimes you may receive emails from me outside normal working hours. I respect your working pattern, so please do not feel obligated to respond out of your normal working hours.

DATE	MEDIA OUTLET	QUERY	RESPONSE
23 September 2021	Irish News	<p>The newsdesk has received a press release in relation to a tribunal case taken against DAERA by [REDACTED] in which she has won.</p> <p>Her legal team say she highlighted not only serious issues within the DAERA relating to animal welfare, but also detrimental implications for traceability within the supply chain.</p> <p>They say it is a landmark case in respect of the Office of the Industrial Tribunals and Fair Employment Tribunal and could result in a total award to the claimant of an estimated £1million. The details of the case, her legal team say, are embargoed to midnight tonight.</p> <p>Please can I check if there is a statement from the department in relation to this tribunal case?</p>	<p>A DAERA Spokesperson said: "The Department has noted the judgment by the Tribunal and cannot comment any further at this stage."</p>
23 September 2021	Belfast Telegraph	<p>If DAERA would like to issue a comment in relation to the case, please send a response by 6pm today (thurs)</p>	<p>A DAERA Spokesperson said: "The Department has noted the judgment by the Tribunal and cannot comment any further at this stage."</p>
23 September 2021	BBC Farmgate	<p>I would like to interview a DAERA representative/comment about the judgement in the case of the [REDACTED] tribunal.</p>	<p>A DAERA Spokesperson said: "The Department has noted the judgment by the Tribunal and cannot comment any further at this stage."</p>
23 September 2021	BBC Newsline	<p>My colleague [REDACTED] was in touch with you earlier I believe, asking for a statement from the department following the decision at the industrial tribunal of [REDACTED]</p> <p>Can you advise on where you are with that?</p>	<p>A DAERA Spokesperson said: "The Department has noted the judgment by the Tribunal and cannot comment any further at this stage."</p>

DATE	MEDIA OUTLET	QUERY	RESPONSE
24 September 2021	Ulster Herald	- will the Department be responding to the outcome of the tribunal case brought by Belfast law firm McCartan Turkington Breen on behalf of [REDACTED]	A DAERA Spokesperson said: "The Department has noted the judgment by the Tribunal and cannot comment any further at this stage."
24 September 2021	Belfast Live	Would it be possible to get comments from DAERA on the outcome of the [REDACTED] industrial tribunal?	A DAERA Spokesperson said: "The Department has noted the judgment by the Tribunal and cannot comment any further at this stage."
29 September 2021	Veterinary Record	Please may I have your lines in relation to this story: https://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/news/northern-ireland/vet-who-voiced-food-safety-concerns-in-line-for-1m-payout-from-stormont-40883318.html	A DAERA Spokesperson said: "The Department has noted the judgment by the Tribunal and cannot comment any further at this stage."
31 January 2022	Belfast Telegraph	Four months ago, an industrial tribunal found against the department in the case of [REDACTED] with huge implications for taxpayers. Can you please answer the following questions in relation to the outcome of that case: 1) Have [REDACTED] or any other official been disciplined for their behaviour? 2) If they have been disciplined, what was the outcome of that process? 3) How much compensation has been paid to [REDACTED] because of how she was treated by her colleagues at the department? 4) How much has the department paid on its own and [REDACTED] legal costs in fighting her claim? 5) Please provide me with a copy of [REDACTED] declarations of interest.	A DAERA spokesperson said: "The appeal date has been set for the last week of April 2022. The Department has noted the judgment by the Tribunal but as it is now under appeal, cannot comment any further at this stage."
18 February 2022	Belfast Telegraph	Can you clarify who has appealed, and whether the minister authorised the appeal?	A DAERA spokesperson said: "We are unable to comment any further."
2 March 2022	Belfast Telegraph	Is the department using public money to fund this appeal?	A DAERA spokesperson said: "The department is appealing the judgement, as is their right and will be funding same."

DATE	MEDIA OUTLET	QUERY	RESPONSE
9 March 2022	Belfast Telegraph	<p>I'm writing about this for tomorrow's paper and have just realised that in response to my initial query asking for a copy of [REDACTED] declarations of interest there was no response.</p> <p>Can you please send me a link to, or a copy of, those declarations?</p>	<p>As [REDACTED] is a member of the Departmental Board – his register of interests is freely available on the website at https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/publications/departamental-board-register-interests</p> <p>I will get back to you about [REDACTED]</p>
14 March 2022	Belfast Telegraph	<p>I still haven't received a copy of [REDACTED] register of interests. Can you provide that?</p> <p>Also, in relation to [REDACTED] – The tribunal found as a matter of fact that he knew the manager of Ballymena Livestock Market "personally" and that "he knew the owner of the market who was Chairman of the Markets Association". The tribunal also found that [REDACTED] acted in a way which discouraged [REDACTED] from enforcing the law against Ballymena Livestock Market. Why did [REDACTED] not register his links with these individuals at Ballymena Livestock Market in his register of interests, and will he do so now?</p>	<p>A DAERA spokesperson said: "As this is a court matter, the Department will not be commenting any further."</p>

DATE	MEDIA OUTLET	QUERY	RESPONSE
7 April 2022	Belfast Telegraph	<p>The [redacted] case was mentioned in the Court of Appeal this morning where it was said that DAERA and [redacted] have agreed a resolution in principle and the case no longer needs to be listed for hearing. Given that it was the department which had taken this appeal, that means that DAERA is abandoning its appeal and accepting that the original devastating judgment – which severely criticised chief vet [redacted] and others in the department – was correct.</p> <p>1) How much public money has DAERA spent on this case thus far?</p> <p>2) Has the department only abandoned this appeal because the media began reporting on what the department was doing?</p> <p>3) Having allowed so much public money to be spent on attempting to overturn this judgment, was it Edwin Poots who authorised the decision to abandon the appeal?</p>	<p>A spokesman from the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs said: “The Department unreservedly apologises to [redacted].”</p> <p>“The Department has now agreed a settlement in principle between the parties, subject to detailed terms being drawn up, and as a result, we have formally withdrawn the appeal. The costings for this case have not yet been finalised. The Department takes the protection of those raising a concern extremely seriously and has commissioned an internal review into this matter and it would not be appropriate to comment further at this time. This review will be completed as soon as possible.</p> <p>“The Department has already completed an internal audit, focused on the robustness of the current controls for animal traceability in livestock markets and abattoirs and issues raised by [redacted]. That audit made a number of recommendations which are now being implemented with urgency.</p> <p>“Maintaining high standards in animal traceability and associated disease risk is of the utmost importance and the Department remains confident that traceability and public health has never been at risk.”</p> <p>“The Minister is not normally involved in any staff-related tribunal cases and in this case, had no involvement.”</p>

DATE	MEDIA OUTLET	QUERY	RESPONSE
8 April 2022	Belfast Live	<p>Can I have a comment on the department dropping its appeal against an industrial tribunal decision involving [REDACTED] please?</p> <p>Can you also tell me whether any of the issues she raised while employed have been escalated or investigated please?</p>	<p>A spokesman from the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs said: "The Department unreservedly apologises to [REDACTED]</p> <p>"The Department has now agreed a settlement in principle between the parties, subject to detailed terms being drawn up, and as a result, we have formally withdrawn the appeal.</p> <p>"The Department takes the protection of those raising a concern extremely seriously and has commissioned an internal review into this matter and it would not be appropriate to comment further at this time. This review will be completed as soon as possible.</p> <p>"The Department has already completed an internal audit, focused on the robustness of the current controls for animal traceability in livestock markets and abattoirs and issues raised by [REDACTED]. That audit made a number of recommendations which are now being implemented with urgency.</p> <p>"Maintaining high standards in animal traceability and associated disease risk is of the utmost importance and the Department remains confident that traceability and public health has never been at risk."</p>

DATE	MEDIA OUTLET	QUERY	RESPONSE
8 April 2022	Belfast Live	<p>Are you able to share the audit please?</p> <p>"That audit made a number of recommendations which are now being implemented with urgency."</p>	<p>you will need to request this as an FOI via daera.informationmanager@daera-ni.gov.uk</p>
15 April 2022	Belfast Telegraph	<p>I understand that [REDACTED] has promoted [REDACTED] despite what has been revealed about his shocking behaviour towards [REDACTED]</p> <p>1) Does Edwin Poots approve of this?</p> <p>2) Is the permanent secretary in agreement with this decision?</p> <p>3) Has a single civil servant been disciplined for how [REDACTED] was treated?</p> <p>4) Now that the legal action has ended, please provide me with [REDACTED] register of interests – both as it stands now, and as it stood in July 2016.</p> <p>5) The department said last week that it was apologising to [REDACTED]. What exactly are you apologising to her for?</p>	<p>A spokesperson for the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs said: "Following an open and transparent temporary promotion competition, the Permanent Secretary was made aware of the successful candidate. DAERA Minister Edwin Poots has no role in any such competitions.</p> <p>"Following the settlement of this case the Department has begun an Internal Audit investigation into the background to, handling of the case and the issues surrounding it and it would not be appropriate to comment further at this time. The Department apologised unreservedly to [REDACTED] for the hurt and distress that was caused to her and which led to the circumstances under which she resigned. This investigation will be completed as soon as possible.</p> <p>"At the time of this case and to the present day, [REDACTED] is not a Departmental Board Member and therefore DAERA does not make such declarations of interest publicly available on the grounds that this is third party personal data."</p>

DATE	MEDIA OUTLET	QUERY	RESPONSE
19 April 2022	BBC Nolan Show	<p>Does the Department, or any of the officials involved, dispute any of the claims in the coverage by the Belfast Telegraph in the following article: https://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/news/northern-ireland/civil-servant-who-forced-out-whistleblower-vet-rewarded-with-promotion-41565018.html</p> <p>If so, please outline which specific points are disputed and why.</p> <p>Does the Minister deny he had any role in the decision to abandon the legal fight against the decision in the [REDACTED] case? If so, why?</p> <p>And if not, will the Department provide the public with transparency as to who did – and explain how such a significant decision was taken without the Minister’s knowledge?</p> <p>Why has the Department refused to release the register of interests for [REDACTED] to the Belfast Telegraph, and why has it changed the reasons for refusing to release the information?</p> <p>Will the Department commit to transparency on the details of [REDACTED] register of interests, and if not, why not?</p> <p>Can you provide a representative from the Department, or the minister, to appear on the programme tomorrow to discuss these matters?</p>	<p>A spokesperson for the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs said: “Following an open and transparent temporary promotion competition, the Permanent Secretary was made aware of the successful candidate. DAERA Minister Edwin Poots has no role in any such competitions.</p> <p>“The Permanent Secretary, Anthony Harbinson, in his capacity as Accounting Officer, based on legal advice, took the decision to settle this case.</p> <p>“Following the settlement of this case the Department has begun an Internal Audit investigation into the background to, handling of the case and the issues surrounding it and it would not be appropriate to comment further at this time. The Department apologised unreservedly to [REDACTED] for the hurt and distress that was caused to her and which led to the circumstances under which she resigned. This investigation will be completed as soon as possible.</p> <p>“At the time of this case and to the present day, Dr Henderson is not a Departmental Board Member and therefore DAERA does not make such declarations of interest publicly available on the grounds that this is third party personal data.”</p> <p>“The Minister is not normally involved in any staff-related tribunal cases and in this case, had no involvement.”</p>

DATE	MEDIA OUTLET	QUERY	RESPONSE
21 April 2022	Irish News	<p>Several former members of the agriculture committee have called on Edwin Poots to make a formal statement about the [REDACTED] case firstly to reassure customers about food safety and secondly to reassure whistleblowers that they will be listened to</p>	<p>DAERA Minister Edwin Poots said: "An important priority for my Department is to ensure the integrity of our animal traceability systems and our disease status for public health, for animal health and for international trade. While the matters under consideration by the recent industrial tribunal occurred before my time as Minister, my Department has completed an internal audit review of the issues raised and is implementing the recommendations from that review with urgency.</p> <p>"Furthermore, I have asked my Permanent Secretary to urgently establish a taskforce to ensure the implementation, without delay, of those recommendations, and to ensure that our traceability systems remain robust as possible and that Departmental policies are being followed. I have also asked for reassurance that the Department will monitor closely implementation of the actions being taken as a result of the internal review and to take further action if necessary.</p> <p>"While Ministers do not and should not get involved in civil service personnel issues, as has always been the case, I have also sought reassurance from the DAERA Permanent Secretary that all HR processes have been, and continue to be, followed."</p> <p>A spokesman for the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs said: "Following the outcome of the case in October 2021, the Department established an Internal Audit Review of Cattle Traceability System within Veterinary Animal</p>

Health Group. This review was focused on the robustness of current controls for animal traceability in livestock markets and abattoirs and also considered all of the issues raised by [REDACTED]. The review made a number of recommendations which the Department is implementing.

“Officials are working to implement a range of measures which will further enhance and strengthen our animal traceability systems.

“APHIS is widely recognised as a world leading software system and one of the most advanced of any region. This multispecies database processes significant numbers of transactions every day from multiple sources. This system itself, and how that system is used, is monitored by a dedicated team and the Department continues to invest heavily in upgrades and training for all users, to ensure the data and records held on the database are robust.

“The Department can reassure the public and the agri-food industry that it will continue to review its risk management tools and will seek to strengthen the controls where necessary for animal traceability to ensure continued confidence in the system.

“The Department takes extremely seriously all the matters raised following the outcome of the recent tribunal and will be progressing an internal review into the matter, to be completed as soon as possible. It would therefore be inappropriate to comment further at this time.”

DATE	MEDIA OUTLET	QUERY	RESPONSE
21 April 2022	BBC Nolan Show	<p>Can you confirm whether the Department will release the internal recommendations in response to the [redacted] tribunal judgement by the end of today?</p> <p>In relation to the judgement and its criticism of [redacted]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How can the public have confidence in the [redacted] given that the judgement found that his account was not "candid, reliable or full"? - How can the public have confidence in the [redacted] after the tribunal found he subjected a whistleblower to "detrimental treatment"? - Does the Department intend to investigate – or has it investigated – the photographic evidence [redacted] claims show the "seriousness of welfare issues at Ballymena"? <p>In addition:</p> <p>The judgement stated the following – which was uncontested by the Department:</p> <p>"It was common case that this deletion of moves occurred in practice both in accordance with and outside the scope of the Department's policy".</p> <p>Therefore, will the Department provide us with the statistics which show how common this was, and a breakdown of the number of deletion of moves which were inside and outside the policy?</p>	<p>DAERA Minister Edwin Poots said: "An important priority for my Department is to ensure the integrity of our animal traceability systems and our disease status for public health, for animal health and for international trade. While the matters under consideration by the recent industrial tribunal occurred before my time as Minister, my Department has completed an internal audit review of the issues raised and is implementing the recommendations from that review with urgency.</p> <p>"Furthermore, I have asked my Permanent Secretary to urgently establish a taskforce to implement, without delay, those recommendations, and to ensure that our traceability systems remain robust as possible and that Departmental policies are being followed. I have also asked for reassurance that the Department will monitor closely implementation of the actions being taken as a result of the internal review and to take further action if necessary.</p> <p>"While Ministers do not and should not get involved in civil service personnel issues, as has always been the case, I have also sought reassurance from the DAERA Permanent Secretary that all HR processes have been, and continue to be, followed."</p> <p>A spokesman for the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs said: "Following the outcome of the case in October 2021, the Department established an Internal Audit Review of Cattle Traceability System within Veterinary Animal</p>

Health Group. This review was focused on the robustness of current controls for animal traceability in livestock markets and abattoirs and also considered all of the issues raised by Dr Bronckaers. The review made a number of recommendations which the Department is implementing.

“Officials are working to implement a range of measures which will further enhance and strengthen our animal traceability systems. The recommendations are outlined below.

“APHIS is widely recognised as a world leading software system and one of the most advanced of any region. This multispecies database processes significant numbers of transactions every day from multiple sources. This system itself, and how that system is used, is monitored by a dedicated team and the Department continues to invest heavily in upgrades and training for all users, to ensure the data and records held on the database are robust.

“The Department can reassure the public and the agri-food industry that it will continue to review its risk management tools and will seek to strengthen the controls where necessary for animal traceability to ensure continued confidence in the system.

“The Department takes extremely seriously all the matters raised following the outcome of the recent tribunal and will be progressing an internal review into the matter, to be completed as soon as possible. It would therefore be inappropriate to comment further at this time.”

Recommendations

1. Management should develop:
 - a. A policy to deal with the issue of deletions and amendments of cattle movement records; seeking appropriate legal advice to ensure it is fully compliant with all relevant legislation;
 - b. Instructions/guidance for markets around deletion/amendment of moves to help achieve compliance with this policy; and
 - c. Appropriate checks over markets to ensure they are complying with policy/legislative requirements.
2.
 - a. Management should ensure that further investigation is carried out to determine the reason why 2 individual markets have significantly more amendments/deletions; and
 - b. Going forward it is recommended that an annual report is produced to show the number of amendments made to movement documents (in respect of movements to a different herd) against total throughput of animals for each market and any anomalies investigated.
3.
 - a. Management should explore if amendments/deletions to cattle movement records made by Animal and Public Health Information System (APHIS) Support Unit can be separated from other fault reports and ensure that appropriate checks are completed to confirm their validity.
4.
 - a. Management should consult with Digital Services Division (DSD) to ensure that appropriate access controls are established and that these comply with best practice for users accessing APHIS in markets/abattoirs.

5. Management should ensure that:
- a. The APHS Data Protection/System Security Agreement with markets is regularly reviewed to ensure that the agreement remains up to date and reflective of any changes needed.
 - b. Markets are asked to sign the APHS Data Protection/System Security Agreement on an annual basis.
- 6.
- a. Management should ensure that Welfare and Enforcement Agency Inspections carried out are signed off and introduce a check to ensure all necessary signatories are completed.
- 7.
- a. It is recommended the Department issue clear guidance or provide training to the markets detailing the checks that should be carried out before cattle are accepted into the market. Consideration should be given to taking appropriate enforcement action where offences continue to be committed.
8. Management should ensure that:
- a. All ID checks carried out should be signed and dated by the Veterinary Officer (VO) to confirm that checks have been carried out and that either:
 - (i) No issues have been identified; or
 - (ii) Details of issues identified recorded and follow up details recorded (if applicable)
 - b. A standardised approach is taken towards record keeping in respect of the 10% daily ID checks carried out by VOs at abattoirs.

DATE	MEDIA OUTLET	QUERY	RESPONSE
22 April 2022	BBC Nolan Show	<p>The statement says :</p> <p>“ The review made a number of recommendations which the Department is implementing.”</p> <p>And Minister Poots says</p> <p>“</p> <p>my Department has completed an internal audit review of the issues raised and is implementing the recommendations from that review with urgency.</p> <p>“Furthermore, I have asked my Permanent Secretary to urgently establish a taskforce to implement, without delay, those recommendations”</p> <p>When was the Permanent Secretary asked to establish the task force ?</p> <p>Have any of the recommendations been implemented to date ?</p> <p>Will the [REDACTED] have any role in the task force , or any role in implementing the recommendations ?</p>	<p>“The Department takes extremely seriously all the matters which contributed to the outcome of the recent tribunal and will be progressing an internal review into them. This review is being undertaken with urgency and will be completed at pace.</p> <p>“With respect to traceability, Northern Ireland has a unique and world leading traceability system (APHIS) that enables the real time recording of bovine animal movements between farms, markets and abattoirs. The system does, and should, facilitate corrective amendments to be made to ensure accuracy of the notified and recorded movements held on APHIS.</p> <p>“For the 12-month period, from November 2020 – October 2021, only around 2% of Market movements had a corrective amendment to the movement made by a Market Operator within 1 working day after the original sale. This corrective amendment is necessary to ensure the information held on the APHIS database accurately reflects the location of all animals and the movements that took place.</p> <p>“Additionally, should any animal be physically moved onto any holding within this timeframe, prior to its final destination, there is a legal obligation to notify the Department. Where the Department has information or evidence of a false notification, the Department will investigate and take appropriate enforcement action.</p> <p>“To ensure food safety, DAERA Official Veterinarian led teams deliver official controls in all Northern</p>

			<p>Ireland abattoirs. These controls can be broadly divided into ante and post mortem checks, as part of ante-mortem checks, only those having full traceability record will be deemed eligible for slaughter for human consumption.”</p> <p>In addition, the DAERA Permanent Secretary has offered to meet with [REDACTED] and that offer also extends to include a meeting with the Minister Edwin Poots.</p>
<p>22 April 2022</p>	<p>BBC Newsline</p>	<p>Could I get the latest statement on the [REDACTED] tribunal please?</p>	<p>DAERA Minister Edwin Poots said: “An important priority for my Department is to ensure the integrity of our animal traceability systems and our disease status for public health, for animal health and for international trade. While the matters under consideration by the recent industrial tribunal occurred before my time as Minister, my Department has completed an internal audit review of the issues raised and is implementing the recommendations from that review with urgency. “Furthermore, I have asked my Permanent Secretary to urgently establish a taskforce to ensure the implementation, without delay, of those recommendations, and to ensure that our traceability systems remain as robust as possible and that Departmental policies are being followed. I have also asked for reassurance that the Department will monitor closely implementation of the actions being taken as a result of the internal review and to take further action if necessary. “While Ministers do not and should not get involved in civil service personnel issues, as has always been the case, I have also sought reassurance from the DAERA Permanent Secretary that all HR processes have been, and continue to be, followed.”</p>

DATE	MEDIA OUTLET	QUERY	RESPONSE
22 April 2022	Belfast Telegraph	<p>I have been told that DAERA insisted on a clause in the settlement terms with [REDACTED] which insisted that the department did not admit liability for anything – ie. it agreed to pay out a huge sum while claiming it had done nothing wrong.</p> <p>1) Did the department pay more in order to secure the inclusion of this ludicrous claim in the settlement terms?</p> <p>2) have also been told that despite the department repeatedly saying in PR statements that it unreservedly apologises to Dr Bronckaers, you have yet to apologise to her either personally or through her solicitor. Why is that so?</p> <p>3) Do [REDACTED] want to issue any personal apology for their appalling treatment of [REDACTED]</p>	<p>1) Did the department pay more in order to secure the inclusion of this ludicrous claim in the settlement terms?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DAERA and [REDACTED] have reached a binding compromise agreement which is in full and final settlement of the litigation between them. • As this is a compromise agreement between the parties, the Department has made no admission of liability. This is a standard term in compromise agreements. • In line with normal practice, the Department does not intend to provide any comment on behalf of any of the seven witnesses who gave evidence to the Tribunal. <p>2. I have also been told that despite the department repeatedly saying in PR statements that it unreservedly apologises to [REDACTED] you have yet to apologise to her either personally or through her solicitor. Why is that so?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Department issued a public apology to [REDACTED] for the hurt and distress caused and has separately now issued a private apology to her through her solicitor. <p>3. Do [REDACTED] want to issue any personal apology for their appalling treatment of [REDACTED]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The public apology to [REDACTED] was made by the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs as her former employer. The private apology has been given directly by the Permanent Secretary to [REDACTED] on behalf of the Department.

DATE	MEDIA OUTLET	QUERY	RESPONSE
23 April 2022	BBC Nolan Show	<p>The Nolan Show has been told a telephone was handed in to [REDACTED] by [REDACTED] when she left her job.</p> <p>We understand the Department knew there was likely to be footage on that phone relating to concerns [REDACTED] had of possible alleged breaches of animal rights at Ballymena Livestock market.</p> <p>Is it the position of Daera that the phone has been</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Destroyed? If so, who destroyed it? 2. Lost? If so, who lost it? 3. Was the footage on the phone secured , since it relates to concerns around animal rights ? 3. Why was the footage not considered as potential evidence for prosecution ? <p>The Nolan Show understands the phone was switched on after it was handed back to the Department by [REDACTED]</p> <p>Did [REDACTED] switch it on and if he did, did he view the footage relating to Ballymena livestock market?</p> <p>If it was not [REDACTED] who switched on the telephone and why?</p>	<p>“A key priority of the Department is animal welfare. During the period 01 January 2017 to 31 December 2020, nearly 5,000 production site inspections for compliance with animal welfare requirements for farmed animals were completed.</p> <p>“The mobile phone in question was surrendered and disposed of securely in line with NICS leavers policy. Departmental phones are password protected and the password is known only to the officer to whom the phone is assigned.</p> <p>“The Department can confirm that photographic evidence gathered by [REDACTED] and a DAERA enforcement inspector in September 2017, was filed and retained on the Department’s electronic records management system as part of official records, and formed part of enforcement considerations for suspected breaches of animal welfare legislation. Following this inspection and a further inspection by Department inspectors, a warning letter was issued to the market operator outlining the non-compliances found and detailing the necessary urgent corrective actions. Following the warning letter, the Department conducted a further nine unannounced inspections of the market in the period up to Spring 2018. The inspections confirmed that the livestock market operator had taken and maintained corrective actions and no welfare issues were detected during these nine inspections.”</p>

DATE	MEDIA OUTLET	QUERY	RESPONSE
24 April 2022	BBC Nolan Show	<p>We have now been told [REDACTED] made the initial decision to launch an appeal of the case . Is this denied ?</p> <p>If it is not , what checks were in place within the Department to ensure the right decision was made around whether an appeal was launched or not , given [REDACTED] involvement in the case</p>	<p>"A key priority of the Department is animal welfare. During the period 01 January 2017 to 31 December 2020, nearly 5,000 production site inspections for compliance with animal welfare requirements for farmed animals were completed.</p> <p>"The mobile phone in question was surrendered and disposed of securely in line with NICS leavers policy. Departmental phones are password protected and the password is known only to the officer to whom the phone is assigned.</p> <p>"The Department can confirm that photographic evidence gathered by [REDACTED] and a DAERA enforcement inspector in September 2017, was filed and retained on the Department's electronic records management system as part of official records, and formed part of enforcement considerations for suspected breaches of animal welfare legislation. Following this inspection and a further inspection by Department inspectors, a warning letter was issued to the market operator outlining the non-compliances found and detailing the necessary urgent corrective actions. Following the warning letter, the Department conducted a further nine unannounced inspections of the market in the period up to Spring 2018. The inspections confirmed that the livestock market operator had taken and maintained corrective actions and no welfare issues were detected during these nine inspections."</p>

DATE	MEDIA OUTLET	QUERY	RESPONSE
24 April 2022	BBC Good Morning Ulster	Can GMU get a response to the statement below from DAERA please.	<p>A spokesman for the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs said: "The Department unreservedly apologises to [REDACTED] for the hurt and distress caused."</p> <p>"Following the outcome of the case in October 2021, the Department established an Internal Audit Review of Cattle Traceability System within Veterinary Animal Health Group. This review was focused on the robustness of current controls for animal traceability in livestock markets and abattoirs and also considered all of the issues raised by [REDACTED]. The review made a number of recommendations which the Department is implementing.</p> <p>"APHIS is widely recognised as a world leading software system and one of the most advanced of any region. This multispecies database processes significant numbers of transactions every day from multiple sources. This system itself, and how that system is used, is monitored by a dedicated team and the Department continues to invest heavily in upgrades and training for all users, to ensure the data and records held on the database are robust.</p> <p>"The Department can reassure the public and the agri-food industry that it will continue to review its risk management tools and will seek to strengthen the controls where necessary for animal traceability to ensure continued confidence in the system.</p> <p>"The Department takes extremely seriously all the matters which contributed to the outcome of the recent tribunal and will be progressing an internal review into them. This review is being undertaken with urgency and will be completed at pace."</p>

DATE	MEDIA OUTLET	QUERY	RESPONSE
25 April 2022	BBC Newsline	The duty press officer was contacted last night about a statement in response to the one from [REDACTED] team about the settlement. Is there a statement available this morning? Many thanks.	<p>A spokesman for the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs said: "The Department unreservedly apologises to [REDACTED] for the hurt and distress caused.</p> <p>"Following the outcome of the case in October 2021, the Department established an Internal Audit Review of Cattle Traceability System within Veterinary Animal Health Group. This review was focused on the robustness of current controls for animal traceability in livestock markets and abattoirs and also considered all of the issues raised by [REDACTED]. The review made a number of recommendations which the Department is implementing.</p> <p>"APHIS is widely recognised as a world leading software system and one of the most advanced of any region. This multispecies database processes significant numbers of transactions every day from multiple sources. This system itself, and how that system is used, is monitored by a dedicated team and the Department continues to invest heavily in upgrades and training for all users, to ensure the data and records held on the database are robust.</p> <p>"The Department can reassure the public and the agri-food industry that it will continue to review its risk management tools and will seek to strengthen the controls where necessary for animal traceability to ensure continued confidence in the system.</p> <p>"The Department takes extremely seriously all the matters which contributed to the outcome of the recent tribunal and will be progressing an internal review into them. This review is being undertaken with urgency and will be completed at pace."</p>

DATE	MEDIA OUTLET	QUERY	RESPONSE
25 April 2022	UTV Live	<p>Could you forward me on to your latest response to the [redacted] case please?</p>	<p>A spokesman for the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs said: "The Department unreservedly apologises to [redacted] for the hurt and distress caused.</p> <p>"Following the outcome of the case in October 2021, the Department established an Internal Audit Review of Cattle Traceability System within Veterinary Animal Health Group. This review was focused on the robustness of current controls for animal traceability in livestock markets and abattoirs and also considered all of the issues raised by Dr Bronckaers. The review made a number of recommendations which the Department is implementing.</p> <p>"With respect to traceability, Northern Ireland has a unique and world leading traceability system (APHIS) that enables the real time recording of bovine animal movements between farms, markets and abattoirs. The system does, and should, facilitate corrective amendments to be made to ensure accuracy of the notified and recorded movements held on APHIS.</p> <p>"For the 12-month period, from November 2020 – October 2021, only around 2% of Market movements had a corrective amendment to the movement made by a Market Operator within 1 working day after the original sale. This corrective amendment is necessary to ensure the information held on the APHIS database accurately reflects the location of all animals and the movements that took place.</p>

			<p>“Additionally, should any animal be physically moved onto any holding within this timeframe, prior to its final destination, there is a legal obligation to notify the Department. Where the Department has information or evidence of a false notification, the Department will investigate and take appropriate enforcement action.</p> <p>“The Department takes extremely seriously all the matters which contributed to the outcome of the recent tribunal and will be progressing an internal review into them. This review is being undertaken with urgency and will be completed at pace.”</p>
<p>25 April 2022</p>	<p>News Letter</p>	<p>Please could li have the latest line from DAERA on this matter: https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-northern-ireland-61212237</p>	<p>A spokesman for the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs said: “The Department unreservedly apologises to [REDACTED] for the hurt and distress caused.</p> <p>“Following the outcome of the case in October 2021, the Department established an Internal Audit Review of Cattle Traceability System within Veterinary Animal Health Group. This review was focused on the robustness of current controls for animal traceability in livestock markets and abattoirs and also considered all of the issues raised by [REDACTED]. The review made a number of recommendations which the Department is implementing.</p> <p>“With respect to traceability, Northern Ireland has a unique and world leading traceability system (APHIS) that enables the real time recording of bovine animal movements between farms, markets and abattoirs. The system does, and should, facilitate corrective amendments to be made to ensure accuracy of the notified and recorded</p>

			<p>movements held on APHIS.</p> <p>“For the 12-month period, from November 2020 – October 2021, only around 2% of Market movements had a corrective amendment to the movement made by a Market Operator within 1 working day after the original sale. This corrective amendment is necessary to ensure the information held on the APHIS database accurately reflects the location of all animals and the movements that took place.</p> <p>“Additionally, should any animal be physically moved onto any holding within this timeframe, prior to its final destination, there is a legal obligation to notify the Department. Where the Department has information or evidence of a false notification, the Department will investigate and take appropriate enforcement action.</p> <p>“The Department takes extremely seriously all the matters which contributed to the outcome of the recent tribunal and will be progressing an internal review into them. This review is being undertaken with urgency and will be completed at pace.”</p>
<p>25 April 2022</p>	<p>Belfast Telegraph</p>	<p>Just wanted to check if the department would like to make a response to comments made by [redacted] on BBC's Nolan Show this morning.</p> <p>“I just know that for my own mental health and my own stress levels, I had to get out [of the Department of Agriculture]. It was affecting my family life. I wasn't sleeping, I was crying a lot, I was scared going into work. I just wasn't functioning the way I wanted to be functioning as a wife and as a mother.</p> <p>“Nobody was prepared to listen to me and I was made out to be the bad guy, for pursuing something that I thought was important.</p>	<p>A spokesman for the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs said: “The Department unreservedly apologises to [redacted] for the hurt and distress caused.</p> <p>“Following the outcome of the case in October 2021, the Department established an Internal Audit Review of Cattle Traceability System within Veterinary Animal Health Group. This review was focused on the robustness of current controls for animal traceability in livestock markets and</p>

"Every day that I tried to get higher and higher up, doors just kept closing on me.

"It really doesn't affect me personally, but it doesn't surprise me one bit [that [redacted] got promoted], because that's the culture - everybody who does something wrong or gets reprimanded seems to be either side tracked or put into a higher position.

"I can't speak for the way other people feel, but I do feel like that.

"Sometimes I think there's an elite male club and as a woman, you always have to prove yourself, even more so than a man, but they don't make it easy for women.

"I didn't get an apology from anybody. The only apologies are the public apologies, which to me mean nothing, they're lip service. An apology wouldn't mean anything to me, from those two men [redacted].

"My biggest hope is that they will change their behaviour. That will mean that I have achieved something.

"I think in general, there are always going to be people who think that they can get away with not being kind to animals, or not adhering to legislation, but we need to make sure that the legislation is adhered to and the policies that derive from it are adhered to. If we do that, I'm sure we can improve welfare for animals."

abattoirs and also considered all of the issues raised by [redacted]. The review made a number of recommendations which the Department is implementing.

"With respect to traceability, Northern Ireland has a unique and world leading traceability system (APHIS) that enables the real time recording of bovine animal movements between farms, markets and abattoirs. The system does, and should, facilitate corrective amendments to be made to ensure accuracy of the notified and recorded movements held on APHIS.

"For the 12-month period, from November 2020 – October 2021, only around 2% of Market movements had a corrective amendment to the movement made by a Market Operator within 1 working day after the original sale. This corrective amendment is necessary to ensure the information held on the APHIS database accurately reflects the location of all animals and the movements that took place.

"Additionally, should any animal be physically moved onto any holding within this timeframe, prior to its final destination, there is a legal obligation to notify the Department. Where the Department has information or evidence of a false notification, the Department will investigate and take appropriate enforcement action.

"The Department takes extremely seriously all the matters which contributed to the outcome of the recent tribunal and will be progressing an internal review into them. This review is being undertaken with urgency and will be completed at pace."

DATE	MEDIA OUTLET	QUERY	RESPONSE
25 April 2022	Veterinary Record	<p>Please may I have DAERA's statement in relation to the £1.25million settlement paid to its the department's former employee [REDACTED] as announced today by her lawyers?</p>	<p>A spokesman for the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs said: "The Department unreservedly apologises to [REDACTED] for the hurt and distress caused.</p> <p>"Following the outcome of the case in October 2021, the Department established an Internal Audit Review of Cattle Traceability System within Veterinary Animal Health Group. This review was focused on the robustness of current controls for animal traceability in livestock markets and abattoirs and also considered all of the issues raised by [REDACTED]. The review made a number of recommendations which the Department is implementing.</p> <p>"With respect to traceability, Northern Ireland has a unique and world leading traceability system (APHIS) that enables the real time recording of bovine animal movements between farms, markets and abattoirs. The system does, and should, facilitate corrective amendments to be made to ensure accuracy of the notified and recorded movements held on APHIS.</p> <p>"For the 12-month period, from November 2020 – October 2021, only around 2% of Market movements had a corrective amendment to the movement made by a Market Operator within 1 working day after the original sale. This corrective amendment is necessary to ensure the information held on the APHIS database accurately reflects the location of all animals and the movements that took place.</p>

<p>25 April 2022</p>	<p>Belfast Live</p>	<p>Can I have the latest line on the [redacted] case?</p>	<p>“Additionally, should any animal be physically moved onto any holding within this timeframe, prior to its final destination, there is a legal obligation to notify the Department. Where the Department has information or evidence of a false notification, the Department will investigate and take appropriate enforcement action.</p> <p>“The Department takes extremely seriously all the matters which contributed to the outcome of the recent tribunal and will be progressing an internal review into them. This review is being undertaken with urgency and will be completed at pace.”</p>
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<p>25 April 2022</p>	<p>Irish farmers Journal</p>	<p>Hi, in light of the furore surrounding the [redacted] case, please can you indicate what changes are to be made to the 'deleted moves' policy on APHIS. Also, are these changes being made under instruction from Minister Poots?</p>	<p>A spokesman for the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs said: “The Department unreservedly apologises to [redacted] for the hurt and distress caused.</p> <p>“Following the outcome of the case in October 2021, the Department established an Internal Audit Review of Cattle Traceability System within Veterinary Animal Health Group. This review was focused on the robustness of current controls for animal traceability in livestock markets and</p>

abattoirs and also considered all of the issues raised by [REDACTED]. The review made a number of recommendations which the Department is implementing.

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DATE	MEDIA OUTLET	QUERY	RESPONSE
25 April 2022	RTE	Can I have the latest statement on the [redacted] case please?	<p>A spokesman for the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs said: "The Department unreservedly apologises to [redacted] for the hurt and distress caused.</p> <p>"Following the outcome of the case in October 2021, the Department established an Internal Audit Review of Cattle Traceability System within Veterinary Animal Health Group. This review was focused on the robustness of current controls for animal traceability in livestock markets and abattoirs and also considered all of the issues raised by [redacted]. The review made a number of recommendations which the Department is implementing.</p> <p>"With respect to traceability, Northern Ireland has a unique and world leading traceability system (APHIS) that enables the real time recording of bovine animal movements between farms, markets and abattoirs. The system does, and should, facilitate corrective amendments to be made to ensure accuracy of the notified and recorded movements held on APHIS.</p> <p>"For the 12-month period, from November 2020 – October 2021, only around 2% of Market movements had a corrective amendment to the movement made by a Market Operator within 1 working day after the original sale. This corrective amendment is necessary to ensure the information held on the APHIS database accurately reflects the location of all animals and the movements that took place.</p>

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<p>25 April 2022</p>	<p>PA</p>	<p>Could you send me your most recent statement on this case please?</p>	<p>A spokesman for the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs said: "The Department unreservedly apologises to [REDACTED] for the hurt and distress caused.</p> <p>"Following the outcome of the case in October 2021, the Department established an Internal Audit Review of Cattle Traceability System within Veterinary Animal Health Group. This review was focused on the robustness of current controls for animal traceability in livestock markets and abattoirs and also considered all of the issues raised by [REDACTED]. The review made a number of recommendations which the Department is implementing.</p> <p>"With respect to traceability, Northern Ireland has a unique and world leading traceability system (APHIS) that enables the real time recording of bovine animal movements between farms, markets and abattoirs. The system does, and should, facilitate corrective amendments to be made to ensure accuracy of the notified and recorded</p>

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<p>26 April 2022</p>	<p>BBC Nolan Show</p>	<p>The statement from the Department includes the line</p> <p>“ Following this inspection and a further inspection by Department inspectors, a warning letter was issued to the market operator outlining the non-compliances found and detailing the necessary urgent corrective actions.”</p> <p>This clearly points to another inspection - in addition to - and after - that of [REDACTED] - conducted by a separate Department inspector - where more non compliance was found .</p>	<p>Thanks for the further queries. We have nothing further to add to our statement at this stage. Given that you intend to dedicate substantial time to it this morning, I expect you will have space to read our full statement out.</p>

		<p>1. Why was prosecution not triggered at this stage - since clearly the non compliance was not an isolated incident ? Who decided non prosecution ?</p> <p>2. When did this "further inspection" occur ?</p> <p>3. What were the "non compliances" stipulated in the statement to the Nolan Show ?</p> <p>4. What were the "urgent necessary corrective actions" ?</p> <p>5. Was this information given to the legal team representing [REDACTED] or her representatives during the tribunal process . If not , why not ?</p> <p>The Department statement to the Nolan Show states</p> <p>"the Department conducted a further nine unannounced inspections of the market up to Spring 2018 .</p> <p>6. How many inspections after Spring 2018 have been conducted and how many of those (if any) detected non compliance ?</p> <p>The tribunal heard that [REDACTED] had stopped [REDACTED] conducting unannounced inspections of Ballymena Livestock market .</p> <p>7. Why were other inspectors allowed to perform unannounced visits ?</p> <p>8. Why does the Daera statement to the Nolan Show speak of "suspected breaches of animal welfare legislation " when further down the same statement the Department confirms actual breaches occurred when it states "non compliances found" ?</p>	
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DATE	MEDIA OUTLET	QUERY	RESPONSE
26 April 2022	Farmers Weekly	<p>I am writing an article for Farmers Weekly on the ruling in the [REDACTED] case. Could I have a response from DAERA to the outcome please, to include in my article? Could I have that this morning please?</p>	<p>A spokesman for the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs said: "The Department unreservedly apologises to [REDACTED] for the hurt and distress caused.</p> <p>"Following the outcome of the case in October 2021, the Department established an Internal Audit Review of Cattle Traceability System within Veterinary Animal Health Group. This review was focused on the robustness of current controls for animal traceability in livestock markets and abattoirs and also considered all of the issues raised by Dr Bronckaers. The review made a number of recommendations which the Department is implementing.</p> <p>"With respect to traceability, Northern Ireland has a unique and world leading traceability system (APHIS) that enables the real time recording of bovine animal movements between farms, markets and abattoirs. The system does, and should, facilitate corrective amendments to be made to ensure accuracy of the notified and recorded movements held on APHIS.</p> <p>"For the 12-month period, from November 2020 – October 2021, only around 2% of Market movements had a corrective amendment to the movement made by a Market Operator within 1 working day after the original sale. This corrective amendment is necessary to ensure the information held on the APHIS database accurately reflects the location of all animals and the movements that took place.</p>

			<p>“Additionally, should any animal be physically moved onto any holding within this timeframe, prior to its final destination, there is a legal obligation to notify the Department. Where the Department has information or evidence of a false notification, the Department will investigate and take appropriate enforcement action.</p> <p>“The Department takes extremely seriously all the matters which contributed to the outcome of the recent tribunal and will be progressing an internal review into them. This review is being undertaken with urgency and will be completed at pace.”</p>
<p>26 April 2022</p>	<p>News Letter</p>	<p>Please can you advise if any disciplinary investigations will be carried into DAERA staff in relation to the case involving the above vet? 2) Can DAERA give any explanation for the lack of action taken about the vet's persistent warnings on traceability? 3) Can DAERA given any comment about what actions will be taken to ensure this type of thing does not happen again?</p>	<p>1. Will anyone face disciplinary action over the [REDACTED] case? There are investigatory processes under review and so the Department cannot comment.</p> <p>2. Can DAERA give any explanation for the lack of action taken about the vet's persistent warnings on traceability? Following the outcome of the case in October 2021, the Department established an Internal Audit Review of the Cattle Traceability System. This review was focused on the robustness of current controls for animal traceability in livestock markets and abattoirs and also considered all of the issues raised by [REDACTED]. Work has already commenced on implementing the recommendations from the internal audit report and these will be taken through to completion as soon as possible, with additional oversight from the new taskforce which the Minister has asked the</p>

Permanent Secretary to establish.

3. Can DAERA given any comment about what actions will be taken to ensure this type of thing does not happen again?

See statement provided to Newsletter on Tuesday 26th April

4. Former MP Tom Elliot tells me he raised all these issues of missing cattle when a member of the Agriculture Committee and was not given satisfactory answers.

He says the worst region of NI for this to happen according to the records at that time was Newry and Enniskillen also having a significant issue. He suggests cross border smuggling may have been a factor but was never able to get to the bottom of it. He says he also went to the police about it at the time.

A spokesperson from the Department said, "The issues raised by Tom Elliott are entirely distinct from those raised in the tribunal by [REDACTED]"

"Under the Cattle Identification (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations (NI) 2012 No. 416 if an animal is lost or stolen, the keeper must send written notification of this to the Department within 7 days of becoming aware of the fact, together with written details of what has occurred.

"Farmers must keep a register of all cattle in their herd and are encouraged to inspect their herd regularly to ensure the health and welfare of their

livestock and continued compliance with identification and registration requirements.

Keepers should report every incident of suspected theft to the PSNI as well as notifying DAERA as soon as they become aware of any missing animals.

“Missing animals and rural crime, in particular the theft of animals, is a direct threat to the livelihood of our farmers and to the integrity of the traceability system which is vital in providing assurance on the safety, integrity and quality of our food. DAERA take all instances of missing cattle very seriously and follow up each incident individually with the relevant keeper as well as liaising closely with our colleagues in the PSNI to investigate incidents of theft and to prevent animal theft occurring,

“These figures represent an average of approximately 3,500 cattle notified to DAERA as lost or stolen annually. To put these figures in context, the cattle population in Northern Ireland last year was 1.68 million according to DAERA census figures. Stolen cattle will account for a proportion of these figures, there will be some animals which have strayed onto neighbouring holdings or remote fields within the holding, some may have died without the keeper being aware and some may be due to administrative inaccuracies where cattle have been incorrectly recorded as moving into and out of herds. Where stray cattle reappear or an administrative error is discovered, DAERA can re-establish the presence of the cattle in the keeper’s herd, provided the correct identity of the cattle can be established.”

26 April
2022

BBC Nolan Show

The Nolan Show understands that the judge in the Employment Tribunal case concerning [redacted] instructed that the photographic / film footage gathered by [redacted]; and / or the work phone assigned to [redacted] be submitted by the Department to [redacted] solicitors .

We understand the solicitors never received this photographic / film evidence and we further understand lawyers representing [redacted] were told neither the phone nor the footage could be located .

On 26 April 2022, the Department told the Nolan Show the photographic evidence was filed and retained on the Department's electronic records management systemand formed part of enforcement considerations for suspected breaches of animal welfare legislation.

1. If the evidence was held by the Department, why was it not submitted to [redacted] lawyers ?

2. Who was asked within the Department regarding the existence of this evidence and what did they say ?

3. Does the Department feel the police need to investigate an allegation of perjury or contempt regarding the non disclosure of this evidence to the solicitors ? If so, why. If not, why not ?

4. What date was the evidence filed and retained on the Department's electronic records management system ?

5. Did [redacted] use the photographic evidence to help form " part of enforcement considerations " ?

6. Were [redacted] aware of the tribunals request for the photographic evidence and if so, did they state any utterances on this matter ?

7. Who was the permanent secretary at the time of the instruction to produce the photographic evidence to [redacted] solicitors and what role did they

These questions fall under the Freedom of Information Act and will be treated as such.

		<p>play, if any , in what was reported to the legal team ?</p> <p>8. Who signed the warning letter which used the photographic evidence as part of the reasoning to issue it ?</p> <p>9. Who authored this warning letter referred to in question 8 ? is it the same person who signed it ?</p> <p>10. What reassurance can the Department give to the public – and other members of the legal profession – that it acts within the law at all times ?</p> <p>11. When the Departmental lawyers asked for the photographic evidence , who told them it could not be located and why ?</p> <p>12. Does the current permanent secretary Anthony Harbinson feel the matter of non disclosure to [REDACTED] solicitors should be reported to the police ? if not, why not ?</p> <p>13. Does minister Edwin Poots feel the matter of nondisclosure to [REDACTED] solicitors should be reported to the police ? if not, why not ?</p>	
<p>26 April 2022</p>	<p>News Letter</p>	<p>Also note - former MP Tom Elliot tells me he raised all these issues of missing cattle when a member of the Agriculture Committee and was not given satisfactory answers.</p> <p>He says the worst region of NI for this to happen according to the records at that time was Newry and Enniskillen also having a significant issue. He suggests cross border smuggling may have been a factor but was never able to get to the bottom of it. He says he also went to the police about it at the time.</p>	<p>A spokesperson from the Department said, "The issues raised by Tom Elliott are entirely distinct from those raised in the tribunal by [REDACTED] [REDACTED]"</p> <p>"Under the Cattle Identification (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations (NI) 2012 No. 416 if an animal is lost or stolen, the keeper must send written notification of this to the Department within 7 days of becoming aware of the fact, together with written details of what has occurred.</p> <p>"Farmers must keep a register of all cattle in their herd and are encouraged to inspect their herd regularly to ensure the health and welfare of their</p>

livestock and continued compliance with identification and registration requirements.

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“These figures represent an average of approximately 3,500 cattle notified to DAERA as lost or stolen annually. To put these figures in context, the cattle population in Northern Ireland last year was 1.68 million according to DAERA census figures. Stolen cattle will account for a proportion of these figures, there will be some animals which have strayed onto neighbouring holdings or remote fields within the holding, some may have died without the keeper being aware and some may be due to administrative inaccuracies where cattle have been incorrectly recorded as moving into and out of herds. Where stray cattle reappear or an administrative error.”

DATE	MEDIA OUTLET	QUERY	RESPONSE
26 April 2022	News Letter	<p> [REDACTED] can you send me copies of any responses sent to the Nolan Show for today's show please? </p>	<p> A spokesperson for the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs said: "The Department unreservedly apologises to [REDACTED] for the hurt and distress caused. </p> <p> "Following the outcome of the case in October 2021, the Department established an Internal Audit Review of Cattle Traceability System within Veterinary Animal Health Group. This review was focused on the robustness of current controls for animal traceability in livestock markets and abattoirs and also considered all of the issues raised by [REDACTED]. The review made a number of recommendations which the Department is implementing. </p> <p> "With respect to traceability, Northern Ireland has a unique and world leading traceability system (APHIS) that enables the real time recording of bovine animal movements between farms, markets and abattoirs. The system does, and should, facilitate corrective amendments to be made to ensure accuracy of the notified and recorded movements held on APHIS. </p> <p> "For the 12-month period, from November 2020 – October 2021, only around 2% of Market movements had a corrective amendment to the movement made by a Market Operator within 1 working day after the original sale. This corrective amendment is necessary to ensure the information held on the APHIS database accurately reflects the location of all animals and the movements that took place. </p>

"Additionally, should any animal be physically moved onto any holding within this timeframe, prior to its final destination, there is a legal obligation to notify the Department. Where the Department has information or evidence of a false notification, the Department will investigate and take appropriate enforcement action.

"The Department takes extremely seriously all the matters which contributed to the outcome of the recent tribunal and will be progressing an internal review into them. This review is being undertaken with urgency and will be completed at pace."

A spokesperson for the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs said: "A key priority of the Department is animal welfare. During the period 01 January 2017 to 31 December 2020, nearly 5,000 production site inspections for compliance with animal welfare requirements for farmed animals were completed.

"The mobile phone in question was surrendered and disposed of securely in line with NICS leavers policy. Departmental phones are password protected and the password is known only to the officer to whom the phone is assigned.

"The Department can confirm that photographic evidence gathered by [REDACTED] and a DAERA enforcement inspector in September 2017, was filed and retained on the Department's electronic records management system as part of official records, and formed part of enforcement considerations for suspected breaches of animal welfare legislation. Following this inspection and a

<p>further inspection by Department inspectors, a warning letter was issued to the market operator outlining the non-compliances found and detailing the necessary urgent corrective actions. Following the warning letter, the Department conducted a further nine unannounced inspections of the market in the period up to Spring 2018. The inspections confirmed that the livestock market operator had taken and maintained corrective actions and no welfare issues were detected during these nine inspections.”</p> <p>Nothing further to add to the line</p>			
<p>I have to say - I do not believe it is prejudicial to any employment processes to say whether disciplinary investigations will or are taking place, in light of what is already legitimately in the public domain and the great public interest in the question.</p> <p>This question does not prejudice the outcome of any such investigation and affirms the presumption of innocence of all involved.</p> <p>Does DAERA insist that it will not clarify whether any disciplinary investigations will take place or are taking place?</p> <p>I would ask for clarity on this by noon tomorrow please.</p> <p>I will be seeking comment and reaction.</p>	<p>News Letter</p>		
<p>Would it be possible to have the department's response to reports circulating today that the department failed to hand over images and film of animal abuse to [redacted] employment tribunal?</p>	<p>BBC</p>		<p>19 May 2022</p>
<p>Material released by DAERA to me under FoI shows that [redacted] (in particular) and [redacted] were regularly involved in departmental discussions about how to handle awkward questions relating to how they had hounded [redacted] from her job.</p> <p>1) Why was it thought appropriate for either of these two individuals to have any role whatsoever in this matter? 2) Does either man continue to have any role in how the department deals</p>	<p>Belfast Telegraph</p>		<p>25 May 2022</p>

22 August 2022	Belfast Telegraph	<p>with any aspect of this situation?</p> <p>3) Did either man have any role whatsoever in the decisions relating to initially defend the tribunal claim and then to appeal the verdict?</p>	<p>Jo</p> <p>Qs 1, 3 and 4: "These matters will form part of the External Independent Review and we cannot comment further."</p> <p>Q2: " [redacted] are not currently involved in decision making on how the Department is handling this issue."</p>
22 August 2022	Belfast Telegraph	<p>Your three departments commissioned a review of DAERA's treatment of [redacted] who was driven from her job after blowing the whistle about animal suffering and potential fraud.</p> <p>In a DAERA statement in May, your three departments said that "the outcomes of the review will be published as soon as possible upon completion", with the first part of the review to be completed by the end of June. The notes to editors stated that "the review [ie. both parts of the review] is expected to be completed by the end of July 2022". It is now late August and there has been no further update on this important review.</p> <p>1) Has the first phase of the review been completed and given to the NICS?</p> <p>2) If so, why has it not been published?</p> <p>3) When will it be published?</p> <p>4) Has the second part of the review been completed and given to the NICS? If so, when will it be published?</p> <p>5) Do [redacted] remain in their posts unsuspended?</p>	<p>A DAERA spokesman said: "The DAERA and DoF Accounting Officers and the Head of the Civil Service are currently considering the findings of the first stage of the review. The second stage is nearing completion. The Department has already committed to publishing the outcomes from the review as soon as possible. The Department does not comment on individual staff members."</p>
24 August 2022	Belfast Telegraph	<p>I have obtained documentation which establishes that it was [redacted] who took the decision – without any authorisation from, or even consultation with, the permanent secretary – to appeal the devastating industrial tribunal judgment in which his conduct towards [redacted] and his evidence in court, was condemned.</p>	<p>A DAERA spokesman said: "In May of this year, PwC was appointed to carry out a comprehensive, two-part review of how the Department dealt with concerns raised in the recent Industrial Tribunal case, taken by former DAERA vet [redacted]"</p>

	<p>In an email to Jill Minne on 15 March – five days after the Belfast Telegraph revealed public money was being squandered on the appeal – Anthony Harbinson said that he had no record of ever being even consulted on the issue of the appeal. He said that [REDACTED] had told him that day that he had taken the decision to appeal himself, without consultation with the permanent secretary. Katrina Godfrey has been aware of this for months.</p> <p>[REDACTED] was sent an email on 3 February updating him on the case and it is clear that he was being consistently informed about what was happening – consistent with his role as the decision-maker.</p> <p>I have eight simple questions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Does [REDACTED] admit that he took the decision to appeal a case in which he had a glaring conflict of interest? 2) Did he declare his conflict of interest prior to taking the decision? 3) Was the decision and his identity as the decision-maker recorded formally in writing? 4) Why, given that [REDACTED] now admits that he took the decision himself and Mr Harbinson was not even consulted, did [REDACTED] suggest in an email on 29 September 2021 – seven days after the judgment and as he was discussing the appeal with lawyers – that it was Mr Harbinson who was making a request in relation to the case? 5) How much will the appeal cost taxpayers? 6) Given the waste of public money due to this decision, is [REDACTED] prepared to refund the public purse for the cost of the appeal? 7) Why did Ms Godfrey not want [REDACTED] to be consulted about the terms of reference for the external investigation? 	<p>[REDACTED] and any lessons learned. The review is considering the decision-making process throughout this case from notification of the Industrial Tribunal claim, and will include decision-making relating to the defending and appeal of the claim. That review will be finalised very shortly and the outcomes published as soon as possible.</p> <p>“The Department is completely committed to taking forward at pace the recommendations and next steps following the review, with absolute fairness, respect for due process and without prejudice for all involved. The Department cannot comment further until the review and any next steps are complete.</p> <p>“The Minister approved the submission on the Terms of Reference in less than 48 hours. Any suggestion that the Minister delayed giving his approval is wholly inaccurate and misleading.”</p>
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<p>25 August 2022</p>	<p>BBC Nolan Show</p>	<p>8) Ms Godfrey has the power to suspend [REDACTED]. The judgment in this case has been public for almost a year. She now also has the findings – and presumably has had them for some time – of her own review and that review sets out clearly the facts of what happened in this case. Why, after promising the public that urgent action would be taken to restore public confidence, is she choosing to keep [REDACTED] in their posts unsuspended?</p> <p>We are set to cover the story on the programme tomorrow morning that appeared in the Belfast Telegraph regarding [REDACTED] and the Industrial Tribunal involving [REDACTED].</p> <p>It reports that [REDACTED] personally authorised appealing a verdict of a judge in a bid to quash the outcome of the industrial tribunal.</p> <p>Could we receive a response to the questions below:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Can DAERA confirm who took the decision to appeal the judge's ruling in the Industrial Tribunal involving [REDACTED]? 2. Can DAERA confirm whether [REDACTED] personally authorised the expenditure of taxpayers' money to appeal a judge's verdict that he was involved in harassing [REDACTED] from her job after she raised animal welfare concerns and possible fraud? 3. Were DAERA aware that [REDACTED] had personally authorised the appeal? 4. If so, when did DAERA become aware and why was it not challenge as a conflict of interest? 5. Were Katrina Godfrey, permanent secretary of the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) and the head of the Civil Service Jayne Brady aware that [REDACTED] personally authorised the appeal? 6. Did they instigate any disciplinary action against [REDACTED]? 7. When did Civil Service strategic director of human resources Jill Minne become first aware of the case and the decision to appeal? 8. On Tuesday March 15th did [REDACTED] tell a senior civil servant that he took the decision to appeal the case without consulting his boss? 9. Who was that civil servant? 10. Please confirm or deny it was Anthony Harbinson. 	
		<p>A DAERA spokesman said: "In May of this year, PwC was appointed to carry out a comprehensive, two-part review of how the Department dealt with concerns raised in the recent Industrial Tribunal case, taken by former DAERA vet [REDACTED] and any lessons learned. The review is considering the decision-making process throughout this case from notification of the Industrial Tribunal claim, and will include decision-making relating to the defending and appeal of the claim. That review will be finalised very shortly and the outcomes published as soon as possible.</p> <p>"The Department is completely committed to taking forward at pace the recommendations and next steps following the review, with absolute fairness, respect for due process and without prejudice for all involved. The Department cannot comment further until the review and any next steps are complete.</p> <p>"The Department does not comment on individual staff members."</p>	

		<p>11. How confident is DAERA that it has a fit for purpose oversight mechanism to ensure that civil servants do not go on solo runs and make decisions like Robert Huey?</p> <p>12. If it was in place can DAERA explain how such a decision by [REDACTED] to personally authorise the appeal was allowed to happen?</p> <p>13. In light of this case is DAERA now reviewing such oversight mechanisms within its department?</p> <p>14. Is [REDACTED] still in post in light of this information from PWC who carried out a two-part review of how the department dealt with concerns raised in the recent Industrial Tribunal?</p> <p>15. Is he still being paid?</p> <p>16. Has he been suspended?</p> <p>17. If not why not?</p> <p>18. Why is [REDACTED] still in post following the findings of the Industrial Tribunal which stated he was another senior official who forced [REDACTED] out of her job?</p>	
<p>26 August 2022</p>	<p>Belfast Telegraph</p>	<p>I have three questions for DAERA:</p> <p>1) Having hounded out of her job a capable vet with an unblemished record, DAERA is now struggling to recruit vets and has insufficient vets to perform its statutory duties. Does Katrina Godfrey consider that the continued presence of [REDACTED] may be an impediment to vets wanting to work in her department? What is she doing to ensure the department performs its statutory functions?</p> <p>2) [REDACTED] has expressed her dismay at what she read in yesterday's Belfast Telegraph about [REDACTED] being allowed to decide himself to appeal the overwhelming judgement against him. She said that she cannot understand how a senior manager who is the subject of an unfair dismissal case can be allowed to take any decisions about that case without any input from the permanent secretary. As a result of the appeal, she says she was caused months of distress and more legal bills. The message to her, and to the people of Northern Ireland, she says is that someone can hound a colleague out of a job, be found by a judge to be less than candid in giving evidence, and be welcomed back to DAERA as the top vet with the ability to promote his accomplice [REDACTED] after his evidence was also found by</p>	<p>1. The shortage of vets across the UK and indeed more widely in Europe is very well documented, as are the reasons for it, and both the RCVS and the BVA have written publicly about the challenges this presents. Northern Ireland is no different and is also more directly affected by competition on the island. Within DAERA our vets carry out a crucial public service that not only helps to ensure excellent standards of animal health and welfare but also protects human health and the quality and integrity of both the food we eat and produce. Supported by NICS HR we have a work programme underway to find solutions that can secure a more assured supply of graduate veterinarians and retain those vets in public service. As is the case in any work area where there are vacancies or recruitment challenges, we continuously monitor resource availability and prioritise our work programmes to ensure we deliver our statutory obligations to the very best of our ability.</p>

		<p>the judge to lack credibility. What does DAERA say in response to [REDACTED]</p> <p>3) Gordon Lyons halted recruitment of vets to conduct Irish Sea border checks and Edwin Poots has endorsed that stance. But earlier this year DAERA advertised for vets and told them they could be deployed to border control posts. Have any of those vets being working at the Irish Sea border posts, and how does Mr Poots explain his apparently changed stance?</p>	<p>2. We are committed to continuing to make sure that all appropriate action is taken and all relevant lessons are learned. That is why we have appointed PwC to undertake an external, independent investigation to establish the facts and ensure that lessons can be learned. That work is nearing completion and, until it is finalised and any associated processes also completed, the Department does not propose to comment further.</p> <p>3. On 25th March, the Department clarified that an advertisement seeking to recruit Veterinary Inspectors, mistakenly specified that new staff would be solely located to the Points of Entry. This is not the case and Veterinary Inspectors continue to work in all aspects of DAERA fulfilling its statutory duties.</p>
<p>4 October 2022</p>	<p>Belfast Telegraph</p>	<p>Jayne Brady said when she set up the external investigation into the [REDACTED] case that "it is a personal priority for me to deal with it promptly".</p> <p>Six months later, the promise of making public the findings still sits unfulfilled. As the three departments who jointly commissioned this investigation, can you please clarify the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) When was the second and final section of the PwC report delivered to the NICS? 2) Who has the authority to publish it, or withhold publication? 3) Why has it not been published? 4) Will only part of the report be published, or will it be published in its entirety? 5) When will the public get to see any of this report? 	<p>A DAERA spokesman said: "The NICS received the final draft report from PwC on Friday 30th September.</p> <p>"Any report received goes through a quality assurance process to ensure it meets the agreed Terms of Reference.</p> <p>"We are currently considering its contents to ensure publication would not prejudice any potential internal processes.</p> <p>"After this process is complete the outcome of the review will be published."</p>

DATE	MEDIA OUTLET	QUERY	RESPONSE
28 October 2022	BBC Farming Matters	<p>I have a query in relation to the independent review of the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs' (DAERA's) handling of concerns raised by former department [REDACTED]</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Has PWC completed the review? 2. Has the commissioners received the review? 3. Has the review been published? 	<p>A Spokesperson for DAERA said: "The NICS received the final draft report from PwC on Friday 30th September.</p> <p>"Any report received goes through a quality assurance process to ensure it meets the agreed Terms of Reference.</p> <p>"We are currently considering its contents to ensure publication would not prejudice any potential internal processes.</p> <p>"After this process is complete the outcome of the review will be published."</p> <p>Timeline is as per line below at present.</p>
1 November 2022	BBC Farming Matters	<p>Is there any indication of when the review will be published? This month, by the end of the year or next year?</p>	<p>A Spokesperson for DAERA said: "The NICS received the final draft report from PwC on Friday 30th September.</p> <p>"Any report received goes through a quality assurance process to ensure it meets the agreed Terms of Reference.</p> <p>"We are currently considering its contents to ensure publication would not prejudice any potential internal processes.</p> <p>"After this process is complete the outcome of the review will be published."</p>
2 November 2022	BBC Farming Matters	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What has held up the publication of the review, it was initially meant to be completed in July? 2. Can you categorically confirm that the review will be published to the public? 	<p>A Spokesperson for DAERA said: "The NICS received the final draft report from PwC on Friday 30th September.</p> <p>"Any report received goes through a quality assurance process to ensure it meets the agreed Terms of Reference.</p> <p>"We are currently considering its contents to ensure publication would not prejudice any potential internal processes.</p> <p>"After this process is complete the outcome of the review will be published."</p>
22 November 2022	BBC Farming Matters	<p>I have a query in relation to the External Independent Review of how the Department dealt with concerns raised in the recent Industrial Tribunal case taken by former DAERA vet Dr Tamara Bronckaers commissioned by head of the Northern Ireland Civil Service Jayne Brady.</p>	<p>A DAERA spokesman said: "We received the final draft reports from PwC on Friday 30th September and are working through the relevant quality control processes to ensure the reports are as complete and accurate as they can be. This is</p>

	<p>DAERA confirmed that the NCIS had received the final draft report from PwC on Friday 30th September.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Will the External Independent Review commissioned by Jayne Brady be published to the public in full? 2. If so, when will it be published? This year, next year; is there a timeline? 3. Is the External Independent Review ready to be published? IE is it fully completed? 4. How much did the External Independent Review cost to conduct? 5. Is the head of the NI civil service Jayne Brady disappointed that the review commissioned by her in April has still not been published? 	<p>important for various reasons, including to ensure that the right learning is captured and applied and that the findings are evidence-based. The Department is committed to ensuring that the NICS learns and applies all lessons from this case.</p> <p>“DAERA has already committed to publishing the outcomes of the external review as soon as practicable and fully intends to abide by that commitment. When it comes to the full reports, the position remains that decisions on publication will need to take account of the responsibilities of all Departments involved to protect any personal information they may contain and to ensure appropriate confidentiality relating to any relevant HR or other processes.</p> <p>“The External Review costs will be finalised following completion of all stages of the reports.</p> <p>“We are unable to comment further until the review is published.”</p>
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[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 10 January 2023 20:42
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: FW: Daily Media Update - Tuesday 10 January 2023

As discussed

From: DfE Press Office <DfE.PressOffice@economy-ni.gov.uk>
Sent: 10 January 2023 10:30
Cc: All DfE Branches Press Office <pressoffice@economy-ni.gov.uk>
Subject: Daily Media Update - Tuesday 10 January 2023

DAILY MEDIA UPDATE



Tuesday 10 January 2023

Please do not reply to this email.

Requests for newspaper clippings/transcripts/audio should be emailed to:

Daily newspaper clippings

1-Historic Belfast whisky deal with South Korea - News Letter (Belfast), 10/01/2023, p.24, Claire Cartmill - Minister of State for Northern Ireland, Steve Baker MP, has announced that Belfast Distillery Company has secured an historic distribution agreement in South Korea.

2-Endgame or kick can down the road? - News Letter (Belfast), 10/01/2023, p.18, Alan Lowry - There's little point in summarising the past two years of Protocol manoeuvres, other than to say that damage was done, problems have been recognised, key players have changed, fresh ideas have been tabled, and there is better mood music.

3-Chocolatier Geri confident of future growth after last year's successes - News Letter (Belfast), 10/01/2023, p.20, Sam Butler - Artisan chocolatier Geri Martin is among a group of food and drink companies able to look back on 2022 with satisfaction. Geri reckons last year was one of most successful for her award-winning Chocolate Manor operation in Castlerock.

4-Equity fund hits 100th investment landmark - Irish News (Belfast), 10/01/2023, p.27, Gary McDonald - A cash injection of £1.55 million into female-founded Belfast-based IT firm Kinsetu means 100 Northern Ireland companies have now benefited from investments of nearly £43m since the Co-Fund NI programme began in 2011.

5-Software firm adds 45 jobs in export push - Irish News (Belfast), 10/01/2023, p.27,

Unattributed - Derry-based software as a service (SaaS) firm Foods Connected is serving up 45 additional jobs paying average £41,000 salaries after investing heavily in its business as it seeks to target new export markets.

6-Londonderry software firm Foods Connected to create 45 new jobs - Belfast Telegraph, 10/01/2023, p.4, Margaret Canning - A software company in Londonderry is creating 45 new jobs, paying an average of £41,000 a year, as it expands into new export markets. Foods Connected provides tools to food businesses to help them manage their complex supply chains and now wants to expand further into the US, Middle East and South Africa.

7-Belfast base: Tech start-up to create 16 new jobs in city - Belfast Telegraph, 10/01/2023, p.3, Margaret Canning - A tech start-up which has developed a shopping and meal planning app is setting up in Belfast, creating 16 new jobs paying an average of nearly £40K. The SME Plate-Up was co-founded by Bangor-born Conor Boyle five years ago to provides users with an all-in one meal planning and online shopping experience.

8-Productivity puzzle as challenging as ever - Belfast Telegraph, 10/01/2023, p.6, Paul Gosling - IT is often referred to as the 'productivity puzzle', yet there are some obvious reasons why Northern Ireland underperforms against competitors when it comes to economic performance and output per person.

9-£150m injection in business park - News Letter (Belfast), 10/01/2023, p.17, Claire Cartmill - Errigal Group has revealed plans for a £150m investment to redevelop and extend the Enkalon Business Park in Antrim. Located next to The Junction Retail and Leisure Park, the redeveloped business park is set to span more than 1.7m sq ft of warehouse and distribution space.

10-Errigal Group reveals £150m investment plan for Antrim business park - Irish News (Belfast), 10/01/2023, p.23, Ryan McAleer - N Irish construction company is investing £150 million in an Antrim business park. A Errigal Group, headquartered in Co Monaghan, close to the border with Tyrone, bought 70 acres of the former Enkalon site in 2019.

11-£150m plan for Antrim business park redevelopment could create 1,200 jobs - Belfast Telegraph, 10/01/2023, p.7, Lisa Smyth - A £150M investment plan to redevelop and extend the Enkalon Business Park in Antrim could create up to 1,200 jobs, it's been claimed.

12-Office plan for Smithfield site dropped in favor of student accommodation bid - Irish News (Belfast), 10/01/2023, p.24, Ryan McAleer – A bid to develop a major office scheme next to Smithfield Market in Belfast has been scrapped in favour of a student accommodation project.

13-NI Chamber on hunt for new chief - Irish News (Belfast), 10/01/2023, p.25, Gary McDonald – The north's biggest business organisation is on the hunt for a new chief executive.

14-Retails likely to benefit from rates revaluation – Irish News (Belfast), 10/01/2023, p.25, Gareth Johnston - After a welcome Christmas break the new year has kicked off with many understandably varied business and property predictions, but the consensus appears to be one of hope for a gradually improving year.

15-New cost-of-living support – News Letter (Belfast), 10/01/2023, p.16, Unattributed - Low-income households to receive fresh payments from Spring

16-Foods Connected expands to reach new markets - News Letter (Belfast), 10/01/2023, p.19, Unattributed – Londonderry – based software as a service (SaaS) firm, Foods Connected, is investing heavily in its business as it seeks to target new export markets.

17- Over 500 student units planned in major project - News Letter (Belfast), 10/01/2023, p.21, Claire Cartmill – Bywater Properties and Ashmour Developments have announced their intention to submit proposals for a major student accommodation development on a site in Belfast that was previously earmarked for offices.

18-April symbolism understandable but lasting resolution more important - Irish News (Belfast), 10/01/2023, p.6 & 7 – John Manley – Whoever linked the resolution of issues around the protocol with the 25th anniversary of the Good Friday Agreement appears to have greatly underestimated the magnitude of the task in hand, as well as the internal politics of each camp.

19-Talks hope after UK/EU strike deal - Belfast Telegraph, 10/01/2023, p.1&2, Unattributed – Talks over the NI Protocol have taken a “positive step” forward after a deal was struck on EU access to UK computer systems.

20-Boucher Retail Park deal leads growth spurt for property - Belfast Telegraph, 10/01/2023, p.2&3, Margaret Canning – Commercial assets such as shopping centres were back in demand during 2022 despite a cost-of-living crisis.

21-More Student digs set for city as office plans are converted- Belfast Telegraph, 10/01/2023, p.4, Alison Magee – Smithfield Yard developer intend to submit new proposals for 583-unit residence instead.

22- EU Pandering to UK over NI Protocol - News Letter (Belfast), 10/01/2023, p.1, Mark Rainey - The EU should stop pandering to the European Union Jim Allister has said after a joint UU/UK statement.

23-Best Practice is at heart of Fibrus Standards -News Letter (Belfast), 10/01/2023, p.21, Unattributed - Northern Ireland Full Fibre Broadband has been awarded four full prestigious accreditations.

24-New Energy and Skills to boost Ards Business Hub -News Letter (Belfast), 10/01/2023, p.23, Claire Cartmill -Two new staff members have been appointed to key positions at Ards Business Hub.

25-Progress at Protocol talks welcomed after UK/EU strike IT deal - Belfast Telegraph, 10/01/2023, p.2, Garrett Hargan -Talks in London over the protocol have taken a forward after a deal was struck on EU access to UK IT systems.

26-Households face rates rise when renewing mortgages - Irish News (Belfast), 10/01/2023, p.12, Vicky Shaw -More than 1.4 million households are facing the prospect of interest rates rises when they renew their fixed rate mortgages.

27-Telecoms provider lands £7m network services contract with 10 councils -Irish News (Belfast), 10/01/2023, p.25, Ryan McAleer -Telecoms and IT provider Eir Evo has landed a £7 million network services contract with 10 councils across the north.

Regional newspaper clippings

Give energy support savings to restored Executive-Derry News, 09/01/2023, p.3, Unattributed- The savings made through the reduced energy support being paid to paid to households in the North of Ireland should be given to a restored Executive, according to Foyle MLA Ciara Ferguson (Sinn Fein)

DfE related broadcast

BBC Evening Extra - The EU and UK say there is a "new basis" for talks on the Northern Ireland protocol after agreement was reached on sharing trade data. The agreement will allow the EU to access to UK IT systems which will give detailed information about goods flowing from GB to Northern Ireland. John Campbell, economics editor

UTV Live - The EU and UK say there is a "new basis" for talks on the Northern Ireland protocol after agreement was reached on sharing trade data. The agreement will allow the EU to access to UK IT systems which will give detailed information about goods flowing from GB to Northern Ireland. Tracey Magee, political editor

GMU -The EU and UK say there is a "new basis" for talks on the Northern Ireland Protocol after agreement was reached on sharing trade data. The agreement will allow the EU to access UK IT systems which will give detailed information about goods flowing from GB to Northern Ireland. Agreement in this area is seen as a key step to reaching a broader deal. Declan Kearney, Sinn Fein, Stephen Farry, Alliance Party.

GMU - What are the prospects for a breakthrough this week over the impasse on the NI Protocol...? Enda McClafferty, political editor

Nolan Show - The EU and UK say there is now a new basis for talks on the NI Protocol.

DfE Press releases

Launch of Northern Ireland Apprenticeship Week 2023

Twenty high quality training places on PwC Professional Services Assured Skills Academy

Press releases on DfE related topics issued by Political parties

[SDLP- O'Toole welcomes progress on access to trade data - Social Democratic and Labour Party \(sdlp.ie\)](#)

[Sinn Féin- Agreement on sharing trade data welcome - Kearney | Sinn Féin \(sinnfein.ie\)](#)

[Alliance- Farry welcomes UK-EU deal on data sharing - Alliance Party](#)

[TUV- It's not pandering to EU we need – TUV – Traditional Unionist Voice](#)

DfE Media Enquiries / Interview bids

Media enquiry - BBC - new scheme to support firms with their energy bills.

Media enquiry - BBC - ESF money

DfE Online news stories

[BBC-NI Protocol: UK and EU reach agreement on trade data sharing - BBC News](#)

[BBC-Energy bill support: Firms fear 'worst to come' - BBC News](#)

[BBC-Price rises boost December sales for shops - BBC News](#)

BBC- Energy bill support for firms to be reduced from April - BBC News

UTV- 'Cordial and constructive meeting' between EU and UK officials over Northern Ireland Protocol | UTV | ITV News

UTV- Energy bill support for businesses to be reduced from April, government confirms | ITV News

RTE- Business News | Latest Breaking Stories & Headlines | RTÉ (rte.ie)

Planned Social Media Activity

Launch of Northern Ireland Apprenticeship Week 2023

Twenty high quality training places on PwC Professional Services Assured Skills Academy



[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 11 January 2023 15:54
To: McFlynn, Sharon
Cc: G_DAERA PressOffice.Group, DAERA
Subject: traceability LTT

Sharon this is the most recent line we have on traceability (Newsletter, April 2022) – of course the Minister may have said otherwise or other, more up to date briefing may have been given to him ahead of AQs etc etc.

Hope this helps.

[REDACTED]

A spokesperson for the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs said: "The Department unreservedly apologises to [REDACTED] for the hurt and distress caused.

"Following the outcome of the case in October 2021, the Department established an Internal Audit Review of Cattle Traceability System within Veterinary Animal Health Group. This review was focused on the robustness of current controls for animal traceability in livestock markets and abattoirs and also considered all of the issues raised by [REDACTED]. The review made a number of recommendations which the Department is implementing.

"With respect to traceability, Northern Ireland has a unique and world leading traceability system (APHIS) that enables the real time recording of bovine animal movements between farms, markets and abattoirs. The system does, and should, facilitate corrective amendments to be made to ensure accuracy of the notified and recorded movements held on APHIS.

"For the 12-month period, from November 2020 – October 2021, only around 2% of Market movements had a corrective amendment to the movement made by a Market Operator within 1 working day after the original sale. This corrective amendment is necessary to ensure the information held on the APHIS database accurately reflects the location of all animals and the movements that took place.

"Additionally, should any animal be physically moved onto any holding within this timeframe, prior to its final destination, there is a legal obligation to notify the Department. Where the Department has information or evidence of a false notification, the Department will investigate and take appropriate enforcement action.

"The Department takes extremely seriously all the matters which contributed to the outcome of the recent tribunal and will be progressing an internal review into them. This review is being undertaken with urgency and will be completed at pace."

A spokesperson for the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs said: "A key priority of the Department is animal welfare. During the period 01 January 2017 to 31 December 2020, nearly 5,000 production site inspections for compliance with animal welfare requirements for farmed animals were completed.

"The mobile phone in question was surrendered and disposed of securely in line with NICS leavers policy. Departmental phones are password protected and the password is known only to the officer to whom the phone is assigned.

"The Department can confirm that photographic evidence gathered by [REDACTED] and a DAERA enforcement inspector in September 2017, was filed and retained on the Department's electronic records management system as part of official records, and formed part of enforcement considerations for suspected breaches of animal welfare legislation. Following this inspection and a further inspection by Department inspectors, a warning letter was issued to the market operator outlining the non-compliances found and detailing the necessary urgent corrective actions. Following the warning letter, the Department conducted a further nine unannounced inspections of the market in the period up to Spring 2018. The inspections confirmed that the livestock market operator had taken and maintained corrective actions and no welfare issues were detected during these nine inspections."

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 12 January 2023 14:02
To: McFlynn, Sharon
Subject: FW: traceability LTT

Hiya,

Made a start, you said short and sweet and I might have taken it too literally. Let me know if you want any more?

Thanks

[REDACTED]

A spokesperson for the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs said: “Following the outcome of the case in October 2021, the Department established an Internal Audit (IA) Review of Cattle Traceability System within Veterinary Animal Health Group. This review was focused on the robustness of current controls for animal traceability in livestock markets and abattoirs and also considered all of the issues raised by [REDACTED]

“The review made a number of recommendations almost all of which have been accepted and implemented by the Department. The implementation of these recommendations has further enhanced and strengthened the control measures in place to enable accurate, real-time recording of bovine animal movements between farms, markets and abattoirs.

“One recommendation remains outstanding regarding the Recording/Deleting Movements of Cattle. This recommendation requires the Department to have the appropriate domestic legislation in place, with which the policy, guidance and instructions could be compared, and conferring the appropriate enforcement powers on the Department to verify market operator compliance and deal with issues of non-compliance. The Department is unable to progress this recommendation in the absence of that legislation and in the absence of Ministers. Not sure how accurate this is re EF??

We also need a line stating how this lapse in legislation affects the accuracy of the traceability system – does it have any real time negative impacts or is it more administrative? Or perhaps we can mitigate against them? I don't see the answer in the sub so will need advice from officials.

[REDACTED]

From: McFlynn, Sharon
Sent: 12 January 2023 20:50
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: FW: OFFICIAL SENSITIVE Revised Reports
Attachments: DAERA External Review_Final Report_9 January 2023.pdf; DAERA - Project Oscar phase 2 final report.pdf

[REDACTED]

Please find attached a copy of the final PWC reports which are being shared in strictest confidence. I will forward the password separately.

Regards,

Sharon

From: McCavigan, Tracey <Tracey.McCavigan@finance-ni.gov.uk>
Sent: 09 January 2023 16:05
To: Sayee, Natasha <Natasha.Sayee@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>; McLaughlin, Mark (DOF) <Mark.McLaughlin@finance-ni.gov.uk>; McNabb, Chris <Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>
Subject: OFFICIAL SENSITIVE Revised Reports

All

Please see attached revised reports provided by PWC today which are to be used for publication. I will send password separately.

There was a minor correction at Para 7.25 in Phase 1 report and Phase 2 they changed their template.

Kind regards

Tracey

Tracey McCavigan
Group Head of Internal Audit and Fraud Investigation Services
Hillview Buildings | Stormont Estate | Belfast | BT4 3TA
☎ (028) 91 279669 Ext: 59669

[REDACTED]

From: McFlynn, Sharon
Sent: 12 January 2023 21:01
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: FW: FW: Phase 2 final report
Attachments: DAERA - Project Oscar phase 2 final report.pdf

[REDACTED]

FYI

Sharon

From: McCavigan, Tracey <Tracey.McCavigan@finance-ni.gov.uk>
Sent: 12 January 2023 14:51
To: Brady, Jayne <HOCS@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; Godfrey, Katrina (DAERA – Perm Sec) <Katrina.Godfrey@daera-ni.gov.uk>; Gibson, Neil <Neil.Gibson@finance-ni.gov.uk>; Crilly, Louise <Louise.Crilly@finance-ni.gov.uk>
Cc: McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>; McNabb, Chris <Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; McLaughlin, Mark (DOF) <Mark.McLaughlin@finance-ni.gov.uk>; Sayee, Natasha <Natasha.Sayee@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>
Subject: FW: FW: Phase 2 final report

All

Please see final phase 2 report to be used for publication. It was amended to remove the draft reference in previous version.

Kind regards
Tracey

Tracey McCavigan
Group Head of Internal Audit and Fraud Investigation Services
Hillview Buildings | Stormont Estate | Belfast | BT4 3TA
☎ (028) 91 279669 Ext: 59669

[REDACTED]

From: McFlynn, Sharon
Sent: 12 January 2023 21:07
To: Sayee, Natasha
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: ACTION REPORT PREFACE

Hi Natasha,

Thanks for sending this across. Can you please grant access to [REDACTED] please? Katrina has agreed that at this juncture [REDACTED] input and perspective will be very helpful in planning for publication of the report. Therefore, the final PWC reports have been shared with her.

Many thanks.

Sharon

From: Sayee, Natasha <Natasha.Sayee@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>
Sent: 12 January 2023 16:54
To: McLaughlin, Mark (DOF) <Mark.McLaughlin@finance-ni.gov.uk>; McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>; Crilly, Louise <Louise.Crilly@finance-ni.gov.uk>; McCavigan, Tracey <Tracey.McCavigan@finance-ni.gov.uk>; Hughes, David (DoF) <David.Hughes@finance-ni.gov.uk>
Cc: Stewart, Chris (TEO) <chris.stewart@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; McNabb, Chris <Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; Byrne, Jayne <Jayne.Byrne@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>
Subject: ACTION REPORT PREFACE
Importance: High

OFFICIAL SENSITIVE

Hi Louise and All ,

Please can you advise in relation to the document on this link (Preface for the Action Report - DAERA case)
: [📎 PREFACE AND INTRO.docx](#)

This has been reviewed by all cc'd.

It is a live link to which you can add your edits and comments. We are working to a tight deadline on this. Please can I request your amends/comments are to me by 1300 tomorrow. Thank you.

The short segment on cultural reform is being reviewed by Jill and Emer separately.

Kind regards,

Natasha

Natasha Sayee (she/her)
Director of Marketing, Outreach & Internal Communications

The Executive Office
Stormont Castle
Tel: ☎ 028 90 378 202 (Internal extension 88202) / 07775017210
E-mail: ✉ natasha.sayee@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk

[REDACTED]

From: McFlynn, Sharon
Sent: 12 January 2023 21:13
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: OFFICIAL SENSITIVE: Oversight draft PR
Attachments: Oversight draft PR.docx

[REDACTED]

When you've had a chance to digest the reports ,and have been granted access to Natasha's document, could you make a start on crafting a quote for Katrina, please? Whilst it will echo the sentiments expressed by HOCS it should also address the animal welfare and traceability issues which are the responsibility of DAERA. Once we have an agreed line on this, it can also be used in the preface and in the Q and A/LTT briefing. I will send you the draft list of potential questions (with draft input to DAERA related questions) and the most up to date version of the action plan. Apologies for the piecemeal approach.

Sharon

-----Original Message-----

From: McNabb, Chris <Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>

Sent: 12 January 2023 14:39

To: McLaughlin, Mark (DOF) <Mark.McLaughlin@finance-ni.gov.uk>; McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>

Cc: Sayee, Natasha <Natasha.Sayee@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; Stewart, Chris (TEO)

<chris.stewart@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; McNabb, Chris <Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>

Subject: Emailing: Oversight draft PR

Mark, Sharon

Here's a working draft of what we might issue on the day of the report publication. I think we need a quotes from Katrina and Neil.

Have a look, see what you think and then we can get this into a place where we have it ready to go to J, K and N when we're asked for it.

Speak tomorrow

Chris

Your message is ready to be sent with the following file or link attachments:

Oversight draft PR

Note: To protect against computer viruses, e-mail programs may prevent sending or receiving certain types of file attachments. Check your e-mail security settings to determine how attachments are handled.

DRAFT PRESS RELEASE

EXTERNAL REPORTS DIFFICULT READING - BRADY

The Northern Ireland Civil Service (NICS) has today published two independent external reports it commissioned at the conclusion of the [REDACTED] Industrial Tribunal case.

It has also published an Action Plan which contains 32 different actions to address failings identified.

Each action has been assigned to a senior civil servant and updates will be published quarterly on the DAERA and Department of Finance websites.

[The Audit and Risk Assurance Committees of both DAERA and DoF have been asked by the relevant Permanent Secretaries to make the Action Plan a key element of their meetings. As a standing agenda item, progress against the Action Plan will be rigorously scrutinised.]

PwC were appointed in XXX to undertake the external review and has made recommendations for improvement covering: Management of the DAERA Whistleblowing Policy, the DAERA Enforcement Policy and Managing Public Money; Recording and Escalating Line of Business Concerns; Record Keeping and Roles and Responsibilities in Dealing with Employment-Related Legal Cases

The action plan addresses the recommendations made by PwC.

[REDACTED]

Head of the Civil Service Jayne Brady has described the reports as difficult reading but said that the NICS will learn from what went wrong and will improve.

She said: "It is only right that when we fall below the standards we set ourselves and the public expect from us that we accept the justifiable criticism that comes our way and make the necessary changes to improve.

"No matter how uncomfortable it is as leaders, we need to be honest with ourselves, our colleagues and stakeholders. In this case [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] and we will improve.

"The independent reports have identified the need for procedural and policy improvement but they also highlight that cultural and behavioural reform is essential if we are to improve as an organisation and a separate programme of broader systemic change is already progressing which includes cultural transformation.

“In Spring 2023, we will publish our plan for embedding and sustaining transformative change, which will shape the Civil Service so that we are the very best we can be.”

DAERA Perm Sec said:

Finance Perm Sec said:

Notes to editors:

1. ██████████ resigned from the NICS and lodged a complaint with the Industrial Tribunal claiming that ██████ had suffered detriment and was constructively dismissed by ██████ employer, DAERA as a result of raising protected disclosures. The Industrial Tribunal concluded that ██████████ had suffered a detriment as a result of raising protected disclosures; that ██████ was dismissed unfairly and that the reason for dismissal was that ██████ had raised protected disclosures.
2. On XXX, the Head of the Civil Service and the Permanent Secretaries of DAERA and the Department of Finance (DoF) commissioned an external review of how DAERA dealt with the concerns raised in this case and of the decision-making of both DAERA and DoF following notification by the Industrial Tribunal that a claim had been made and throughout the period from notification of that claim through to April 15, 2022, when the agreed terms of settlement were signed.
3. PwC were appointed and the review had two phases. The first phase was a fact-find exercise which:
 - gathered and present information, supported by evidence and/or clarification from relevant officials, on the actions taken by all persons involved in the cases;

- assess these actions against the agreed policies, procedures and processes for raising concerns in place at the time and the requirements of Managing Public Money NI and any other relevant policies and determine the extent of compliance and
 - consider the extent to which the actions taken reflected the NICS Code of Ethics and provide an assessment of compliance with that code.
4. The second phase of the report looked at lessons learned and provide recommendations for improvements for the future handling of such matters to prevent recurrence of issues identified in the first report. This included:
- the robustness and transparency of the relevant systems, policies, processes and governance arrangements and
 - the capacity, capability, communication and any cultural issues in relation to raising, investigating and managing concerns.
5. The Independent External Review has identified [REDACTED] in:
- Management of the DAERA Whistleblowing Policy, the DAERA Enforcement Policy and MPMNI
 - Recording and Escalating Line of Business Concerns
 - Record Keeping
 - Roles and Responsibilities in Dealing with Employment-Related Legal Cases
6. An Action Plan has also been published alongside the external reports, which contain 32 different actions to address [REDACTED] identified in the PwC reports. While the majority of the actions sit with DAERA and the Department of Finance, the findings have an impact on all Departments.
7. The Head of the Civil Service, as Chair of the NI Civil Service Board, will monitor the status of actions, seeking monthly updates from the Permanent Secretaries of DAERA, DoF and the Departmental Solicitor. Where an action applies across the organisation, the NICS Board will collectively report on progress to the Chair.

[REDACTED]

From: McFlynn, Sharon
Sent: 12 January 2023 21:59
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: Official Sensitive- External Review- draft official response and potential list of questions
Attachments: Potential questions 201222 (004).docx; 6.1.23 Official response to DAERA Whistleblowing Lessons Learnt Report by PwC.DOCX

[REDACTED]

Further to our conversation earlier, please find attached a list of potential questions that may be asked following publication of the external review (see email at the bottom of this chain about handling arrangements). I have dropped in the responses provided to date by Roger and included a slightly reworked version of your draft line regarding animal traceability. A copy of the draft action plan (all DAERA input has been agreed by Katrina and DoF is still working on theirs so some of it may be subject to change) is also attached for your information. The actions in it could be used to flesh out some answers but rather than repeating what's in the plan, the LTT might just refer the enquirer to the relevant action for further information. I would appreciate your thoughts on the content of the Q and A document so far-feel free to comment and amend as you see fit. When that has been done, we will need to engage with the business side to get their clearance on our amends prior to sending them to Katrina for clearance.

As far as it is possible, I would like to issue all material requiring Katrina's clearance to her at the same time. I'm conscious that you are being hit with a lot of information at the one time, so perhaps we could agree a time tomorrow for a catch up. We can sort this at our meeting in the morning.

Many thanks.

Sharon

From: Downey, Roger <Roger.Downey@daera-ni.gov.uk>
Sent: 12 January 2023 17:23
To: McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: FW: Official Sensitive- External Review- potential list of questions

Sharon

Please see attached responses to your comments.

Roger

From: McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>
Sent: 12 January 2023 11:21
To: Downey, Roger <Roger.Downey@daera-ni.gov.uk>
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: FW: Official Sensitive- External Review- potential list of questions

Roger,

Many thanks for your input. I have inserted a few comments for consideration. Happy to discuss further.

Sharon

From: Downey, Roger <Roger.Downey@daera-ni.gov.uk>
Sent: 11 January 2023 16:06
To: McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: FW: Official Sensitive- External Review- potential list of questions

Sharon

I've highlighted in green the yellow highlights that I think fall to me and I've highlighted my suggested responses to these in green.

Apologies for the delay and happy to discuss

Roger

From: McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>
Sent: 10 January 2023 18:48
To: Downey, Roger <Roger.Downey@daera-ni.gov.uk>
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Official Sensitive- External Review- potential list of questions

Roger,

Further to our conversation earlier, please find attached the potential list of questions that may be asked following publication of the external review. I have provided you with the full list that has been drafted by the comms leads. As you will see the bulk of the questions relate to DoF/NICS Corporate matters. I have highlighted those that will require specific DAERA input but I do appreciate that they may not all fall within your area of responsibility and therefore you may not be placed to provide a draft response. However, I would appreciate if you could provide whatever input you can and if there are other questions that may be asked, please feel free to add as you see fit.

[REDACTED] the action plan remains the key document detailing, the action, timescale for completion, senior officer responsible and mechanism to monitor progress/performance. I have provided David Hughes with the updated version agreed by Katrina today so feel free to draw on it to inform the answers to related questions.

DoF is also working on developing draft answers to these potential questions. When all draft answers have been prepared, the document will be used as the basis for LTTs for media interviews. HOCS office is seeking input from all departments tomorrow (Wednesday) in advance of the next meeting of the oversight board. Apologies for the tight deadline-would it be possible for draft answers to be provided by lunchtime?

Happy to discuss if you have any queries.

Sharon

[REDACTED]

From: Sayee, Natasha
Sent: 13 January 2023 09:20
To: McFlynn, Sharon
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: ACTION REPORT PREFACE

 [PREFACE AND INTRO.docx](#)

Hi Sharon and [REDACTED]

The report is attached.

Huge thanks,

N

From: McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>
Sent: 12 January 2023 21:07
To: Sayee, Natasha <Natasha.Sayee@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: ACTION REPORT PREFACE

Hi Natasha,

Thanks for sending this across. Can you please grant access to [REDACTED] please? Katrina has agreed that at this juncture [REDACTED] input and perspective will be very helpful in planning for publication of the report. Therefore, the final PWC reports have been shared with her.

Many thanks.

Sharon

From: Sayee, Natasha <Natasha.Sayee@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>
Sent: 12 January 2023 16:54
To: McLaughlin, Mark (DOF) <Mark.McLaughlin@finance-ni.gov.uk>; McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>; Crilly, Louise <Louise.Crilly@finance-ni.gov.uk>; McCavigan, Tracey <Tracey.McCavigan@finance-ni.gov.uk>; Hughes, David (DoF) <David.Hughes@finance-ni.gov.uk>
Cc: Stewart, Chris (TEO) <chris.stewart@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; McNabb, Chris <Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; Byrne, Jayne <Jayne.Byrne@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>
Subject: ACTION REPORT PREFACE
Importance: High

OFFICIAL SENSITIVE

Hi Louise and All ,

Please can you advise in relation to the document on this link (Preface for the Action Report - DAERA case)
:  [PREFACE AND INTRO.docx](#)

This has been reviewed by all cc'd.

It is a live link to which you can add your edits and comments. We are working to a tight deadline on this. Please can I request your amends/comments are to me by 1300 tomorrow. Thank you.

The short segment on cultural reform is being reviewed by Jill and Emer separately.

Kind regards,

Natasha

Natasha Sayee (she/her)
Director of Marketing, Outreach & Internal Communications

The Executive Office
Stormont Castle

Tel: ☎ 028 90 378 202 (Internal extension 88202) / 07775017210

E-mail: ✉ natasha.sayee@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk

[REDACTED]

From: McFlynn, Sharon
Sent: 13 January 2023 15:57
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: FW: CM: official - sensitive PWC report
Attachments: PWC report comms v3.DOCX

Record Number: AE1/23/61005

From: Godfrey, Katrina (DAERA – Perm Sec) <Katrina.Godfrey@daera-ni.gov.uk>
Sent: 12 January 2023 11:45
To: McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>
Subject: FW: CM: official - sensitive PWC report

Sharon

Keen to have your thoughts.

Katrina

From: Stewart, Chris (TEO) <chris.stewart@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>
Sent: 12 January 2023 10:46
To: Brady, Jayne <Jayne.Brady@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>
Cc: Gibson, Neil <Neil.Gibson@finance-ni.gov.uk>; Godfrey, Katrina (DAERA – Perm Sec) <Katrina.Godfrey@daera-ni.gov.uk>; Crilly, Louise <Louise.Crilly@finance-ni.gov.uk>; McNabb, Chris <Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; Sayee, Natasha <Natasha.Sayee@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; McLaughlin, Mark (DOF) <Mark.McLaughlin@finance-ni.gov.uk>
Subject: CM: official - sensitive PWC report

Jayne and colleagues

Please see the attached. Communications and legal colleagues are aware of this advice. However, I have not asked them to endorse it, and they may wish to offer their own (different) advice.

C

From: Chris Stewart
Date: 12 January 2023

cc Chris McNabb
Natasha Sayee
Mark McLoughlin

Jayne Brady
Neil Gibson
Katrina Godfrey

PWC REPORT AND APPROACH TO COMMUNICATIONS

1. On 9 January, the oversight group discussed the potential approach to communications in relation to the above report. I expressed the view (which I continue to hold) that offering media interviews is the wrong approach.
2. There are two risks to be managed: that of reputational damage to the NICS from an unsuccessful interview (or from declining an interview), and [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] In my view the latter is the more significant in terms of long-term damage. Failure to manage the first risk may lead to short-term unfavourable media coverage. Failure to manage the second may damage the confidence of staff in the values and leadership of the NICS.
3. The two risks are, of course, connected. In any interview situation, the more cautious we are in relation to the second risk, the more we increase the first. But cautious we must be. It is for that reason that my earnest advice is that we do not offer interviews, and decline any request.
4. My concern is perhaps best illustrated by the attached draft Q&A briefing, which illustrates that a prudently cautious approach to answering predictable questions does nothing to address the first risk.
5. I suggest that both risks would be better managed by a communications strategy that might include: a press statement and direct communication to stakeholders (such as MLAs) and NICS staff.
6. Glad to discuss.

CF Stewart

CHRIS STEWART

[Redacted]

From: [Redacted]
Sent: 13 January 2023 16:52
To: Gartland, Neal
Cc: McFlynn, Sharon
Subject: lines

Hi Neal – understand you have spoken with Sharon. Would really appreciate your input on some lines to address animal welfare and traceability queries.

We've crafted the line below but it's lacking in detail around what impact the AHL (if any) is having on our ability to deliver on these control measures and what mitigations we have in place to risk manage them.

Could you add a few bits in to this that highlights the work to date and anything else you think is important.

Many thanks

[Redacted]

[Large redacted block]

[Redacted]

From: [Redacted]
Sent: 13 January 2023 17:32
To: McFlynn, Sharon
Subject: Oversight draft PR
Attachments: Oversight draft PR.docx

Made a start, not sure it's a very good one! Words on a page for now, and happy for your rework!

Thanks

[Redacted]

[REDACTED]

From: Gartland, Neal
Sent: 13 January 2023 18:22
To: McCauley, Joanne (DAERA)
Cc: McFlynn, Sharon
Subject: RE: lines

Thanks [REDACTED] can I check are these lines for the auditors and will they be made public?

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 13 January 2023 16:52
To: Gartland, Neal <Neal.Gartland@daera-ni.gov.uk>
Cc: McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>
Subject: lines

Hi Neal – understand you have spoken with Sharon. Would really appreciate your input on some lines to address animal welfare and traceability queries.

We've crafted the line below but it's lacking in detail around what impact the AHL (if any) is having on our ability to deliver on these control measures and what mitigations we have in place to risk manage them.

Could you add a few bits in to this that highlights the work to date and anything else you think is important.

Many thanks

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 13 January 2023 18:22
To: Gartland, Neal
Cc: McFlynn, Sharon
Subject: RE: lines

Public facing thanks Neal.

[REDACTED]

From: Gartland, Neal <Neal.Gartland@daera-ni.gov.uk>
Sent: 13 January 2023 18:22
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>
Subject: RE: lines

Thanks [REDACTED] can I check are these lines for the auditors and will they be made public?

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 13 January 2023 16:52
To: Gartland, Neal <Neal.Gartland@daera-ni.gov.uk>
Cc: McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>
Subject: lines

Hi Neal – understand you have spoken with Sharon. Would really appreciate your input on some lines to address animal welfare and traceability queries.

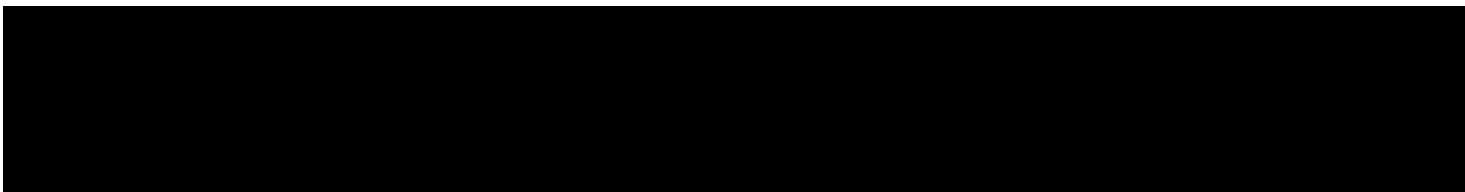
We've crafted the line below but it's lacking in detail around what impact the AHL (if any) is having on our ability to deliver on these control measures and what mitigations we have in place to risk manage them.

Could you add a few bits in to this that highlights the work to date and anything else you think is important.

Many thanks

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]



[REDACTED]

From: Gartland, Neal
Sent: 17 January 2023 17:32
To: Doohar, Brian
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: FW: Protect: Brian to see - in confidence: FW: lines

Importance: High

Brian – I have amended last line, we have discussed on jabber. Let me know what you think?

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 13 January 2023 16:52
To: Gartland, Neal <Neal.Gartland@daera-ni.gov.uk>
Cc: McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>
Subject: lines

Hi Neal – understand you have spoken with Sharon. Would really appreciate your input on some lines to address animal welfare and traceability queries.

We've crafted the line below but it's lacking in detail around what impact the AHL (if any) is having on our ability to deliver on these control measures and what mitigations we have in place to risk manage them.

Could you add a few bits in to this that highlights the work to date and anything else you think is important.

Many thanks

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 17 January 2023 18:27
To: McFlynn, Sharon
Subject: FW: Protect: Brian to see - in confidence: FW: lines

Importance: High

Line So far.....

From: Gartland, Neal <Neal.Gartland@daera-ni.gov.uk>
Date: Tuesday, 17 Jan 2023, 5:31 pm
To: Doohar, Brian <Brian.Doohar@daera-ni.gov.uk>
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: FW: Protect: Brian to see - in confidence: FW: lines

Brian – I have amended last line, we have discussed on jabber. Let me know what you think?

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 13 January 2023 16:52
To: Gartland, Neal <Neal.Gartland@daera-ni.gov.uk>
Cc: McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>
Subject: lines

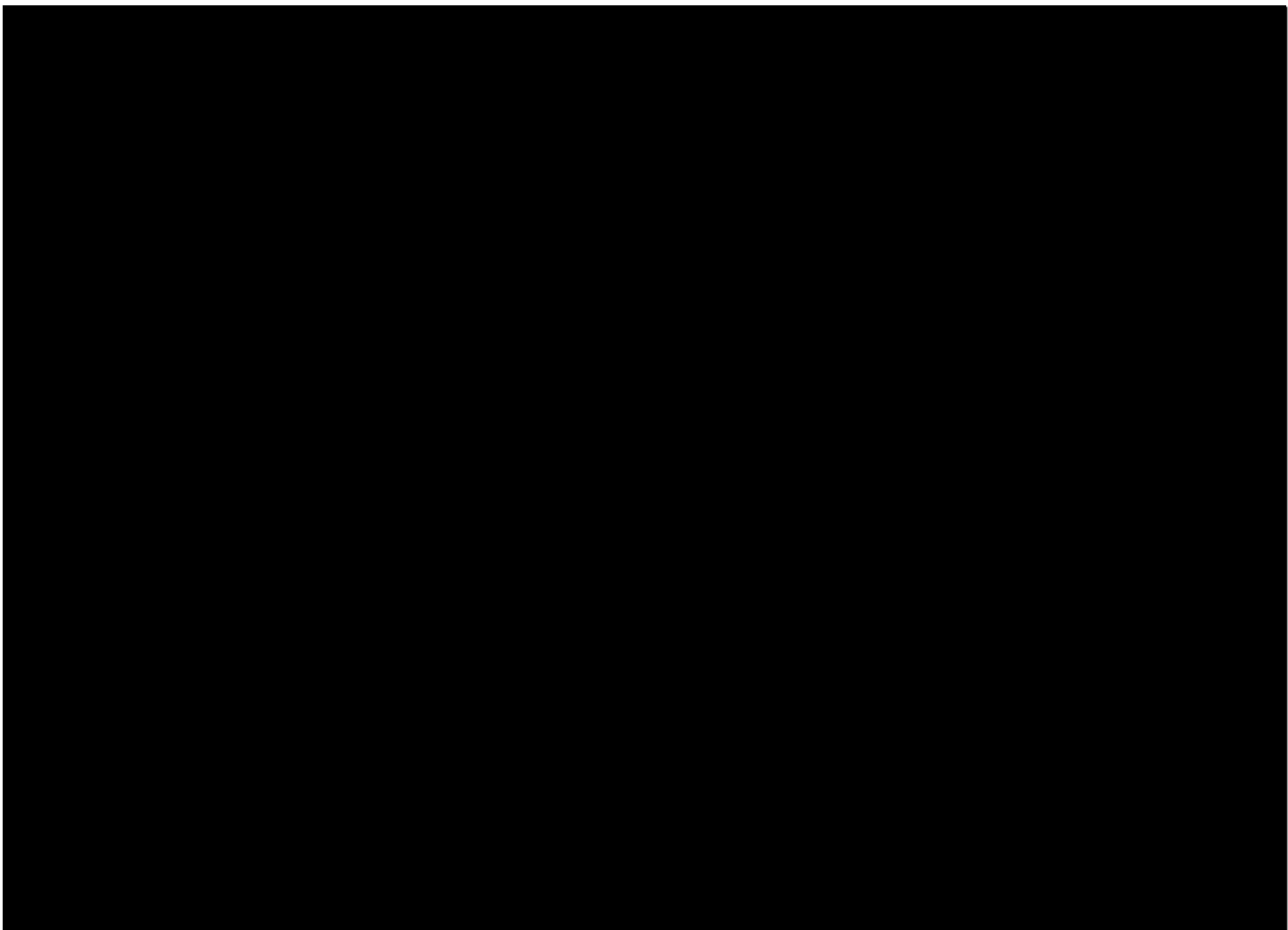
Hi Neal – understand you have spoken with Sharon. Would really appreciate your input on some lines to address animal welfare and traceability queries.

We've crafted the line below but it's lacking in detail around what impact the AHL (if any) is having on our ability to deliver on these control measures and what mitigations we have in place to risk manage them.

Could you add a few bits in to this that highlights the work to date and anything else you think is important.

Many thanks

[REDACTED]



11. The first part of the document discusses the importance of maintaining accurate records of all transactions and activities. It emphasizes the need for transparency and accountability in financial reporting.

12. The second part of the document outlines the various methods and techniques used to collect and analyze data. It includes a detailed description of the experimental procedures and the statistical tools employed.

13. The third part of the document presents the results of the study, showing the trends and patterns observed in the data. It includes several tables and graphs to illustrate the findings.

14. The fourth part of the document discusses the implications of the results and provides recommendations for future research. It also addresses the limitations of the study and suggests ways to improve the methodology.

15. The final part of the document is a conclusion that summarizes the key findings and reiterates the importance of the research. It also includes a list of references and a bibliography.

[REDACTED]

From: Gartland, Neal
Sent: 18 January 2023 09:39
To: Dooher, Brian
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: FW: Protect: Brian to see - in confidence: FW: lines

Importance: High

Brian – I understand and accept your points on this.

You happy Perm Sec line is what you have put across to me (as below) I think It is to the point and factual now.

[REDACTED] to confirm the LTT is not for public consumption (bit under red question)?

Neal

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 13 January 2023 16:52
To: Gartland, Neal <Neal.Gartland@daera-ni.gov.uk>
Cc: McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>
Subject: lines

Hi Neal – understand you have spoken with Sharon. Would really appreciate your input on some lines to address animal welfare and traceability queries.

We've crafted the line below but it's lacking in detail around what impact the AHL (if any) is having on our ability to deliver on these control measures and what mitigations we have in place to risk manage them.

Could you add a few bits in to this that highlights the work to date and anything else you think is important.

Many thanks

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

From: Gartland, Neal
Sent: 18 January 2023 11:47
To: [REDACTED] McFlynn, Sharon
Cc: Dooher, Brian
Subject: FW: Protect: FW: lines

Importance: High

[REDACTED] Sharon,

Please see below the proposed response from VSAHG. Our understanding is that the LTT under the red question are not for public consumption? Happy for any further questions or queries that may come from this.

Thanks to Brian also – IRM DCVO – who is copied in confidence.

Thanks,

Neal

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 13 January 2023 16:52
To: Gartland, Neal <Neal.Gartland@daera-ni.gov.uk>
Cc: McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>
Subject: lines

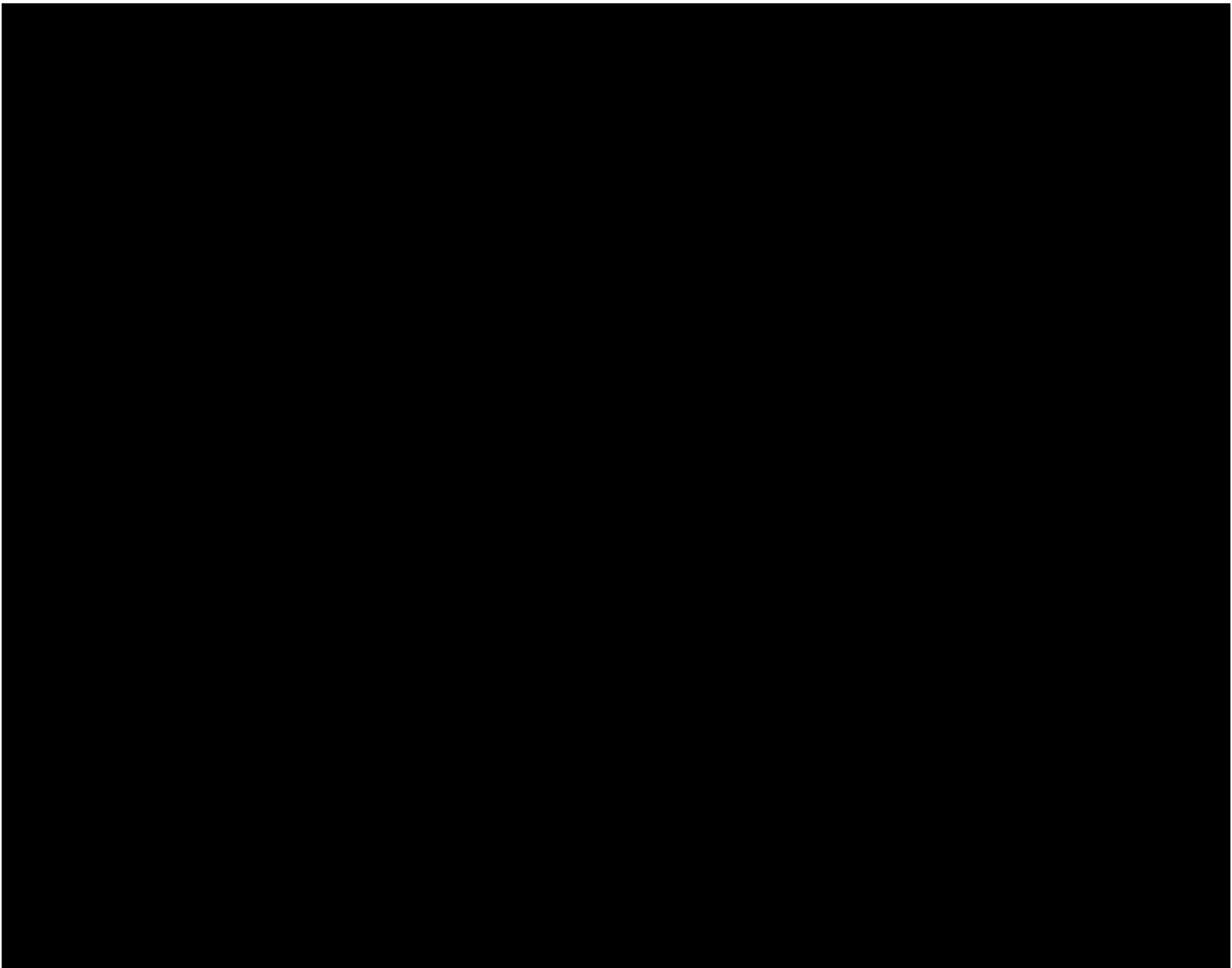
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Could you add a few bits in to this that highlights the work to date and anything else you think is important.

Many thanks

[REDACTED]



1. The first part of the document discusses the importance of maintaining accurate records of all transactions and activities. It emphasizes the need for transparency and accountability in financial reporting.

2. The second part of the document outlines the various methods used to collect and analyze data. It includes a detailed description of the sampling process and the statistical techniques employed to ensure the validity of the results.

3. The third part of the document presents the findings of the study. It shows that there is a significant correlation between the variables being studied, and that the results are consistent with the theoretical framework.

4. The fourth part of the document discusses the implications of the findings for practice and policy. It suggests that the results can be used to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the processes being studied.

5. The fifth part of the document concludes the study and provides a summary of the key points. It also identifies the limitations of the study and suggests areas for future research.

[REDACTED]

From: McFlynn, Sharon
Sent: 18 January 2023 12:14
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: FW: Official response to DAERA Whistleblowing Lessons Learnt Report by PwC - with ~ 16 January 2022

From: Crilly, Louise <Louise.Crilly@finance-ni.gov.uk>
Sent: 17 January 2023 22:22
To: Stewart, Chris (TEO) <chris.stewart@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; Brady, Jayne <HOCS@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; Hughes, David (DoF) <David.Hughes@finance-ni.gov.uk>; McCavigan, Tracey <Tracey.McCavigan@finance-ni.gov.uk>; Gibson, Neil <Neil.Gibson@finance-ni.gov.uk>; Sayee, Natasha <Natasha.Sayee@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>; McLaughlin, Mark (DOF) <Mark.McLaughlin@finance-ni.gov.uk>; Godfrey, Katrina (DAERA – Perm Sec) <Katrina.Godfrey@daera-ni.gov.uk>
Cc: Byrne, Jayne <Jayne.Byrne@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>
Subject: RE: Official response to DAERA Whistleblowing Lessons Learnt Report by PwC - with ~ 16 January 2022

 [INDEPENDENT EXTERNAL REVIEW COMMS PACK.docx](#)

[REDACTED]

From: Stewart, Chris (TEO) <chris.stewart@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>
Sent: 16 January 2023 19:21
To: Brady, Jayne <HOCS@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; Hughes, David (DoF) <David.Hughes@finance-ni.gov.uk>; Byrne, Jayne <Jayne.Byrne@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>
Cc: Sayee, Natasha <Natasha.Sayee@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; McCavigan, Tracey <Tracey.McCavigan@finance-ni.gov.uk>; Crilly, Louise <Louise.Crilly@finance-ni.gov.uk>; McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>; McLaughlin, Mark (DOF) <Mark.McLaughlin@finance-ni.gov.uk>; Godfrey, Katrina (DAERA – Perm Sec) <Katrina.Godfrey@daera-ni.gov.uk>; Gibson, Neil <Neil.Gibson@finance-ni.gov.uk>
Subject: RE: Official response to DAERA Whistleblowing Lessons Learnt Report by PwC - with ~ 16 January 2022

Jayne

Revised version attached.

C

From: Brady, Jayne <HOCS@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>

Sent: 16 January 2023 18:43

To: Hughes, David (DoF) <David.Hughes@finance-ni.gov.uk>; Byrne, Jayne <Jayne.Byrne@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>

Cc: Stewart, Chris (TEO) <chris.stewart@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; Sayee, Natasha

<Natasha.Sayee@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; McCavigan, Tracey <Tracey.McCavigan@finance-ni.gov.uk>; Crilly, Louise <Louise.Crilly@finance-ni.gov.uk>; McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>; McLaughlin, Mark (DOF) <Mark.McLaughlin@finance-ni.gov.uk>; Godfrey, Katrina (DAERA – Perm Sec) <Katrina.Godfrey@daera-ni.gov.uk>; Gibson, Neil <Neil.Gibson@finance-ni.gov.uk>

Subject: RE: Official response to DAERA Whistleblowing Lessons Learnt Report by PwC - with ~ 16 January 2022

Thanks all, I have spoken to Jill and am content not to include the reference to external panel. I suggest we send this evening. Chris is the letter in final form?

Jayne

Sent with BlackBerry Work
(www.blackberry.com)

From: Hughes, David (DoF) <David.Hughes@finance-ni.gov.uk>

Date: Monday, 16 Jan 2023 at 6:20 pm

To: Byrne, Jayne <Jayne.Byrne@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>

Cc: Stewart, Chris (TEO) <chris.stewart@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>, Sayee, Natasha <Natasha.Sayee@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>, McCavigan, Tracey <Tracey.McCavigan@finance-ni.gov.uk>, Crilly, Louise <Louise.Crilly@finance-ni.gov.uk>, McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>, McLaughlin, Mark (DOF) <Mark.McLaughlin@finance-ni.gov.uk>, Godfrey, Katrina (DAERA – Perm Sec) <Katrina.Godfrey@daera-ni.gov.uk>, Gibson, Neil <Neil.Gibson@finance-ni.gov.uk>, Brady, Jayne <HOCS@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>

Subject: Official response to DAERA Whistleblowing Lessons Learnt Report by PwC - with ~ 16 January 2022

[REDACTED]

From: McFlynn, Sharon
Sent: 18 January 2023 12:22
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: FW: RE: Official response to DAERA Whistleblowing Lessons Learnt Report by PwC - with ~ 16 January 2022
Attachments: INDEPENDENT EXTERNAL REVIEW COMMS PACK.docx

From: Godfrey, Katrina (DAERA – Perm Sec) <Katrina.Godfrey@daera-ni.gov.uk>
Sent: 18 January 2023 09:34
To: Crilly, Louise <Louise.Crilly@finance-ni.gov.uk>; Stewart, Chris (TEO) <chris.stewart@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; Brady, Jayne <HOCS@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; Hughes, David (DoF) <David.Hughes@finance-ni.gov.uk>; McCavigan, Tracey <Tracey.McCavigan@finance-ni.gov.uk>; Gibson, Neil <Neil.Gibson@finance-ni.gov.uk>; Sayee, Natasha <Natasha.Sayee@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>; McLaughlin, Mark (DOF) <Mark.McLaughlin@finance-ni.gov.uk>
Cc: Byrne, Jayne <Jayne.Byrne@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>
Subject: RE: RE: Official response to DAERA Whistleblowing Lessons Learnt Report by PwC - with ~ 16 January 2022

My comments inserted. Could we please consider a shared CM document going forward?

Many thanks

Katrina

From: Crilly, Louise <Louise.Crilly@finance-ni.gov.uk>
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Subject: RE: Official response to DAERA Whistleblowing Lessons Learnt Report by PwC - with ~ 16 January 2022

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Subject: Official response to DAERA Whistleblowing Lessons Learnt Report by PwC - with ~ 16 January 2022

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 18 January 2023 13:37
To: Gartland, Neal; McFlynn, Sharon
Cc: Dooher, Brian
Subject: RE: Protect: FW: lines

Thanks Neal and Brian,

I am suggesting an amend to the final two paras as below just to simplify this for public lines.

Thanks, I will send up to Perm Sec to consider.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

From: Gartland, Neal <Neal.Gartland@daera-ni.gov.uk>
Sent: 18 January 2023 11:47
To: [REDACTED] McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>
Cc: Dooher, Brian <Brian.Dooher@daera-ni.gov.uk>
Subject: FW: Protect: FW: lines
Importance: High

[REDACTED] Sharon,

Please see below the proposed response from VSAHG. Our understanding is that the LTT under the red question are not for public consumption? Happy for any further questions or queries that may come from this.

Thanks to Brian also – IRM DCVO – who is copied in confidence.

Thanks,

Neal

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 13 January 2023 16:52

To: Gartland, Neal <Neal.Gartland@daera-ni.gov.uk>

Cc: McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>

Subject: lines

Hi Neal – understand you have spoken with Sharon. Would really appreciate your input on some lines to address animal welfare and traceability queries.

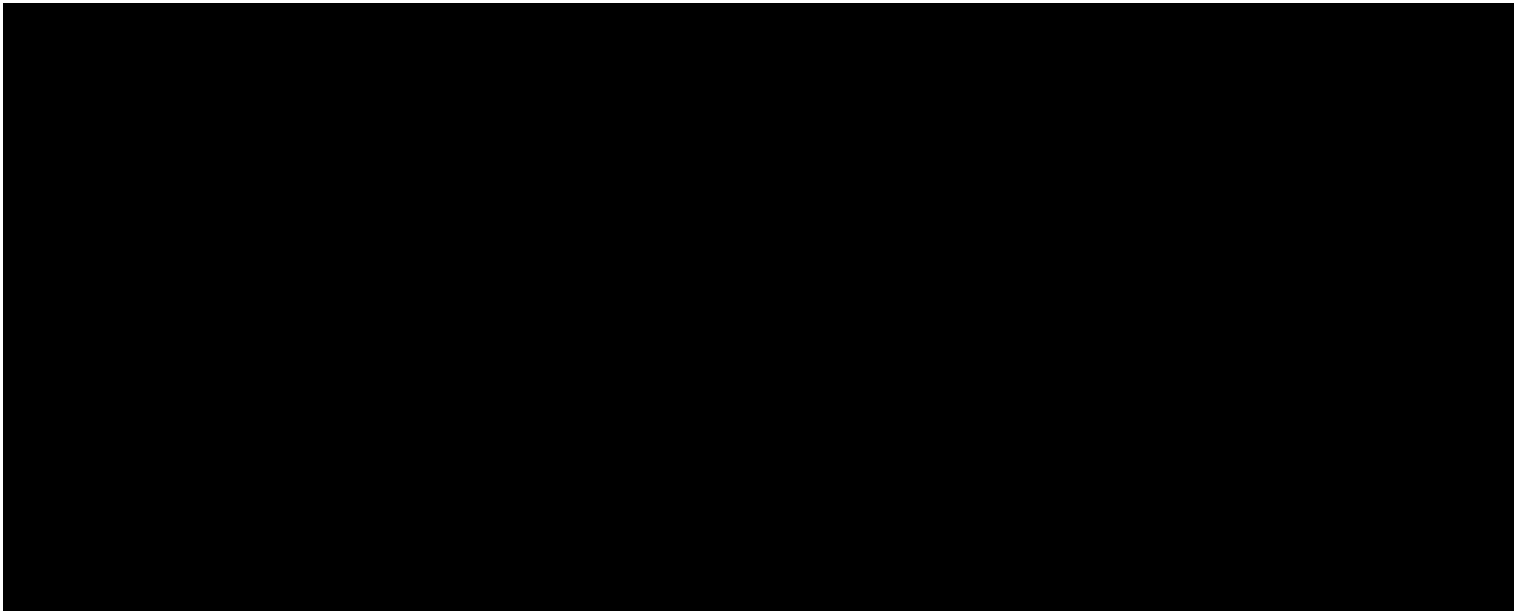
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Could you add a few bits in to this that highlights the work to date and anything else you think is important.

Many thanks

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]



[REDACTED]

From: Gartland, Neal
Sent: 18 January 2023 13:55
To: [REDACTED] McFlynn, Sharon
Cc: Dooher, Brian
Subject: RE: Protect: FW: lines

I am happy with that, thanks [REDACTED] Neal

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 18 January 2023 13:37
To: Gartland, Neal <Neal.Gartland@daera-ni.gov.uk>; McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>
Cc: Dooher, Brian <Brian.Dooher@daera-ni.gov.uk>
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Cc: McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>

Subject: lines

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Could you add a few bits in to this that highlights the work to date and anything else you think is important.

Many thanks

█

█



[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 18 January 2023 17:00
To: Sayee, Natasha; McNabb, Chris; [REDACTED] McFlynn, Sharon
Cc: McLaughlin, Mark (DOF)
Subject: DRAFT questions and quote
Attachments: DRAFT potential questions 180123.docx

Hi all

Please see attached draft composite list of Q and A. I have highlighted areas that need DAERA / TEO input. I have also put below a quote from Neil for the joint PR – we can review again once we see the final version.

Thanks

[REDACTED]

Neil Gibson, Department of Finance Permanent Secretary said: **“The report provides valuable learning and will help inform our journey of continuous improvement. It will enable us to build on the strengths of the Civil Service while striving to improve in areas where we can do better. This will ensure we are delivering the best possible service for the citizens we serve but also for our workforce.”**

[REDACTED]

From: McFlynn, Sharon
Sent: 18 January 2023 23:18
To: Godfrey, Katrina (DAERA – Perm Sec)
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: DRAFT questions
Attachments: DRAFT potential questions 180123.docx; 20 questions for HOCS NS EDIT.docx

Katrina,

Please find attached the latest draft composite Q and A list with DoF input been cleared by Neil.

As you will see throughout the document, DoF has highlighted areas that require DAERA/TEO input. I have provided draft responses for most of them (inserted as tracked changes) and where there are gaps, I have highlighted the questions in yellow. The draft responses have been cleared with the relevant policy leads- Roger (Finance) and Neal (VSAHG Policy) and are for your consideration and clearance.

Alongside this document, Chris McNabb prepared a list of top 20 questions which was been requested by HOCS for COP today (copy attached for information). It is still a working draft and Chris is awaiting further input from colleagues across a variety of disciplines but he is hopeful that a near final draft will be available tomorrow.

In addition to these two documents there has been a considerable amount of work done on developing the internal and external comms materials (as set out in the document shared by Natasha). We will keep working on this with a view to having a well developed suite to discuss at our meeting on Friday.

I will be out of the office tomorrow at the NICS G5 Leadership Programme but will have my mobile with me if you need to contact me.

Many thanks.

Sharon

[REDACTED]

From: Crilly, Louise
Sent: 18 January 2023 23:20
To: Sayee, Natasha; Byrne, Jayne
Cc: McLaughlin, Mark (DOF); McCavigan, Tracey; McFlynn, Sharon; [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] Hughes, David (DoF); McNabb, Chris; Stewart, Chris (TEO); [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Revised Communications Plan
Attachments: RE: Emailing: 20 questions for HOCS

Please see attached, which I have put together in response to the 20 questions that Chris shared . The comments I have made permeate all our comms on this if it is not possible to confine our commentary solely to the report itself.

Kind regards
Louise

From: Sayee, Natasha <Natasha.Sayee@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>
Sent: 18 January 2023 17:38
To: Byrne, Jayne <Jayne.Byrne@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>
Cc: McLaughlin, Mark (DOF) <Mark.McLaughlin@finance-ni.gov.uk>; Crilly, Louise <Louise.Crilly@finance-ni.gov.uk>; McCavigan, Tracey <Tracey.McCavigan@finance-ni.gov.uk>; McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>; [REDACTED] Hughes, David (DoF) <David.Hughes@finance-ni.gov.uk>; McNabb, Chris <Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; Stewart, Chris (TEO) <chris.stewart@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; [REDACTED]
Subject: Revised Communications Plan

 [REVISED COMMUNICATIONS PLAN 180123.docx](#)

Hi Jayne,

Please find link to latest version of comms plan.

Inputted into by all copied.

We have several outstanding items which we are all working on and decisions in terms of wording etc, which require decision by the Oversight Group. Katrina has requested the document is saved in CM, I am sorting this shortly.

I expect this document will be updated tomorrow.

Kind regards,

Natasha

Natasha Sayee (she/her)
Director of Marketing, Outreach & Internal Communications

The Executive Office
Stormont Castle
Tel: ☎ 028 90 378 202 (Internal extension 88202) / 07775017210
E-mail: ✉ natasha.sayee@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk

[REDACTED]

From: Godfrey, Katrina (DAERA – Perm Sec)
Sent: 19 January 2023 13:42
To: McFlynn, Sharon
Cc: [REDACTED] Downey, Roger; DAERA Central Services Deputy Secretary
Subject: OFFICIAL - SENSITIVE: DRAFT questions
Attachments: DRAFT potential questions 180123.docx; 20 questions for HOCS NS EDIT.docx

Record Number: AE1/23/103910

OFFICIAL – SENSITIVE

Thanks a million Sharon – some tracks, comments, queries etc from me but this is enormously helpful and represents a lot of work for which I'm very grateful. I am copying Roger and Fiona in too as I think you might need help from them in a couple of places to respond to my queries.

Katrina

From: McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>
Sent: 18 January 2023 23:18
To: Godfrey, Katrina (DAERA – Perm Sec) <Katrina.Godfrey@daera-ni.gov.uk>
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: CM: DRAFT questions

Katrina,

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[REDACTED]

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Sent: 19 January 2023 22:45
To: Godfrey, Katrina (DAERA – Perm Sec)
Cc: [REDACTED] Downey, Roger; DAERA Central Services Deputy Secretary
Subject: OFFICIAL - SENSITIVE: DRAFT questions
Attachments: DRAFT potential questions 180123.docx; 20 questions for HOCS NS EDIT.docx
Record Number: AE1/23/103910

Katrina,

OFFICIAL SENSITIVE

Thanks for your feedback.

Draft potential questions document:

Fiona and I have reviewed your tracks, comments and queries and have incorporated input from Roger in the updated version of the document (attached).

20 questions doc

I note that you have also made a number of suggested changes to this document. However, in the period since I issued it to you last night, DSO (Louise) has also reviewed it and made a number of suggested changes. It is my understanding that they will be picked up at our meeting tomorrow, so rather than work through your changes tonight, I thought it would make more sense to pick them in our discussions tomorrow. Happy to discuss in advance if you think that would be helpful.

Sharon

From: Godfrey, Katrina (DAERA – Perm Sec) <Katrina.Godfrey@daera-ni.gov.uk>
Sent: 19 January 2023 13:42
To: McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>
Cc: [REDACTED] Downey, Roger <Roger.Downey@daera-ni.gov.uk>; DAERA Central Services Deputy Secretary <csdeputysecretary@daera-ni.gov.uk>
Subject: OFFICIAL - SENSITIVE: DRAFT questions

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Cc

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Please find attached the latest draft composite Q and A list with DoF input been cleared by Neil.

As you will see throughout the document, DoF has highlighted areas that require DAERA/TEO input. I have provided draft responses for most of them (inserted as tracked changes) and where there are gaps, I have highlighted the questions in yellow. The draft responses have been cleared with the relevant policy leads- Roger (Finance) and Neal (VSAHG Policy) and are for your consideration and clearance.

Alongside this document, Chris McNabb prepared a list of top 20 questions which was been requested by HOCS for COP today (copy attached for information). It is still a working draft and Chris is awaiting further input from colleagues across a variety of disciplines but he is hopeful that a near final draft will be available tomorrow.

In addition to these two documents there has been a considerable amount of work done on developing the internal and external comms materials (as set out in the document shared by Natasha). We will keep working on this with a view to having a well developed suite to discuss at our meeting on Friday.

I will be out of the office tomorrow at the NICS G5 Leadership Programme but will have my mobile with me if you need to contact me.

Many thanks.

Sharon

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 23 January 2023 11:07
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: photo
Attachments: Jayne Brady.jpg

Hello [REDACTED]

Please see attached, which has been approved by HOCS. If you need it in higher resolution, let me know.

Thanks,

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 23 January 2023 10:49
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: photo

Thanks a lot, yes

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 23 January 2023 10:01
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: photo

Hi [REDACTED]

Yes, we will take a look and send one to you.
Is this for the PwC report?

Thanks,

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 23 January 2023 09:58

To: [REDACTED]

Subject: photo

Hi both, have either of you a pic of HOCS I could use for a report? A serious photo?

Thanks



[REDACTED]

From: McFlynn, Sharon
Sent: 23 January 2023 17:36
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: FW: All Comms Docs

FYI

From: Sayee, Natasha <Natasha.Sayee@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>
Sent: 23 January 2023 14:03
To: McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>; McNabb, Chris <Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; McLaughlin, Mark (DOF) <Mark.McLaughlin@finance-ni.gov.uk>; [REDACTED]
Cc: Stewart, Chris (TEO) <chris.stewart@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; Byrne, Jayne <Jayne.Byrne@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>
Subject: All Comms Docs

Hi All,

Just a reminder:

Clean Comms – (going to oversight group this afternoon for approval)  [PwC Communications FINAL DRAFT .docx](#)

Q&A doc [Q&A DOCUMENT 18-01-23](#)

Comms Output Tracker  [COMMS OUTPUT TRACKER.docx](#) - as you have progressed your item please mark 'complete' – allowing next step to move forward

Many thanks all,

Natasha

Natasha Sayee (she/her)
Director of Marketing, Outreach & Internal Communications

The Executive Office
Stormont Castle

Tel: ☎ 028 90 378 202 (Internal extension 88202) / 07775017210

E-mail: ✉ natasha.sayee@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk

[REDACTED]

From: Sayee, Natasha
Sent: 23 January 2023 17:46
To: Brady, Jayne; Godfrey, Katrina (DAERA – Perm Sec); Gibson, Neil
Cc: McFlynn, Sharon; McNabb, Chris; McLaughlin, Mark (DOF); [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] Byrne, Jayne; McCavigan, Tracey; Stewart, Chris (TEO);
Minne, Jill; Crilly, Louise; Hughes, David (DoF); [REDACTED]
Subject: Final Action Plan and Supporting Comms
Importance: High

Dear All,

PwC Communications FINAL DRAFT

Please find near final Action Plan and supporting communications, with thanks to all copied, who have been consistently working off this shared link in recent days.

I should flag Jill has raised concerns with use of 'transformative' change and 'substantial body of work' re renewal. Jayne, I know you were keen on this wording, so it remains, but I can update the pack accordingly.

We do require sign off or amends on the comms, and in particular the Action Plan by noon tomorrow.

Kind regards,

Natasha

Natasha Sayee (she/her)
Director of Marketing, Outreach & Internal Communications

The Executive Office
Stormont Castle

Tel: ☎ 028 90 378 202 (Internal extension 88202) / 07775017210

E-mail: ✉ natasha.sayee@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk

[REDACTED]

From: Crilly, Louise
Sent: 23 January 2023 19:58
To: Sayee, Natasha; Brady, Jayne; Godfrey, Katrina (DAERA – Perm Sec); Gibson, Neil
Cc: McFlynn, Sharon; McNabb, Chris; McLaughlin, Mark (DOF); [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] Byrne, Jayne; McCavigan, Tracey; Stewart, Chris (TEO);
Minne, Jill; Hughes, David (DoF); [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Final Action Plan and Supporting Comms
Attachments: PwC Communications FINAL DRAFT .docx

Added a word in. I am assuming the points raised by Katrina are being addressed ?

Regards
Louise

From: Sayee, Natasha <Natasha.Sayee@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>
Sent: 23 January 2023 17:46
To: Brady, Jayne <Jayne.Brady@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; Godfrey, Katrina (DAERA – Perm Sec) <Katrina.Godfrey@daera-ni.gov.uk>; Gibson, Neil <Neil.Gibson@finance-ni.gov.uk>
Cc: McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>; McNabb, Chris <Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; McLaughlin, Mark (DOF) <Mark.McLaughlin@finance-ni.gov.uk>; [REDACTED] Byrne, Jayne <Jayne.Byrne@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; McCavigan, Tracey <Tracey.McCavigan@finance-ni.gov.uk>; Stewart, Chris (TEO) <chris.stewart@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; Minne, Jill <Jill.Minne@finance-ni.gov.uk>; Crilly, Louise <Louise.Crilly@finance-ni.gov.uk>; Hughes, David (DoF) <David.Hughes@finance-ni.gov.uk>; [REDACTED]
Subject: Final Action Plan and Supporting Comms
Importance: High

Dear All,

PwC Communications FINAL DRAFT

Please find near final Action Plan and supporting communications, with thanks to all copied, who have been consistently working off this shared link in recent days.

I should flag Jill has raised concerns with use of 'transformative' change and 'substantial body of work' re renewal. Jayne, I know you were keen on this wording, so it remains, but I can update the pack accordingly.

We do require sign off or amends on the comms, and in particular the Action Plan by noon tomorrow.

Kind regards,

Natasha

Natasha Sayee (she/her)
Director of Marketing, Outreach & Internal Communications

The Executive Office

Stormont Castle

Tel: ☎ 028 90 378 202 (Internal extension 88202) / 07775017210

E-mail: ✉ natasha.sayee@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk

[REDACTED]

From: McFlynn, Sharon
Sent: 24 January 2023 10:59
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: OFFICIAL SENSITIVE- DRAFT ACTION PLAN
Attachments: FW: Signature; signature; FW: DoF Permanent Secretary ; PwC Communications FINAL DRAFT .docx

[REDACTED]

AS discussed, please find attached a working draft of the action plan. I am sharing it with you so that you can advance preparations for design of the publication. I have also attached signatures for inclusion- please ensure they are stored securely and locked down.

A final draft of the text will be available later today – but it may be after 5pm when it is agreed. The plan is to publish tomorrow (with an accompanying pr for issue at noon). As you will know we will need the pdf signed off and posted to live on the website in advance of that. Apologies for the very tight deadline.

I have copied in [REDACTED] if you have any queries, hopefully she will be able to help (as I will be in meetings for the rest of this morning).

Thanks a million.

Sharon

[REDACTED]

From:

Sent:

[REDACTED]
24 January 2023 10:31

To:

McFlynn, Sharon

Subject:

signature

[REDACTED]

Signature attached – please protect. Ta, R

[Redacted]

From: [Redacted]
Sent: 24 January 2023 10:26
To: McFlynn, Sharon
Subject: FW: DoF Permanent Secretary
Attachments: Neil Gibson.jpg; NG Signature.png

From: [Redacted]
Sent: 23 January 2023 16:15
To: [Redacted]
Cc: [Redacted]
Subject: DoF Permanent Secretary

Hi [Redacted]

Sorry for delay – please see attached pic and signature.

Hope this is ok – let me know if you need the bio as seeking final clearance.

Best wishes
[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 24 January 2023 10:52
To: McFlynn, Sharon
Subject: FW: Signature
Attachments: KG - Signature.png; Signature.docx

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 24 January 2023 10:47
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: DAERA PermSec <perm.sec@daera-ni.gov.uk>
Subject: Signature

[REDACTED]

See attached two options for Katrina's electronic signature for use on the reports.

Perm Sec box – copied in for info as I'm going offline now to collect new laptop.

Regards

[REDACTED]



Department of
**Agriculture, Environment
and Rural Affairs**
www.daera-ni.gov.uk

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living, working, active landscape
valued by everyone.*

All e-mails and attachments issued by the Office of the Permanent Secretary must be filed appropriately by the responsible business area. The Permanent Secretary's Office does not keep official records of such correspondence.

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 24 January 2023 10:46

To: [REDACTED]
Subject: Signature

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

From: Godfrey, Katrina (DAERA – Perm Sec)
Sent: 24 January 2023 11:53
To: McFlynn, Sharon
Cc: [REDACTED] DAERA PermSec; DAERA Central Services Deputy Secretary
Subject: PUBLICATION OF THE PWC REPORTS: MESSAGE TO DAERA STAFF
Attachments: Blank doc 6.DOCX

Sharon

As discussed and for any advice, amendments etc.

Thanks so much

Katrina

Katrina Godfrey
Permanent Secretary
Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs
Room 636
Dundonald House

028 90 524608
Ext 24608



Department of
**Agriculture, Environment
and Rural Affairs**
www.daera-ni.gov.uk

*Sustainability at the heart of a
living, working, active landscape
valued by everyone.*

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 24 January 2023 12:02
To: McFlynn, Sharon
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: FW: External Independent Review - Reports and Action Plan

Sharin

Please see below the link for the report and AP. We can add text and the documents when available. This is presently sitting as a draft page so when you click on the link it just reads access denied. We will also arrange for access to the page to be listed as a quick link on the DAERA home page once it goes live.

<https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/publications/external-independent-review-pwc-reports-and-nics-action-plan>

In terms of measuring, we are picking this up with [REDACTED]-the switchy links route requires multiple links to get meaningful info so thought best to stick with one for now so as not to complicate the process. We will be able to see views and times on page from experience with the reports [REDACTED] previously provided.

Kind regards

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

From: Sayee, Natasha
Sent: 24 January 2023 12:03
To: Hughes, David (DoF)
Cc: McFlynn, Sharon; McLaughlin, Mark (DOF); Minne, Jill; Stewart, Chris (TEO); McNabb, Chris; Crilly, Louise; McCavigan, Tracey; [REDACTED]
Subject: Action Plan
Attachments: FOR DAVID.docx
Importance: High

Hi David,

Please see attached.

Nothing further to add from me.

This should be proofed and formally issued to Oversight Group for sign off.

I will leave it with you.

Kind regards,

Natasha

Natasha Sayee (she/her)
Director of Marketing, Outreach & Internal Communications

The Executive Office
Stormont Castle
Tel: ☎ 028 90 378 202 (Internal extension 88202) / 07775017210
E-mail: ✉ natasha.sayee@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk

Action Plan – Latest version 24-01 12noon

Preface

In May 2022, the Head of the Civil Service and the Permanent Secretaries for the Departments of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) and the Department of Finance (DoF), jointly commissioned an Independent External Review into the handling of concerns and other serious matters, raised in a case taken by a former DAERA employee.

The Independent External Review was carried out by PwC, following a competitive tender process. This action plan is our response to the recommendations and some service wide issues raised by the review. We have shared this action plan and the PwC reports with MLAs, staff, trade unions and with the NI Audit Office.

We welcome the findings in the two reports which we have published in full. We had previously committed to publishing only the outcomes of the review but have gone further. Regrettably, this has taken longer but has resulted in greater transparency. We are committed to learning from this review and the issues it raises and to taking action to improve both our processes and how we implement them. We want to ensure that there can be much greater confidence, among both our staff and the public, in how we handle concerns when they are raised with us.

PwC's reports highlight areas for improvement in the recording and escalating of concerns, the application of some policies, and the way in which some employment related legal cases are managed by the organisation.

We are clear that concerns must always be raised, listened to and acted upon in the proper manner. It is critical that every civil servant maintains proper records and that all policies are up-to-date. These are the foundations of good governance.

We also acknowledge that some of the issues identified in this review, particularly in relation to record-keeping, were previously highlighted by the Inquiry into the Renewable Heat Incentive Scheme (RHI) in its March 2020 report.

This is not good enough. As leaders of the NI Civil Service, we will rigorously pursue progress against the recommendations of the Independent External Review.

This action plan sets out 33 actions to deliver improvement and explains how change will be monitored and scrutinised.

Separately, we have also published a new NICS Raising a Concern Policy Framework. This sets out for departments, for the first time, a single, overarching approach to dealing with concerns raised.

Improving the application of policies and procedures across every department is a starting point, but real success requires behavioural and cultural change. That this review was proactive and cross-departmental, is evidence of the collaborative culture we are driving throughout the service.

Meanwhile, work is already underway, to empower and support civil servants in effectively delivering the work of government and to develop an inclusive workplace culture.

By seeking out issues and by making positive change, we can build on the strengths of the NI Civil Service. This will ensure we are delivering the best possible service for the public and our workforce.

Introduction

In January 2023, PwC provided DAERA as the commissioning department and, through it, the Oversight Group (comprising the Head of the Civil Service along with the Permanent Secretaries for DAERA and DoF and Group Head of Internal Audit), with the findings and recommendations of the Independent External Review, which it had undertaken following its appointment in May 2022.

This Action Plan sets out the actions that DAERA, DoF and the Head of the Civil Service will take to address the recommendations and findings in the Phase 2 Lessons Learned and Recommendations report from the External Review. It also responds to any service wide issues raised by the review.

Neither the Independent External Review, nor this Action Plan, addresses the actions of individual civil servants. The NI Civil Service, as a responsible employer, does not comment on internal employment related matters, which may or may not arise.

The requirements of employment law, the contractual obligations applying to every civil servant, and the obligation of fairness to all staff mean that any such matters must remain confidential in order to be lawful and fair and no individual civil servant or department may comment on these.

Accountability and Scrutiny

In their capacity as Principal Accounting Officers for their Departments, the Permanent Secretaries of DAERA and DoF will monitor the status of actions and have already asked their respective Audit Committees to scrutinise progress.

They will also provide the Head of the Civil Service, as Chair of the NI Civil Service Board, with regular updates. Where an action applies across the organisation, the NICS Board will collectively report on progress to the Chair.

Both DAERA and DoF will also publish quarterly progress reports on their respective websites.

This will provide assurance that action is underway as set out below, and confirm, in due course, that all recommendations have been implemented in full.

Finding 1: Updating of Core Policy Documents

Recommendation:

<i>The last review date of the 3 policies [Managing Public Money NI, the DAERA Enforcement Policy and the DAERA Whistleblowing Policy] indicated should be updated to evidence the</i>
--

date of the last review. The names reported in the policy documents and on the website should be updated so they are consistent. Ownership for each policy should be assigned to a specific role or person within the relevant department.

	Department	Action	Timescale for completion
1	DAERA	The DAERA Enforcement policy will be reviewed and updated, published on the DAERA website and communicated to DAERA staff and stakeholders.	May 2023
2	DAERA	A formal review cycle will be introduced for the DAERA Enforcement policy which will require it to be formally reviewed every five years unless an earlier review is needed.	May 2023
3	DAERA	The DAERA Enforcement policy will have a designated owner who will take responsibility for ensuring implementation of the regular review cycle (or earlier reviews if needed) and the policy document will include details of the ownership and review dates.	May 2023
4	DAERA	The DAERA Whistleblowing policy will be reviewed and updated including to reflect fully the content and approach outlined in the NICS <i>Raising a Concern</i> framework (referred to at Action 11). The updated policy will be published on the DAERA intranet and communicated to all DAERA staff.	March 2023
5	DAERA	The DAERA Whistleblowing Policy will have a designated owner who will take responsibility for ensuring implementation of the formal review cycle and the policy documents will include ownership and review dates.	March 2023
6	DOF	Recognising that the points about policy ownership and regular review are more widely applicable across all departments, the Information Governance Board will issue guidance on the review arrangements for corporate policy documents.	March 2023
7	DOF	A formal review cycle will be introduced for <i>Managing Public Money NI</i> (MPMNI) and this, along with the responsible owner, will be documented in the policy and on the relevant web page.	April 2023

8	DOF	The NICS <u>Code of Ethics</u> was updated and drawn to the attention of all staff in February 2022. A formal review cycle will be introduced for the NICS Code of Ethics and this, along with the responsible owner, will be documented in the policy and on the relevant web page.	March 2023
9	TEO	The Head of the Civil Service will circulate the <u>Code of Ethics</u> in line with the performance management reporting cycle. This will include a reminder that performance management includes an assessment of behaviours in relation to the Code, as well as the delivery of business objectives. A breach of the Code of Ethics will be treated under performance management arrangements and may be treated as a disciplinary matter.	March 2023
10	DOF	The NICS HR Handbook is regularly reviewed. Additions to and deletions from the Handbook are agreed through the formal agreed central Civil Service negotiating arrangements, advised to NICS trade unions and publicised to staff internally.	

Finding 2: Recording and escalating line of business concerns

Recommendation:

Guidance for staff with line management responsibilities should be introduced to understand what the criteria for escalation may be and the process that should be followed. This should include 'red flags' to be aware of such as repeated concerns being made and potential increase in severity. Where escalation is deemed required, a process should be introduced which allows line managers to record line of business concerns on a register making a note of who the matter has been escalated to for action. This register should be reviewed by an independent person of appropriate seniority. This person would be responsible for ensuring that the matter is being dealt with appropriately. This process should be set out within the guidance referred to in (1) above.

	Department	Action	Timescale for completion
11	DOF	DoF has published a new <u>Raising a Concern Policy Framework</u> which will apply across the NICS.	January 2023
12	All NICS Departments	The <u>Raising a Concern Policy Framework</u> will be reflected in updated operational guidance at departmental level, including guidance on registering concerns, recognising protected disclosures arising from line of business issues,	June 2023

		and identifying the thresholds for escalating concerns.	
13	All NICS Departments	Each department will have a Designated Officer responsible for overseeing the handling of concerns, including maintaining a record, and reporting to their departmental Audit and Risk Assurance Committee on a regular basis.	April 2023
14	DOF	Training will be rolled out to responsible officials across all departments to ensure that there is a shared understanding of their role in dealing with concerns raised by staff or members of the public.	June 2023
15	DOF	DoF will establish a Designated Officers' Forum to discuss common issues around the raising and handling of concerns to ensure system-wide learning.	April 2023
16	TEO	The NICS Board will commission an annual report from the Designated Officers' Forum on the concerns being raised across departments, in order to monitor trends and address problems.	July 2023
17	DOF	The Group Internal Audit Service will complete audits within all nine Departments to ensure the <u>Raising a Concern Policy Framework</u> is adequate and effective to manage the concerns raised. They will also provide an overall report to NICS Board on the summary of key findings across the NICS including good practice, lessons to be learned and any further enhancements required.	By March 2024
18	DAERA	DAERA will nominate a Designated Officer responsible for overseeing the handling of concerns, including maintaining a record of all concerns raised.	January 2023
19	DAERA	The DAERA Audit and Risk Assurance Committee will continue to have oversight of all whistleblowing/raising concerns cases relating to the Department.	At each meeting
20	DAERA	DAERA will provide specific guidance to all staff with line management responsibilities on the identification and handling of protected disclosures, including those which arise through normal	March 2023

		line of business activity, and monitoring for 'red flags.'	
21	DAERA	The guidance referred to at (action 20) will be supplemented with bespoke training for all DAERA staff at Grade 7 and above on handling concerns.	September 2023
22	DAERA	DAERA will revise its induction material to ensure that new staff joining the Department receive a briefing on how to handle concerns raised with them by staff or members of the public.	March 2023

Finding 3: Record Keeping

Recommendation:

The need to retain detailed and formal records should be reinforced within DAERA. This would include the need to ensure full and structured records are kept on key decisions, consultations and judgements to ensure an adequate audit trail is retained of how concerns are being managed. Templates should be introduced to assist staff documenting key discussions to ensure relevant information is retained including, date of discussion, who was involved, key matters discussed, and agreed next steps. These records should be detailed enough to provide a full audit trail to show how escalated matters, recorded on the register per finding 2, are being dealt with.

	Department	Action	Timescale for completion
23	DAERA	The Department will stress again to all staff the requirement to make and retain appropriate records including relating to decision-making and make clear that senior officers are responsible for ensuring high standards of record-keeping are in place in their business areas.	February 2023
24	DAERA	All staff in DAERA will be reminded to include in their annual performance agreement a specific objective relating to record-keeping which will be subject to performance management.	February 2023
25	DAERA	Recognising the importance of record-keeping and its place in the NICS <u>Code of Ethics</u> , staff will be reminded that any breaches of the requirements to make and retain clear records may be dealt with under NICS disciplinary processes.	February 2023
26	DAERA	DAERA will revise its induction material to strengthen its content to ensure that new staff joining the Department are absolutely clear about their responsibilities for record keeping and records management.	January 2023

27	DOF	The <u>Code of Ethics</u> was revised to include an explicit obligation on civil servants to keep accurate official records. This will be promoted to staff bi-annually in line with performance management reporting cycles (Action 8 above).	February 2023
28	DOF	The new <i>Raising a Concern</i> framework sets out the requirement for good record-keeping relating to concerns.	January 2023

Finding 4: Training

Recommendation:

DAERA should review and confirm they are satisfied with the adequacy of training in place for employees on how to manage concerns. If any gaps are identified an action plan should be put in place to address these.

Actions 14, 21, 22 above will fulfil this recommendation

Additional Finding: Roles and responsibilities in dealing with employment-related legal cases

Recommendation:

The Phase 1 report from the external review also highlighted some learning in dealing with employment-related legal cases. While not specifically referenced in the Phase 2 report recommendations, DAERA and DOF [DSO/NICSHR] have identified some additional actions to be taken to help ensure that such learning can be embedded for the future.

	Department	Action	Timescale for completion
29	DOF	A protocol will be developed and introduced in relation to the management of employment-related legal cases. This will clearly set out the respective roles, responsibilities and decision-making authorities of all stakeholders. It will include the employing department, the Departmental Solicitor's Office, any external legal support (e.g., counsel), and the relevant HR functions.	April 2023
30	DOF	Refreshed advice, reflecting existing good practice, will be provided to all departments to set out the level of support and preparation available to staff giving evidence in a court, tribunal or public inquiry.	April 2023
31	DOF	Advice on managing conflicts of interest in the context of legal cases will be issued to all departments.	April 2023
32	DAERA	Following development of the protocol referenced at Action 29 above, and reflecting its content, roles and responsibilities of senior staff in DAERA in relation to	May 2023

		decisions on how to respond to litigation in employment cases and the limits of delegation in such cases, including in relation to approval of expenditure, will be clearly communicated.	
33	DAERA	New arrangements will immediately be put in place in DAERA, pending development of the protocol, to ensure that staff who were involved in decisions or processes that may have given rise to employment-related legal action are not involved in decision-making on that legal action.	Immediate

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 24 January 2023 12:17
To: Godfrey, Katrina (DAERA – Perm Sec); McFlynn, Sharon
Cc: DAERA PermSec; DAERA Central Services Deputy Secretary
Subject: RE: PUBLICATION OF THE PWC REPORTS: MESSAGE TO DAERA STAFF
Attachments: Blank doc 6 (004).DOCX

Just a few small tracks and comments from me.

From: Godfrey, Katrina (DAERA – Perm Sec) <Katrina.Godfrey@daera-ni.gov.uk>
Sent: 24 January 2023 11:53
To: McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>
Cc: [REDACTED] DAERA PermSec <perm.sec@daera-ni.gov.uk>; DAERA Central Services Deputy Secretary <csdeputysecretary@daera-ni.gov.uk>
Subject: PUBLICATION OF THE PWC REPORTS: MESSAGE TO DAERA STAFF

Sharon

As discussed and for any advice, amendments etc.

Thanks so much

Katrina

Katrina Godfrey
Permanent Secretary
Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs
Room 636
Dundonald House

028 90 524608
Ext 24608



Sustainability at the heart of a living, working, active landscape valued by everyone.

[REDACTED]

From: Godfrey, Katrina (DAERA – Perm Sec)
Sent: 24 January 2023 12:26
To: [REDACTED] McFlynn, Sharon
Cc: DAERA PermSec; DAERA Central Services Deputy Secretary
Subject: RE: PUBLICATION OF THE PWC REPORTS: MESSAGE TO DAERA STAFF
Attachments: Blank doc 6 (004).DOCX

Thanks a million [REDACTED] – updated in the attachment now

K

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 24 January 2023 12:17
To: Godfrey, Katrina (DAERA – Perm Sec) <Katrina.Godfrey@daera-ni.gov.uk>; McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>
Cc: DAERA PermSec <perm.sec@daera-ni.gov.uk>; DAERA Central Services Deputy Secretary <csdeputysecretary@daera-ni.gov.uk>
Subject: RE: PUBLICATION OF THE PWC REPORTS: MESSAGE TO DAERA STAFF

Just a few small tracks and comments from me.

[REDACTED]

From: Godfrey, Katrina (DAERA – Perm Sec) <Katrina.Godfrey@daera-ni.gov.uk>
Sent: 24 January 2023 11:53
To: McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>
Cc: [REDACTED] DAERA PermSec <perm.sec@daera-ni.gov.uk>; DAERA Central Services Deputy Secretary <csdeputysecretary@daera-ni.gov.uk>
Subject: PUBLICATION OF THE PWC REPORTS: MESSAGE TO DAERA STAFF

Sharon

As discussed and for any advice, amendments etc.

Thanks so much

Katrina

Katrina Godfrey
Permanent Secretary
Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs
Room 636
Dundonald House

028 90 524608
Ext 24608

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 24 January 2023 15:06
To: [REDACTED] McFlynn, Sharon
Subject: RE: OFFICIAL SENSITIVE- DRAFT ACTION PLAN

Hi [REDACTED] – thanks a lot for the update.

Action Plan in response to PwC report 2023 (could change!!)

Can you please remove the contact section.

Thanks a lot

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 24 January 2023 12:30
To: McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: OFFICIAL SENSITIVE- DRAFT ACTION PLAN

Hi Sharon [REDACTED]

Just as an update from my end, document is straight forward for layout purposes, I have everything ready and just waiting for the final text.

Can you check/advise what the actual title is for the front cover, also I have left an area for contact details on the back cover, do they want to include contact details, or will I remove this?

Cheers

[REDACTED]

From: McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>
Sent: 24 January 2023 10:59
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: OFFICIAL SENSITIVE- DRAFT ACTION PLAN

[REDACTED]

AS discussed, please find attached a working draft of the action plan. I am sharing it with you so that you can advance preparations for design of the publication. I have also attached signatures for inclusion- please ensure they are stored securely and locked down.

A final draft of the text will be available later today – but it may be after 5pm when it is agreed. The plan is to publish tomorrow (with an accompanying pr for issue at noon). As you will know we will need the pdf signed off and posted to live on the website in advance of that. Apologies for the very tight deadline.

I have copied in [REDACTED] if you have any queries, hopefully she will be able to help (as I will be in meetings for the rest of this morning).

Thanks a million.

Sharon

[REDACTED]

From: McFlynn, Sharon
Sent: 24 January 2023 15:14
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: FW: Emailing: Document1
Attachments: REVISED INTERNAL COMM .docx

-----Original Message-----

From: Sayee, Natasha <Natasha.Sayee@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>
Sent: 24 January 2023 14:58
To: McNabb, Chris <Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; Godfrey, Katrina (DAERA – Perm Sec) <Katrina.Godfrey@daera-ni.gov.uk>; Byrne, Jayne <Jayne.Byrne@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; Gibson, Neil <Neil.Gibson@finance-ni.gov.uk>; Brady, Jayne <Jayne.Brady@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>
Cc: McLaughlin, Mark (DOF) <Mark.McLaughlin@finance-ni.gov.uk>; McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>; McCavigan, Tracey <Tracey.McCavigan@finance-ni.gov.uk>; Stewart, Chris (TEO) <chris.stewart@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; Hughes, David (DoF) <David.Hughes@finance-ni.gov.uk>
Subject: RE: Emailing: Document1

All,

Following on from Press Release, revised internal comm.

Thank you,

Natasha

-----Original Message-----

From: McNabb, Chris <Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>
Sent: 24 January 2023 13:54
To: Godfrey, Katrina (DAERA – Perm Sec) <Katrina.Godfrey@daera-ni.gov.uk>; Sayee, Natasha <Natasha.Sayee@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; Byrne, Jayne <Jayne.Byrne@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; Gibson, Neil <Neil.Gibson@finance-ni.gov.uk>; Brady, Jayne <Jayne.Brady@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>
Cc: McLaughlin, Mark (DOF) <Mark.McLaughlin@finance-ni.gov.uk>; McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>; McCavigan, Tracey <Tracey.McCavigan@finance-ni.gov.uk>; Stewart, Chris (TEO) <chris.stewart@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; Hughes, David (DoF) <David.Hughes@finance-ni.gov.uk>
Subject: RE: Emailing: Document1

Thanks

-----Original Message-----

From: Godfrey, Katrina (DAERA – Perm Sec) <Katrina.Godfrey@daera-ni.gov.uk>
Sent: 24 January 2023 13:51
To: McNabb, Chris <Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; Sayee, Natasha <Natasha.Sayee@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; Byrne, Jayne <Jayne.Byrne@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; Gibson, Neil <Neil.Gibson@finance-ni.gov.uk>; Brady, Jayne <Jayne.Brady@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>
Cc: McLaughlin, Mark (DOF) <Mark.McLaughlin@finance-ni.gov.uk>; McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>; McCavigan, Tracey <Tracey.McCavigan@finance-ni.gov.uk>; Stewart, Chris (TEO) <chris.stewart@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; Hughes, David (DoF) <David.Hughes@finance-ni.gov.uk>
Subject: RE: Emailing: Document1

Chris

Many thanks and well done - I think this is in much better shape. Have tried to address a couple of your challenges in the attachment.

Katrina

-----Original Message-----

From: McNabb, Chris <Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>

Sent: 24 January 2023 13:43

To: Sayee, Natasha <Natasha.Sayee@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; Byrne, Jayne <Jayne.Byrne@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; Gibson, Neil <Neil.Gibson@finance-ni.gov.uk>; Godfrey, Katrina (DAERA – Perm Sec)

<Katrina.Godfrey@daera-ni.gov.uk>; Brady, Jayne <Jayne.Brady@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>

Cc: McLaughlin, Mark (DOF) <Mark.McLaughlin@finance-ni.gov.uk>; McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>; McCavigan, Tracey <Tracey.McCavigan@finance-ni.gov.uk>; Stewart, Chris (TEO)

<chris.stewart@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; Hughes, David (DoF) <David.Hughes@finance-ni.gov.uk>

Subject: Emailing: Document1

All

Here's a revised draft press release as discussed at this morning's meeting - Mark and Sharon have both seen this draft.

Sorry for the untidiness which highlights my inability to format documents.

Chris

Chris

Your message is ready to be sent with the following file or link attachments:

Document1

Note: To protect against computer viruses, e-mail programs may prevent sending or receiving certain types of file attachments. Check your e-mail security settings to determine how attachments are handled.

INTERNAL COMMUNICATION – HOCS EMAIL ALL Staff

Dear Colleagues,

A 33-point action plan [\[hyperlink\]](#) to improve governance across the NI Civil Service has been published today.

The plan is in response to findings from an independent external review [\[hyperlink\]](#) undertaken by PwC to examine the handling of concerns and other matters raised in a case taken by a former DAERA employee.

Commissioned by DAERA on behalf of the Department's Permanent Secretary Katrina Godfrey, the Department of Finance Permanent Secretary Neil Gibson and myself as the Head of the Civil Service, the reports and action plan have been shared with staff, trade unions, MLAs and the NI Audit Office.

Together, we welcome the findings in the reports and as a Service are committed to learning from this review and addressing the issues identified. We remain on a journey of continuous improvement and the action plan sets out our response to the review recommendations.

We will implement each of the 33 actions so that there is greater confidence that we are delivering the best possible service for you our workforce and the public.

The External Review highlights issues in the recording and escalating of concerns, the application of some policies and the way in which employment related legal cases are managed by the organisation.

Concerns must always be raised, listened to and acted upon in the proper manner. It is critical that every civil servant maintains proper records and that all policies are up-to-date. These are the foundations of good governance.

A new NICS Raising a Concern Policy Framework has also been published. These guidelines for Departments set out, for the first time, a single, overarching approach to dealing with concerns raised.

A refreshed Civil Service Code of Ethics will be embedded into performance management processes, which includes the obligation on all civil servants to keep proper records.

Neither the Independent External Review, nor the Action Plan, address the actions of individual civil servants. The NI Civil Service, as a responsible employer, does not comment on internal employment related matters, which may or may not arise.

The Permanent Secretaries of DAERA and DoF will monitor the status of actions and have already asked their respective Departmental Audit Committees to scrutinise progress. Quarterly progress reports will be published on their respective websites.

The review also identifies areas for improvement in the culture of the service. Real success requires behavioural and cultural change and work is already underway to

empower and support you in effectively delivering the work of government and to develop a more inclusive workplace culture.

While the review and action plan focus on how we can improve, it is important not to lose sight of the excellent work of civil servants who deliver for the public here.

I very much hope that none of this detracts from the pride you should rightly take in the very important work you do.

Thank you for your support,

Jayne Brady

[REDACTED]

From: McFlynn, Sharon
Sent: 24 January 2023 15:18
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: FW: Emailing: Document1
Attachments: Document1.docx

-----Original Message-----

From: Godfrey, Katrina (DAERA – Perm Sec) <Katrina.Godfrey@daera-ni.gov.uk>
Sent: 24 January 2023 13:51
To: McNabb, Chris <Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; Sayee, Natasha <Natasha.Sayee@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; Byrne, Jayne <Jayne.Byrne@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; Gibson, Neil <Neil.Gibson@finance-ni.gov.uk>; Brady, Jayne <Jayne.Brady@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>
Cc: McLaughlin, Mark (DOF) <Mark.McLaughlin@finance-ni.gov.uk>; McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>; McCavigan, Tracey <Tracey.McCavigan@finance-ni.gov.uk>; Stewart, Chris (TEO) <chris.stewart@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; Hughes, David (DoF) <David.Hughes@finance-ni.gov.uk>
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Katrina

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Cc: McLaughlin, Mark (DOF) <Mark.McLaughlin@finance-ni.gov.uk>; McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>; McCavigan, Tracey <Tracey.McCavigan@finance-ni.gov.uk>; Stewart, Chris (TEO) <chris.stewart@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; Hughes, David (DoF) <David.Hughes@finance-ni.gov.uk>
Subject: Emailing: Document1

All

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Sorry for the untidiness which highlights my inability to format documents.

Chris

Chris
Your message is ready to be sent with the following file or link attachments:

Document1

that all policies are up-to-date. These are the foundations of good governance.

“Some of the issues identified in this review, particularly in relation to record-keeping, were previously highlighted by the Inquiry into the Renewable Heat Incentive Scheme (RHI) report. This is not good enough and as leaders of the NI Civil Service, we will rigorously pursue progress against the recommendations.

“Improving the application of policies and procedures is a starting point, but real success requires behavioural and cultural change. Work is already underway to empower and support civil servants in effectively delivering the work of government and to develop an inclusive workplace culture.”

ENDS

Notes to Editors:

1. The PwC reports were commissioned by DAERA, on behalf of the Department's Permanent Secretary, the Department of Finance Permanent Secretary and the Head of the Civil Service. The reports are available at [insert Link] and the Action Plan is available at [Insert link].
2. The ToR committed to the publication of the outcomes of the review. The decision was taken in the interest of transparency for both papers of the Independent External Review in full. This has taken longer than initially anticipated.
3. Neither the Independent External Review, nor this action plan, addresses the actions of individual civil servants. The NI Civil Service, as a responsible employer, does not comment on internal employment related matters, which may or may not arise. The requirements of employment law, the contractual obligations applying to every civil servant, and the obligation of fairness to all staff mean that any such matters must remain confidential in order to be lawful and fair and no individual civil servant or department may comment on these.
4. Link to NICS Code of Ethics: NICS Code of Ethics | Department of Finance (finance-ni.gov.uk)
5. Link to the new NICS Raising a Concern Policy Framework:
<https://www.finance-ni.gov.uk/publications/raising-concern-policy-framework>
6. The full costs of the review are currently being finalised and will be published in due course on the DAERA website~~there a line about costs to be added—what they are or future publication?~~

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 24 January 2023 15:29
To: [REDACTED] McFlynn, Sharon
Subject: RE: OFFICIAL SENSITIVE- DRAFT ACTION PLAN
Attachments: Action Plan in response to Independent External Review - Draft 1.pdf

Hi [REDACTED]/Sharon

See attached, should be fine, but grateful if you have a quick look through before sending on just to make sure I haven't missed anything.

Cheers

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 24 January 2023 15:23
To: [REDACTED]; McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>
Subject: RE: OFFICIAL SENSITIVE- DRAFT ACTION PLAN

New title!

**Action plan in response to Independent External Review
January 2023**

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 24 January 2023 15:06
To: [REDACTED]; McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>
Subject: RE: OFFICIAL SENSITIVE- DRAFT ACTION PLAN

Hi [REDACTED] – thanks a lot for the update.

Action Plan in response to PwC report 2023 (could change!!)

Can you please remove the contact section.

Thanks a lot

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 24 January 2023 12:30
To: McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: OFFICIAL SENSITIVE- DRAFT ACTION PLAN

Hi Sharon [REDACTED]

Just as an update from my end, document is straight forward for layout purposes, I have everything ready and just waiting for the final text.

Can you check/advise what the actual title is for the front cover, also I have left an area for contact details on the back cover, do they want to include contact details, or will I remove this?

Cheers

From: McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>

Sent: 24 January 2023 10:59

To: [REDACTED]

Cc: [REDACTED]

Subject: OFFICIAL SENSITIVE- DRAFT ACTION PLAN

[REDACTED]

AS discussed, please find attached a working draft of the action plan. I am sharing it with you so that you can advance preparations for design of the publication. I have also attached signatures for inclusion- please ensure they are stored securely and locked down.

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I have copied in [REDACTED]-if you have any queries, hopefully she will be able to help (as I will be in meetings for the rest of this morning).

Thanks a million.

Sharon

[REDACTED]

From: McFlynn, Sharon
Sent: 24 January 2023 15:50
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: OFFICIAL SENSITIVE- DRAFT ACTION PLAN

Thanks [REDACTED]

It has now been agreed that the contact details on back cover should be the Permanent Secretary's Office.

[REDACTED] can you get details from [REDACTED] please?

Report text being considered now. Will get back to you when I've sign off.

Sharon

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 24 January 2023 15:29
To: [REDACTED] McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>
Subject: RE: OFFICIAL SENSITIVE- DRAFT ACTION PLAN

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January 2023**

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To: McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>
Cc: [REDACTED]
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From: McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>
Sent: 24 January 2023 10:59
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: OFFICIAL SENSITIVE- DRAFT ACTION PLAN

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Thanks a million.

Sharon

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 24 January 2023 16:09
To: McFlynn, Sharon; [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: OFFICIAL SENSITIVE- DRAFT ACTION PLAN

Hi [REDACTED]

Add in

Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs
Office of the Permanent Secretary
Room 636
Dundonald House
Upper Newtownards Road
Belfast
BT4 3SU
Email: perm.sec@daera-ni.gov.uk

From: McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>
Sent: 24 January 2023 15:50
To: [REDACTED]

Subject: RE: OFFICIAL SENSITIVE- DRAFT ACTION PLAN

Thanks [REDACTED]

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To: [REDACTED] McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>
Subject: RE: OFFICIAL SENSITIVE- DRAFT ACTION PLAN

Hi [REDACTED] Sharon

See attached, should be fine, but grateful if you have a quick look through before sending on just to make sure I haven't missed anything.

Cheers

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
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Subject: RE: OFFICIAL SENSITIVE- DRAFT ACTION PLAN

New title!

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January 2023**

From: [REDACTED]
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Subject: RE: OFFICIAL SENSITIVE- DRAFT ACTION PLAN

Hi [REDACTED] – thanks a lot for the update.

Action Plan in response to PwC report 2023 (could change!!)

Can you please remove the contact section.

Thanks a lot

[REDACTED]
From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 24 January 2023 12:30
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
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[REDACTED]
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Thanks a million.

Sharon

[REDACTED]

From: McFlynn, Sharon
Sent: 24 January 2023 16:14
To: Sayee, Natasha; McNabb, Chris; McLaughlin, Mark (DOF)
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: FW: External Independent Review - Reports and Action Plan

All,

Please see below the link for the report and AP. We can add text and the documents when available. This is presently sitting as a draft page so when you click on the link it just reads access denied.

We will also arrange for access to the page to be listed as a quick link on the DAERA home page once it goes live.

<https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/publications/external-independent-review-pwc-reports-and-nics-action-plan>

Sharon

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 24 January 2023 16:16
To: [REDACTED] McFlynn, Sharon
Subject: RE: OFFICIAL SENSITIVE- DRAFT ACTION PLAN
Attachments: Action Plan in response to Independent External Review - Draft 1.pdf

Updated version.

Cheers

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 24 January 2023 16:09
To: McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk> [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: OFFICIAL SENSITIVE- DRAFT ACTION PLAN

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Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs
Office of the Permanent Secretary
Room 636
Dundonald House
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Email: perm.sec@daera-ni.gov.uk

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January 2023**

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Sharon

[REDACTED]

From: Sayee, Natasha
Sent: 24 January 2023 16:25
To: McFlynn, Sharon; McNabb, Chris; McLaughlin, Mark (DOF)
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: External Independent Review - Reports and Action Plan

Thank you Sharon

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<https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/publications/external-independent-review-pwc-reports-and-nics-action-plan>

Sharon

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 24 January 2023 16:37
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: OFFICIAL SENSITIVE- DRAFT ACTION PLAN

Hi [REDACTED]

Just taking the dog for a walk before it gets dark.

I will be back around 5.15ish and will check if you have any updates.

If not, any final changes can take place tomorrow morning. 😊

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 24 January 2023 16:09
To: McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>; [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: OFFICIAL SENSITIVE- DRAFT ACTION PLAN

Hi [REDACTED]

Add in

Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs
Office of the Permanent Secretary
Room 636
Dundonald House
Upper Newtownards Road
Belfast
BT4 3SU
Email: perm.sec@daera-ni.gov.uk

From: McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>
Sent: 24 January 2023 15:50
To: [REDACTED]

Subject: RE: OFFICIAL SENSITIVE- DRAFT ACTION PLAN

Thanks [REDACTED]

It has now been agreed that the contact details on back cover should be the Permanent Secretary's Office.

[REDACTED] can you get details from [REDACTED] please?

Report text being considered now. Will get back to you when I've sign off.

Sharon

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 24 January 2023 15:29
To: [REDACTED] McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>

ni.gov.uk>

Subject: RE: OFFICIAL SENSITIVE- DRAFT ACTION PLAN

Hi [REDACTED]/Sharon

See attached, should be fine, but grateful if you have a quick look through before sending on just to make sure I haven't missed anything.

Cheers

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 24 January 2023 15:23
To: [REDACTED] McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>
Subject: RE: OFFICIAL SENSITIVE- DRAFT ACTION PLAN

New title!

**Action plan in response to Independent External Review
January 2023**

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 24 January 2023 15:06
To: [REDACTED] McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>
Subject: RE: OFFICIAL SENSITIVE- DRAFT ACTION PLAN

Hi [REDACTED] – thanks a lot for the update.

Action Plan in response to PwC report 2023 (could change!!)

Can you please remove the contact section.

Thanks a lot

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 24 January 2023 12:30
To: McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>
Cc: McCauley, Joanne (DAERA) <Joanne.McCauley@daera-ni.gov.uk>
Subject: RE: OFFICIAL SENSITIVE- DRAFT ACTION PLAN

Hi Sharon, [REDACTED]

Just as an update from my end, document is straight forward for layout purposes, I have everything ready and just waiting for the final text.

Can you check/advise what the actual title is for the front cover, also I have left an area for contact details on the back cover, do they want to include contact details, or will I remove this?

Cheers

From: McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>

Sent: 24 January 2023 10:59

To: [REDACTED]

Cc: [REDACTED]

Subject: OFFICIAL SENSITIVE- DRAFT ACTION PLAN

[REDACTED]

AS discussed, please find attached a working draft of the action plan. I am sharing it with you so that you can advance preparations for design of the publication. I have also attached signatures for inclusion- please ensure they are stored securely and locked down.

A final draft of the text will be available later today – but it may be after 5pm when it is agreed. The plan is to publish tomorrow (with an accompanying pr for issue at noon). As you will know we will need the pdf signed off and posted to live on the website in advance of that. Apologies for the very tight deadline.

I have copied in [REDACTED] if you have any queries, hopefully she will be able to help (as I will be in meetings for the rest of this morning).

Thanks a million.

Sharon

[REDACTED]

From: Sayee, Natasha
Sent: 24 January 2023 16:49
To: McFlynn, Sharon; McNabb, Chris; McLaughlin, Mark (DOF)
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: External Independent Review - Reports and Action Plan

Hello Sharon –

Quick question on the link, if you have a second please could you call me.

Thank you,

Natasha

From: McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>
Sent: 24 January 2023 16:14
To: Sayee, Natasha <Natasha.Sayee@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; McNabb, Chris <Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; McLaughlin, Mark (DOF) <Mark.McLaughlin@finance-ni.gov.uk>
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: FW: External Independent Review - Reports and Action Plan

All,

Please see below the link for the report and AP. We can add text and the documents when available. This is presently sitting as a draft page so when you click on the link it just reads access denied.

We will also arrange for access to the page to be listed as a quick link on the DAERA home page once it goes live.

<https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/publications/external-independent-review-pwc-reports-and-nics-action-plan>

Sharon

[REDACTED]

From: McFlynn, Sharon
Sent: 24 January 2023 17:01
To: Sayee, Natasha; McLaughlin, Mark (DOF); McNabb, Chris; Crilly, Louise
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: DAERA INTERNAL COMMS
Attachments: Blank doc 6 (004).DOCX

Folks,

Katrina will issue a note to all DAERA staff tomorrow. It will issue after HOCS internal comms. A copy is attached for your information.

Louise- if you get a chance I would appreciate if you could run your eye for it. Thanks.

Sharon

Dear colleagues

PWC EXTERNAL REVIEW AND NICS RAISING A CONCERN FRAMEWORK

I am writing to let you know that, today, the Department is publishing the reports from the independent external review carried out by PwC into how DAERA dealt with the concerns raised in the recent industrial tribunal case involving [REDACTED] and of the decision-making of both DAERA and DoF relating to this case. The reports are available at this link: **[DN: insert]**

As I said when we announced the review, it was important to take such a step in order to establish the facts and ensure lessons are identified, applied and factored into future handling of such cases.

The review has taken much longer to complete than I initially expected, but one result of the longer duration is that it has also identified a much wider set of lessons than I had first envisaged. Those lessons relate to how we handle concerns; the standard of some of our record keeping; and how we apply, review and update our core policies. There is also important learning in relation to how we define and discharge our responsibilities when decisions are needed on employment-related legal cases.

At the heart of this particular case was our handling of concerns raised by a former colleague. We simply must learn from this to prevent a similar situation from arising again in DAERA or in any other department. That is why, today, the Head of the Civil Service is also launching a new Raising a Concern Policy Framework which will apply across all departments **[DN: insert link]**. Within DAERA, I want us to lead by example in implementing and giving life to the new Raising a Concern procedures and will set out in the coming weeks how the framework will be applied across the Department, including in NIEA and in Forest Service.

In response to this and to the other issues raised in the PwC reports, we have agreed and are also publishing today a detailed action plan setting out how we intend, within DAERA and DoF and where applicable across all departments, to respond to the recommendations made in the second PwC report. You can read the action plan **[here]**.

I have asked the chair of the Departmental Audit and Risk Assurance Committee (DARAC) to make the action plan a standing item on its agenda until I am satisfied that the DAERA actions have been completed and embedded and I am grateful for her agreement and for the support from DARAC and my Departmental Board as we work to respond to the findings of the PwC reports.

It is, however, important for me to recognise that, no matter how diligently we take forward our work to address the actions in that plan, our effectiveness will be defined not by a completed list of actions, but by our behaviours and by the culture we create in the teams to which we belong. Our real test of success will be when any colleague in any part of the Department who wants to raise a concern feels confident to do so and any manager receiving a concern knows what action to take and takes it. I will do all that I can to lead by example to build a culture fitting of the exemplar organisation that we strive to be, but I will need everyone's help to make sure that is the case across all parts of DAERA.

KATRINA GODFREY

[REDACTED]

From: DAERA Perm Sec Corporate
Sent: 24 January 2023 17:02
To: Godfrey, Katrina (DAERA – Perm Sec); Fulton, Norman; Gartland, Neal; Reid, David (DAERA RAFSETBOR); Lyttle, Owen; Donnelly, Paul (DAERA); DAERA Central Services Deputy Secretary; McFlynn, Sharon; [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED] DAERA Perm Sec Corporate
Subject: Draft notes/action points WBR 23 January
Attachments: Draft Note and Action Points - WBR - 23 January 2023.DOCX

All,

Please find attached draft minutes/ action points from Monday's WBR, for any comments.

I'd be grateful for a response by 12 pm Thursday 26/1/22.

Many thanks

[REDACTED]



Department of
**Agriculture, Environment
and Rural Affairs**
www.daera.ni.gov.uk

*Sustainability at the heart of a
living, working, active landscape
valued by everyone.*



TITLE	Weekly Business Review
VENUE:	Via Webex
DATE	Monday 23 January 2023
Apologies: Tracey Teague [REDACTED]	Attendees: Katrina Godfrey (Chair) Norman Fulton Neal Gartland David Reid Owen Lyttle Paul Donnelly Brian Doherty Sharon McFlynn [REDACTED]
Minutes written by: [REDACTED]	Date: 23 January 2023
Note and Outstanding Action Points from Previous Meeting	
<p>Members agreed the note and action points from the previous meeting.</p> <p>There was one action point outstanding relating to circulation of ICO decisions and Brian undertook to complete this as soon as possible. [Action: Brian Doherty]</p>	
Chair's Business	
<p>Katrina provided an update on the Budget Bill and on the work to develop budget proposals for 2023-24, noting that there would be a bilateral with DoF, on 6th February to inform the advice to the Secretary of State on setting a 2023-24 budget. She reminded colleagues to ensure any potential savings were identified and passed to Roger Downey.</p> <p>Katrina advised that, in light of the specific challenges for the NICS in undertaking work associated with the REUL Bill in absence of the Executive a Northern Ireland Sub-Group on REUL reform had been established and a nominee was being sought from DAERA. Brian Doherty had been asked to make the necessary arrangements.</p> <p>In that context, Brian also provided an update on reprioritisation of work programmes to free up a senior leader to co-ordinate the Department's approach to REUL.</p>	

Katrina informed the group that the reports from the PwC External Review would be published this week, alongside an updated NICS Raising Concerns Framework. A note would issue from HOCS to all staff.

Permanent Secretary Diary Snapshot

Diary update was provided - all to note that a meeting with [REDACTED] had now been arranged for 30th January as part of the current round of engagement with political parties.

Grade 3 Forward Look

Grade 3s/ Deputies provided updates as follows:

CSCPG – Brian Doherty

- Roger Downey would send a draft response to DoF on the zero based light exercise to Katrina for clearance, this week.
- 22 SCS expressed interest in CEF accountability training so a DAERA tailored event would be explored.
- Return to NICS HR on the vacancy priority list was sent last week, with a reduction of 23 posts. This would need to be further refined when 23/24 Budget was confirmed.
- Progress on the EAF accounts was pointing to them no longer being qualified by due to the error margin being below the qualification threshold but it was likely that the auditors would add emphasis of matter

FFG – Norman Fulton

- FAP Programme Board met last Tuesday to map roll out up to 2026. A further discussion would take place at TLT this Friday.
- Agreement had been reached to run a competition for agricultural inspectors.
- Submissions on the launch of the Regional Food Programme and Spirits/ Drinks Enforcement Regulations were being prepared.

RAFSET – David Reid

- Work was continuing with VSAHG in relation to the position on SPS infrastructure including in the context of the regulations recently made by Defra. NICS HR was also involved
- Officials would be attending a Home Office meeting on 15th February about implementation of Martyn's Law.
- The next stages in establishing the Rural Advisory Group were in hand.

EMFG – Owen Lyttle

- Advice from DSO was being sought regarding the recent correspondence from Global Feedback Limited
- The UK Government response to the Deposit Return Scheme consultation was published on Friday 20 January 23. DAERA Press Office has issued content. Initial reception seems to be positive.

- Data Collection Regulations submission would be sent this week to Katrina for consideration.
- The Climate Change Committee made a successful visit to NI last week.

NIEA – Paul Donnelly

- Update on Mobuoy and liaison with Press Office was continuing.
- Irregularities in soil sampling as part of the Nitrogen Action Plan were being investigated.
- The procurement process for a dangerous animals vet had not been successful and Paul would speak with Robert about other options.
- NIEA was considering how best to take forward any future tranches of the Environment Fund in a context where eNGOS were facing cost increases and where affordability and financial constraints presented real challenges in that regard.

VSAHG – Neal Gartland

- Neal highlighted the impact of the REUL Bill on some aspects of Animal Health Legislation and the action being taken.
- The outcome of the judicial review on the TB Eradication Scheme was expected shortly.
- DSO advice had been sought on recent correspondence in respect of BVD.
- Engagement was continuing with DEFRA on granting NI disease free status, in respect of AI.
- The Rule 9 statement for the Covid Inquiry 9 had required significant staff resources to complete but was almost ready.

Media Update

██████████ provided an update:

- Mobuoy was generating queries, and these were expected to continue.
- Outstanding decisions on legislation and BCPs were also generating queries.
- Lough Neagh queries continued to be received – with ██████ noting the complexities and levels of details involved.
- Social media engagement remained high, with last week's engagement including a focus on dogs; AI; Deposit Return Scheme; and equality and diversity posts.

Current FOIs

Noted.

Decisions Likely to be Needed in the Coming Weeks

Attendees provided updates on likely forthcoming EF decisions. A discussion would take place at this week's SCSG on the current guidance, and any potential updates.

AOB

None

[REDACTED]

From: McFlynn, Sharon
Sent: 24 January 2023 21:56
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: Documents for DAERA website and Comms overview
Attachments: DAERA - External Review-Phase 1 Final Report.pdf; DAERA - External Review-Phase 2 Lessons Learned and Recommendations (1).pdf; PwC Communications Pack FIN 250123 - USE.docx; External Review PS note to Staff.DOCX; DRAFT potential questions 180123.docx; Perm Sec -note to ARAC ER.docx

[REDACTED]

Please find attached the most up to date communications pack for tomorrow's announcement and publication of documents. It will give you an overview of the co-ordinated approach to comms and includes an output tracker so we're all clear on who has responsibility for what. It does not include the DAERA specific comms to staff and the ARAC (which Katrina is taking care off and will issue first thing tomorrow morning-copy attached). The missing piece of the jigsaw is the action plan which remains in draft with one query still to be addressed. We are hopeful that it will be sorted by early tomorrow morning at the latest.

In terms of output and timing there are a number of tasks for which we have been assigned responsibility:

- **Action Plan for publication-** [REDACTED] has prepared a design mock up of the report and is on stand by to drop the text from the agreed action plan into it. He will be available from around 8:30 tomorrow morning to do this. It is a straightforward document and [REDACTED] is confident that he will be able to turn it around quickly. We will need to proof it very quickly and if time permits I will also circulate it to comms colleagues in DoF and HOCS office and ask for their assistance in doing same. When it is agreed we'll need a pdf copy for uploading to the website. It should be saved and appear on the website as 'Action Plan in response to Independent External Review'.
- **Publication of documents on DAERA website-** target time for docs to be uploaded and page set to live is 11:40.

Drawing on the pr and preface to the action plan, I have pulled together a few lines of introductory text for the page:

[Today we have published a 33 point action plan to improve governance across the NI Civil Service. The plan is in response to findings from an independent external review undertaken by PwC to examine the handling of concerns and other matters raised in a case taken by a former DAERA employee.

In May 2022, the Head of the Civil Service and the Permanent Secretaries for the Departments of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) and the Department of Finance (DoF), jointly commissioned an Independent

External Review into the handling of concerns and other serious matters, raised in a case taken by a former DAERA employee.

The action plan and two reports setting out the findings from the review can be accessed in the documents below.]

The three reports should be presented in the following order-(i) Phase 1 Final Report; (ii) Phase 2:Lessons Learned and Recommendations report; and (iii) Action Plan in response to Independent External Review. The two PwC Reports are attached and, as per above, the action plan to follow.

Lisa- you have already provided a link to the landing page <https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/publications/external-independent-review-pwc-reports-and-nics-action-plan>

Please go ahead and arrange for as much as possible to set up on the page so that we can get it finalised quickly when the action plan arrives. Target time for go live is 11:40. Please confirm when done so I can advise comms colleagues. You have also confirmed that you'll arrange for access to the page to be listed as a quick link on the DAERA home page once it goes live. This should be done after Katrina's note to staff has issued.

- **Note from Katrina to all DAERA staff-** HOCS all staff email and publication of it as a global intranet article are scheduled to go live at 11:45 [REDACTED] (to confirm when done) followed by the DAERA staff email at 11:55.

Lisa- I have attached a copy of the article which has been cleared by Katrina and legal. Hyperlinks to the docs have been inserted. If not done already, please arrange for this to be set up in the mailstyler template so it's ready to go. Again, please confirm when done so I can advise comms colleagues.

Following issue of the DAERA staff note, HOCS will issue an email to all MLAs and when this has been confirmed as done, the press release will issue at noon from TEO.

- **Media Queries:**

[REDACTED] in preparation for media queries, I have attached the most up to version of the potential questions doc. There is still some fine tuning to be done and a few answers still require agreement between DAERA and DoF. We can pick these up as we go but I thought it would be useful for us to have this document to hand. As discussed previously, we need to ensure there's a joined up approach on all media queries and I trust these will be handled as per BAU, linking in with other press offices and ensuring that each has early sight of queries received and involved as necessary in clearance of responses. Please ensure that I have early sight of the queries. All responses should be shared among press offices for info. Chris McNabb will keep a repository of all media queries and answers.

I have tried to wrap up as much as possible in this email so we'll all have it to hand as a point of reference. If you think I've overlooked anything or require clarification on any of the actions set out, please do let me know. Many thanks for your help and support in getting us to this point.

Sharon

FROM: NATASHA SAYEE

DATE: 24 JANUARY 2023

**TO JAYNE BRADY
NEIL GIBSON
KATRINA GODFREY**

DAERA WHISTLEBLOWING: ACTION PLAN

1. Please find attached for the Oversight Board's consideration and approval
 - Press Release
 - Internal Communication – HOCS Email
 - Email to MLAs – HOCS
 - Script for Video for Internal Communication - HOCS
2. I attach for your information the communications output schedule:

COMMS OUTPUT TRACKER - PUBLICATION OF PRESS RELEASE WED 25th JAN 2023

	OUTPUT IN ORDER OF SEQUENCING	TIMING	RESPONSIBLE	Person responsible to mark as complete
Output 1	DAERA WEBPAGE TEXT AND LINKS LIVE TO ACTION PLAN AND 2 X PWC REPORTS	1140 25/1	[REDACTED]	
Output 2	DOF WEBPAGE TEXT AND LINKS LIVE TO - RAISING A CONCERN FRAMEWORK AND CODE OF ETHICS	1140 25/1	[REDACTED]	
Output 3	HOCS ALL STAFF EMAIL LIVE	1145 25/1	[REDACTED]	
Output 4	HOCS INTERNAL COMMUNICATION TO GLOBAL INTRANET LIVE	1145 25/1	[REDACTED]	
Output 5	DAERA PS STAFF EMAIL	1155	SHARON MCFLYNN	
Output 6	HOCS EMAIL TO ALL MLAS	1155 25/1	NATASHA SAYEE [REDACTED]	
CHECKPOINT	NS TO CONFIRM TO CHRIS MCNABB THAT ALL PREVIOUS 6 OUTPUTS HAVE BEEN ACTION – BEFORE PRESS RELEASE CAN ISSUE	NOON	NATASHA SAYEE	

Output 7	PRESS RELEASE ISSUES	1205PM 25/1	CHRIS MCNABB	
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*HOCS Video to staff can be issued either with outputs 3 & 4 or inputted into output 4 retrospectively.

Copies to

Louise Crilly
Chris McNabb
Chris Stewart
Jayne Byrne
Tracy McCavigan
Sharon McFlynn
Mark McLaughlin
David Hughes



Press Release

Civil Service publishes action plan in response to external review

A 33-point action plan to improve governance across the NI Civil Service has been published today.

The plan is in response to findings from an independent external review undertaken by PwC to examine the handling of concerns and other matters raised in a case taken by a former DAERA employee.

Commissioned by DAERA on behalf of the Department's Permanent Secretary Katrina Godfrey, the Department of Finance Permanent Secretary Neil Gibson and the Head of the Civil Service Jayne Brady, the reports and action plan have been shared with staff, trade unions, MLAs and the NI Audit Office.

Jayne Brady said: "I welcome the findings in the reports. As a Service, we are committed to learning from this review and addressing the issues identified.

"We remain on a journey of continuous improvement and the action plan sets out our response to the review recommendations.

"We will implement each of the 33 actions so that there is greater confidence that we are delivering the best possible service for the public and our workforce."

The External Review highlights issues in the recording and escalating of concerns, the application of some policies and the way in which employment related legal cases are managed by the NICS.

A new NICS Raising a Concern Policy Framework has also been published. These guidelines for Departments set out, for the first time, a single, overarching approach to dealing with concerns raised.

A refreshed Civil Service Code of Ethics, which includes the obligation on all civil servants to keep proper records, will be embedded into performance management processes.

Neither PwC's Lessons learned and recommendations report, nor the Action Plan, addresses the actions of individual civil servants. The NI Civil Service, as a responsible employer, does not comment on internal employment related matters, which may or may not arise.

The Permanent Secretaries of DAERA and DoF will monitor the status of actions and have already asked their respective Departmental Audit Committees to scrutinise progress. Quarterly progress reports will be published on their respective websites.

The review also identifies areas for improvement in the culture of the service.

Jayne Brady said: "Concerns must always be raised, listened to and acted upon in the proper manner. It is critical that every civil servant maintains proper records and that all policies are up-to-date. These are the foundations of good governance.

"Some of the issues identified in this review, particularly in relation to record-keeping, were previously highlighted by the Inquiry into the Renewable Heat Incentive Scheme (RHI) report. This is not good enough and as leaders of the NI Civil Service, we will rigorously pursue progress against the recommendations.

"Improving the application of policies and procedures is a starting point, but real success requires behavioural and cultural change. Work is already underway to empower and support civil servants in effectively delivering the work of government and to develop an inclusive workplace culture."

ENDS

Notes to Editors:

1. The PwC reports were commissioned by DAERA, on behalf of the Department's Permanent Secretary, the Department of Finance Permanent Secretary and the Head of the Civil Service. The reports and action plan are available here: <https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/publications/external-independent-review-pwc-reports-and-nics-action-plan>
2. The ToR committed to the publication of the outcomes of the review. The decision was taken in the interest of transparency for both papers of the Independent External Review in full. This has taken longer than initially anticipated.
3. Neither PwC's Lessons learned and recommendations report, nor the action plan, addresses the actions of individual civil servants. The NI Civil Service, as a responsible employer, does not comment on internal employment related matters, which may or may not arise. The requirements of employment law, the contractual obligations applying to every civil servant, and the obligation of fairness to all staff mean that any such matters must remain confidential in order to be lawful and fair and no individual civil servant or department may comment on these.
4. Link to NICS Code of Ethics: NICS Code of Ethics | Department of Finance (finance-ni.gov.uk)
5. Link to the new NICS Raising a Concern Policy Framework: <https://www.finance-ni.gov.uk/publications/raising-concern-policy-framework>
6. The full costs of the review are currently being finalised and will be published in due course on the DAERA website

Internal Communication

INTERNAL COMMUNICATION – HOCS EMAIL ALL Staff

Dear Colleagues,

A 33-point action plan to improve governance across the NI Civil Service has been published today.

The plan is in response to findings from an independent external review undertaken by PwC to examine the handling of concerns and other matters raised in a case taken by a former DAERA employee.

Commissioned by DAERA on behalf of the Department's Permanent Secretary Katrina Godfrey, the Department of Finance Permanent Secretary Neil Gibson and myself as the Head of the Civil Service, the reports and action plan are being shared with staff, trade unions, MLAs and the NI Audit Office.

Together, we welcome the findings in the reports and as a Service are committed to learning from this review and addressing the issues identified. We remain on a journey of continuous improvement and the action plan sets out our response to the review recommendations.

We will implement each of the 33 actions so that there is greater confidence that we are delivering the best possible service for you our workforce and the public.

The External Review highlights issues in the recording and escalating of concerns, the application of some policies and the way in which employment related legal cases are managed by the organisation.

Concerns must always be raised, listened to and acted upon in the proper manner. It is critical that every civil servant maintains proper records and that all policies are up-to-date. These are the foundations of good governance.

A new NICS Raising a Concern Policy Framework has also been published. These guidelines for Departments set out, for the first time, a single, overarching approach to dealing with concerns raised.

A refreshed Civil Service Code of Ethics will be embedded into performance management processes, which includes the obligation on all civil servants to keep proper records.

Neither PwC's Lessons learned and recommendations report, nor the action plan, addresses the actions of individual civil servants. The NI Civil Service, as a responsible employer, does not comment on internal employment related matters, which may or may not arise.

The Permanent Secretaries of DAERA and DoF will monitor the status of actions and have already asked their respective Departmental Audit Committees to scrutinise progress. Quarterly progress reports will be published on their respective websites.

The review also identifies areas for improvement in the culture of the service. Real success requires behavioural and cultural change and work is already underway to empower and support you in effectively delivering the work of government and to develop a more inclusive workplace culture.

While the review and action plan focus on how we can improve, it is important not to lose sight of the excellent work of civil servants who deliver for the public here.

I very much hope that none of this detracts from the pride you should rightly take in the very important work you do.

Thank you for your support,

[e-sig]

Jayne Brady

Email to MLAs

Chris Stewart assistance required re text review and formatting

Dear Colleagues,

The Northern Ireland Civil Service publishes action plan in response to external review

A 33-point action plan to improve governance across the NI Civil Service has been published today.

The plan is in response to findings from an independent external review undertaken by PwC to examine the handling of concerns and other matters raised in a case taken by a former DAERA employee.

Commissioned by DAERA on behalf of the Department's Permanent Secretary Katrina Godfrey, the Department of Finance Permanent Secretary Neil Gibson and myself as the Head of the Civil Service, the reports and action plan are being shared with staff, trade unions, the NI Audit Office and all MLAs.

We welcome the findings in the two reports which we have published in full. We had previously committed to publishing only the outcomes of the review but have gone further. Regrettably, this has taken longer but has resulted in greater transparency.

We will implement each of the 33 actions so that there is greater confidence that we are delivering the best possible service for our workforce and the public.

The External Review highlights issues in the recording and escalating of concerns, the application of some policies and the way in which employment related legal cases are managed by the organisation.

Concerns must always be raised, listened to and acted upon in the proper manner. It is critical that every civil servant maintains proper records and that all policies are up-to-date. These are the foundations of good governance.

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The review also identifies areas for improvement in the culture of the service. Real success requires behavioural and cultural change and work is already underway to empower and support civil servants in effectively delivering the work of government and to develop a more inclusive workplace culture.

Kind regards,

[e-sig]

Jayne Brady

HOCS to Staff Video Script

Colleagues, today we are taking some real steps to improving I am pleased that we have published an NICS Action plan to deliver meaningful and accountable change.

We will implement each of the 33 actions so that there is greater confidence that we are delivering the best possible service for you our workforce and the public.

A new Raising a Concern Policy Framework has also been published. These guidelines for Departments set out, for the first time, a single, overarching approach to dealing with concerns raised.

The refreshed Civil Service Code of Ethics will be embedded into performance management processes, which includes the obligation on all civil servants to keep proper records.

While the review and action plan focus on how we can improve, it is important not to lose sight of the excellent work of civil servants who deliver for the public here.

I very much hope that none of this detracts from the pride you should rightly take in the very important work you do.

Thank you for your support...

Dear colleagues

PWC EXTERNAL REVIEW AND NICS RAISING A CONCERN FRAMEWORK

I am writing to let you know that, today, the Department is publishing the reports from the independent external review carried out by PwC into how DAERA dealt with the concerns raised in the recent industrial tribunal case involving [REDACTED] and of the decision-making of both DAERA and DoF relating to this case.

As I said when we announced the review, it was important to take such a step in order to establish the facts and ensure lessons are identified, applied and factored into future handling of such cases.

The review has taken much longer to complete than I initially expected, but one result of the longer duration is that it has also identified a much wider set of lessons than I had first envisaged. Those lessons relate to how we handle concerns; the standard of some of our record keeping; and how we apply, review and update our core policies. There is also important learning in relation to how we define and discharge our responsibilities when decisions are needed on employment-related legal cases.

At the heart of this particular case was our handling of concerns raised by a former colleague. We simply must learn from this to prevent a similar situation from arising again in DAERA or in any other department. That is why, today, the Head of the Civil Service is also launching a new Raising a Concern Policy Framework which will apply across all departments. Within DAERA, I want us to lead by example in implementing and giving life to the new Raising a Concern procedures and will set out in the coming weeks how the framework will be applied across the Department, including in NIEA and in Forest Service.

In response to this and to the other issues raised in the PwC reports, we have agreed and are also publishing today a detailed action plan setting out how we intend, within DAERA and DoF and where applicable across all departments, to respond to the recommendations made in the second PwC report.

I have asked the chair of the Departmental Audit and Risk Assurance Committee (DARAC) to make the action plan a standing item on its agenda until I am satisfied that the DAERA actions have been completed and embedded and I am grateful for her agreement and for the support from DARAC and my Departmental Board as we work to respond to the findings of the PwC reports.

It is, however, important for me to recognise that, no matter how diligently we take forward our work to address the actions in that plan, our effectiveness will be defined not by a completed list of actions, but by our behaviours and by the culture we create in the teams to which we belong. Our real test of success will be when any colleague in any part of the Department who wants to raise a concern feels confident to do so and any manager receiving a concern knows what action to take and takes it. I will do all that I can to lead by example to build a culture fitting of the exemplar organisation that we strive to be, but I will need everyone's help to make sure that is the case across all parts of DAERA.

KATRINA GODFREY

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 24 January 2023 23:04
To: McFlynn, Sharon; [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Documents for DAERA website and Comms overview

Great stuff Sharon, thanks for all this and well done for getting it to this point!!

We will keep close tomorrow and do our best to make sure all runs to plan

[REDACTED]

From: McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>
Date: Tuesday, 24 Jan 2023, 9:56 pm
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: Documents for DAERA website and Comms overview

[REDACTED]

Please find attached the most up to date communications pack for tomorrow's announcement and publication of documents. It will give you an overview of the co-ordinated approach to comms and includes an output tracker so we're all clear on who has responsibility for what. It does not include the DAERA specific comms to staff and the ARAC (which Katrina is taking care of and will issue first thing tomorrow morning-copy attached). The missing piece of the jigsaw is the action plan which remains in draft with one query still to be addressed. We are hopeful that it will be sorted by early tomorrow morning at the latest.

In terms of output and timing there are a number of tasks for which we have been assigned responsibility:

- **Action Plan for publication-** [REDACTED] has prepared a design mock up of the report and is on stand by to drop the text from the agreed action plan into it. He will be available from around 8:30 tomorrow morning to do this. It is a straightforward document and [REDACTED] is confident that he will be able to turn it around quickly. We will need to proof it very quickly and if time permits I will also circulate it to comms colleagues in DoF and HOCS office and ask for their assistance in doing same. When it is agreed we'll need a pdf copy for uploading to the website. It should be saved and appear on the website as 'Action Plan in response to Independent External Review'.
- **Publication of documents on DAERA website-** target time for docs to be uploaded and page set to live is **11:40**.

Drawing on the pr and preface to the action plan, I have pulled together a few lines of introductory text for the page:

[Today we have published a 33 point action plan to improve governance across the NI Civil Service. The plan is in response to findings from an independent external review undertaken by PwC to examine the handling of concerns and other matters raised in a case taken by a former DAERA employee.

In May 2022, the Head of the Civil Service and the Permanent Secretaries for the Departments of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) and the Department of Finance (DoF), jointly commissioned an Independent External Review into the handling of concerns and other serious matters, raised in a case taken by a former DAERA employee.

The action plan and two reports setting out the findings from the review can be accessed in the documents below.]

The three reports should be presented in the following order-(i) Phase 1 Final Report; (ii) Phase 2:Lessons Learned and Recommendations report; and (iii) Action Plan in response to Independent External Review. The two PwC Reports are attached and, as per above, the action plan to follow.

Lisa- you have already provided a link to the landing page <https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/publications/external-independent-review-pwc-reports-and-nics-action-plan>

Please go ahead and arrange for as much as possible to set up on the page so that we can get it finalised quickly when the action plan arrives. Target time for go live is 11:40. Please confirm when done so I can advise comms colleagues. You have also confirmed that you'll arrange for access to the page to be listed as a quick link on the DAERA home page once it goes live. This should be done after Katrina's note to staff has issued.

- **Note from Katrina to all DAERA staff-** HOCS all staff email and publication of it as a global intranet article are scheduled to go live at 11:45 (██████ to confirm when done) followed by the DAERA staff email at 11:55.

Lisa- I have attached a copy of the article which has been cleared by Katrina and legal. Hyperlinks to the docs have been inserted. If not done already, please arrange for this to be set up in the mailstyler template so it's ready to go. Again, please confirm when done so I can advise comms colleagues.

Following issue of the DAERA staff note, HOCS will issue an email to all MLAs and when this has been confirmed as done, the press release will issue at noon from TEO.

- **Media Queries:**

██████ in preparation for media queries, I have attached the most up to version of the potential questions doc. There is still some fine tuning to be done and a few answers still require agreement between DAERA and DoF. We can pick these up as we go but I thought it would be useful for us to have this document to hand. As discussed previously, we need to ensure there's a joined up approach on all media queries and I trust these will be handled as per BAU, linking in with other press offices and ensuring that each has early sight of queries received and involved as necessary in clearance of responses. Please ensure that I have early sight of the queries. All responses should be shared among press offices for info. Chris McNabb will keep a repository of all media queries and answers.

I have tried to wrap up as much as possible in this email so we'll all have it to hand as a point of reference. If you think I've overlooked anything or require clarification on any of the actions set out, please do let me know. Many thanks for your help and support in getting us to this point.

Sharon

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 26 January 2023 10:04
To: G_DAERA PressOffice.Group, DAERA
Subject: DAERA Daily Digest 26.01.23
Attachments: Daily Digest 26.01.23.docx; Farmgate transcript 26.01.23.docx; Farmgate 260123.tr5; DAERA Daily Press Cuttings 26.01.2023.pdf

Folks

Please find attached digest for Thursday 26th January.

Thanks

[REDACTED]

www.daera-ni.gov.uk

Twitter: [@daera_ni](https://twitter.com/daera_ni)

For more information on any story, please contact the Press Office on x24619 or pressoffice.group@daera-ni.gov.uk.

The daily digest can also be found on the DAERA intranet homepage and is updated no later than noon each day: <http://nics.intranet.nigov.net/daera/articles/media-digest>

Thursday 26 January 2023

Daily Clippings

Belfast Telegraph - Top vets off hook after whistleblower report, pages 1, 4 & 5, 26/01/23

Belfast Telegraph - No deadline in EU Protocol talks says SoS, page 6, 26/01/23

Belfast Telegraph - DUP 'sacks' councillor suspended over SF post, page 14, 26/01/23

Irish News - Failure to heed RHI scandal guidance not good enough', pages 1, 4 & 5, 26/01/23

Irish News - Heaton-Harris: UK not placing talks deadline, page 5, 26/01/23

Irish News - M&S warns about separate labelling on goods from North, page 5, 26/01/23

Newsletter - Medicines 'cliff-edge', pages 1 & 4, 26/01/23

Newsletter - Heaton-Harris: UK not placing talks deadline, page 4, 26/01/23

Newsletter - M&S boss: approach to Ni Protocol baffling, page 5, 26/01/23

Newsletter - Path to victory over Protocol lies in threatening the Tories, page 15, 26/01/23

Irish Times - Donaldson's scope for compromise depends on EU, page 10, 26/01/23

The Guardian – Post-Brexit farming subsidies revealed, pages 1 & 2, 26/01/23

The Times - The real Brexit challenge is to avoid the situation getting worse, page 35, 26/01/23

Daily Telegraph - Baffling Brexit plan for labelling, page 35, 26/01/23

Farmgate, BBC Radio Ulster

The business of growing is going to be under the microscope next week as the UFU, CAFRE and the Ulster Arable Society host a conference. The focus is on the business management side of things because arable farmers have been exposed to a lot of the price rises when it comes to fertiliser and energy costs. But the higher price of grain over the last year or so has helped them get through it. Robin Bolton is a crops development adviser at the College of Agriculture, Food and Rural Enterprise and he says there is plenty to talk about. Interview follows with Robin Bolton.

When you think of arable farming you might picture rolling hills of crops and grains and very peacefulness, but it might surprise you just how much energy and fuel is needed to keep those farms running, so helping farmers improve their energy efficiency is a key way to help them save money. Interview follows with Robin Bolton.

Issues around markets and access to agri-chemicals has also had an impact on our arable sector, and Robin says the fallout from Brexit continues. Interview follows with Robin Bolton.

That conference takes place on Tuesday, it is an all-day thing from 9 in the morning until 4pm at Greenmount. The keynote speaker is the farmer and accidental Youtuber Ollie Harrison, you will need to register through the UFU website, it is in the events section.

UTV Live

No DAERA related content.

BBC Newsline

NI Protocol - Marks and Spencer has warned that UK-only labelling for goods being sold here would not be a viable change to the NI Protocol...

- John Campbell reports

Evening Extra, BBC Radio Ulster

17:39 - The Civil Service has published a plan of action in response to a review into the handling of matters raised by a former DAERA employee. It published its findings earlier this month...

- Louise Cullen

Good Morning Ulster, BBC Radio Ulster

No DAERA related content.

Farming Today, BBC Radio 4

The Scottish Government says its Hunting with Dogs Bill, passed by MSPs this week, will end illegal hunts by closing a loophole in the law. It aims to prevent packs of dogs chasing and killing wild mammals, such as foxes and hares. But animal rights organisations say the provision of a licencing scheme leaves a loophole, while land managers say the change is unnecessary and impractical.

The government is clamping down on the abuse of fishing crews; so says the fishing (and farming) minister Mark Spencer.

More options, improved payments, and an accelerated rollout: today more details have been released on England's 'public money for public goods' payment system, and has got a cautious welcome from farmers and conservationists.

And rural transport must change drastically if local bus services are to survive. That was the message yesterday to a special one-off session of Parliament's transport committee.

Listen at <http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b006qj8q/broadcasts/>

Provincial Clippings

Down Recorder - Geopark status to give free farm plan, page 2, 25/01/23

Down Recorder - Red squirrels introduced to Castle Ward in boost for environment, page 14, 25/01/23

Fermanagh Herald - Newtown woman is fined for dog attack, page 14, 25/01/23

Fermanagh Herald - Concern farmers are being 'disregarded' by government's energy support scheme, page 22, 25/01/23

Fermanagh Herald - Farmer support for nutrient efficiency, page 23, 25/01/23

Fermanagh Herald - Farmers urged to make wellbeing a priority, page 24, 25/01/23

Fermanagh Herald - Farmers reminded of slurry spreading rules for the new season, page 25, 25/01/23

Fermanagh Herald - Ulster Farmers' Union hoping for significant action on cattle diseases, page 27, 25/01/23

Mourne Observer - Council to call for clarity on future support for farmers, page 17, 25/01/23

Newry Reporter - Camlough Lake facelift closer after £2.8m funding secured, page 8, 25/01/23

Newtownabbey Times - Oyster nursery to be established at Glenarm, page 8, 25/01/23

Newtownabbey Times - Plan has a lot of bottle, page 11, 25/01/23

Tyrone Constitution - DAERA Online system for Nutrient Action Programme open, page 34, 25/01/23

Tyrone Constitution - Cuilcagh Lakelands UNESCO Global Geopark launches exciting programme of events, page 36, 25/01/23

Political Parties

No DAERA related content.

Websites

BBC

Civil Service 'will learn' from whistleblower vet tribunal review - <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-northern-ireland-64403444>

UTV

Tony Blair says Northern Ireland Protocol problem can be solved by dropping ideology - <https://www.itv.com/news/utv/2023-01-25/how-you-solve-a-problem-like-the-protocol>

Belfast Telegraph

Tamara Bronckaers: Top vets not questioned in probe over the forcing out of whistleblower - <https://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/news/politics/tamara-bronckaers-top-vets-not-questioned-in-probe-over-the-forcing-out-of-whistleblower/149438205.html>

Irish News

M&S chairman says UK Government's 'baffling' post-Brexit plans will wreck trade - https://www.irishnews.com/news/republicofirelandnews/2023/01/26/news/m_s_chairman_says_uk_government_s_baffling_post-brexit_plans_will_wreck_trade-3019666/

M&S warns against separate labelling for goods sold in the north as result of NI protocol - https://www.irishnews.com/news/northernirelandnews/2023/01/25/news/m_s_warns_against_separate_labelling_for_goods_sold_in_the_north_as_result_of_ni_protocol-3019047/

Tree strategy consultation launched in Belfast - https://www.irishnews.com/news/northernirelandnews/2023/01/25/news/tree_strategy_consultation_launched_in_belfast-3016799/

RTE

UK's 'baffling' post-Brexit plans will wreck trade, says M&S chair - <https://www.rte.ie/news/brexit/2023/0126/1351892-m-s-brexit-trade/>

Government/Stakeholders

LMC

End of year boost to lamb purchases welcomed by LMC

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 26 January 2023 12:05
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED] G_DAERA PressOffice.Group, DAERA
Subject: RE: TEO News Release - CIVIL SERVICE PUBLISHES ACTION PLAN IN RESPONSE TO EXTERNAL REVIEW

Thanks [REDACTED] for this to note [REDACTED] is off for couple of days so if you can keep us in loop in meantime too if anything else comes in.

Thanks. [REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 25 January 2023 20:57
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED] G_DAERA PressOffice.Group, DAERA
<PressOffice.Group@daera-ni.gov.uk>
Subject: FW: TEO News Release - CIVIL SERVICE PUBLISHES ACTION PLAN IN RESPONSE TO EXTERNAL REVIEW

Hi [REDACTED]

Please see below as requested.

Thanks
[REDACTED]

Sent with BlackBerry Work
(www.blackberry.com)

From: [REDACTED]
Date: Wednesday, 25 Jan 2023 at 5:49 pm
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: FW: TEO News Release - CIVIL SERVICE PUBLISHES ACTION PLAN IN RESPONSE TO EXTERNAL REVIEW

Hi [REDACTED] to see response which issued
[REDACTED]

Sent with BlackBerry Work
(www.blackberry.com)

From: [REDACTED]
Date: Wednesday, 25 Jan 2023 at 4:44 pm
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: TEO Press Office <press.office@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>, McNabb, Chris <Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>, [REDACTED]
Subject: FW: TEO News Release - CIVIL SERVICE PUBLISHES ACTION PLAN IN RESPONSE TO EXTERNAL REVIEW

Hi [REDACTED] our response to your query is 'yes' which you can attribute to an Executive Office spokesperson.

Your email was sent to an automated address – I think you replied to the email which included the press release – if you could send any future queries to: press.office@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk

Many thanks

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 25 January 2023 14:46
To: TEO EIS NewsService <EIS.NewsService@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>
Subject: Re: TEO News Release - CIVIL SERVICE PUBLISHES ACTION PLAN IN RESPONSE TO EXTERNAL REVIEW

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FOR INTERNAL NICS STAFF ONLY - If you have any concerns regarding the email please forward to spam@finance-ni.gov.uk.

Hello,

I have one query regarding the PwC report:

Is TEO satisfied that Daera provided all relevant records and documentation to report authors PwC?

I'll need a response no later than 5pm today.

Thanks in advance,

On 25 Jan 2023, at 12:20, Executive News Service <EIS.Newsservice@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk> wrote:

THE EXECUTIVE OFFICE

25 January 2023

Civil Service publishes action plan in response to external review

A 33-point action plan to improve governance across the NI Civil Service has been published today. The plan is in response to findings from an external independent review undertaken by PwC to examine the handling of concerns and other matters raised in a case taken by a former DAERA employee.

Commissioned by DAERA on behalf of the Department's Permanent Secretary Katrina Godfrey, the Department of Finance Permanent Secretary Neil Gibson and the Head of the Civil Service Jayne Brady, the reports and action plan have been shared with staff, trade unions, MLAs and the NI Audit Office.

Jayne Brady said: "I welcome the findings in the reports. As a Service, we are committed to learning from this review and addressing the issues identified.

"We remain on a journey of continuous improvement and the action plan sets out our response to the review recommendations.

"We will implement each of the 33 actions so that there is greater confidence that we are delivering the best possible service for the public and our workforce."

The external review highlights issues in the recording and escalating of concerns, the application of some policies and the way in which employment related legal cases are managed by the NICS.

A new NICS Raising a Concern Policy Framework has also been published. These guidelines for Departments set out, for the first time, a single, overarching approach to dealing with concerns raised.

A refreshed Civil Service Code of Ethics, which includes the obligation on all civil servants to keep proper records, will be embedded into performance management processes.

Neither PwC's Lessons learned and recommendations report, nor the Action Plan, addresses the actions of individual civil servants. The NI Civil Service, as a responsible employer, does not comment on internal employment related matters, which may or may not arise.

The Permanent Secretaries of DAERA and DoF will monitor the status of actions and have already asked their respective Departmental Audit Committees to scrutinise progress. Quarterly progress reports will be published on their respective websites.

The review also identifies areas for improvement in the culture of the service.

Jayne Brady said: "Concerns must always be raised, listened to and acted upon in the proper manner. It is critical that every civil servant maintains proper records and that all policies are up-to-date. These are the foundations of good governance.

"Some of the issues identified in this review, particularly in relation to record-keeping, were previously highlighted by the Inquiry into the Renewable Heat Incentive Scheme (RHI) report. This is not good enough and as leaders of the NI Civil Service, we will rigorously pursue progress against the recommendations.

"Improving the application of policies and procedures is a starting point, but real success requires behavioural and cultural change. Work is already underway to empower and support civil servants in effectively delivering the work of government and to develop an inclusive workplace culture."

Notes to Editors:

1. The PwC reports were commissioned by DAERA, on behalf of the Department's Permanent Secretary, the Department of Finance Permanent Secretary and the Head of the Civil Service. The reports and action plan are available here: <https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/publications/external-independent-review-pwc-reports-and-nics-action-plan>
2. The Terms of Reference committed to the publication of the outcomes of the review. The decision was taken in the interest of transparency for both papers of the External Independent Review in full. This has taken longer than initially anticipated.
3. Neither PwC's Lessons learned and recommendations report, nor the action plan, addresses the actions of individual civil servants. The NI Civil Service, as a responsible employer, does not comment on internal employment related matters, which may or may not arise. The requirements of employment law, the contractual obligations applying to every civil servant, and the obligation of fairness to all staff mean that any such matters must remain confidential in order to be lawful and fair and no individual civil servant or department may comment on these.
4. Link to NICS Code of Ethics: [NICS Code of Ethics | Department of Finance \(finance-ni.gov.uk\)](https://www.finance-ni.gov.uk)
5. Link to the new NICS Raising a Concern Policy Framework: <https://www.finance-ni.gov.uk/publications/raising-concern-policy-framework>
6. The full costs of the review are currently being finalised and will be published in due course on the DAERA website.
7. Media queries should be directed to the TEO press office via email at press.office@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk
8. The Executive Information Service operates an out of hours service for media enquiries **only** between 1800hrs and 0800hrs Monday to Friday and at weekends and public holidays. The duty press officer can be contacted on 028 9037 8110.

This is an automated distribution service - please do not reply to this email address.

If you wish to unsubscribe from this service please email EIS.info@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 26 January 2023 12:46
To: G_DAERA PressOffice.Group, DAERA
Subject: Evening Extra interview request re. 33-point action plan to improve governance across the NI Civil Service

Caution – This email has been received from outside the NICS network. Please ensure you can verify the sender's name and email address. Treat all attachments and links with caution.
FOR INTERNAL NICS STAFF ONLY - If you have any concerns regarding the email please forward to spam@finance-ni.gov.uk.

Hi,

Evening Extra is following up on the report published yesterday of a plan to improve governance across the NI Civil Service. It was in response to findings from an external independent review undertaken by PwC to examine the handling of concerns and other matters raised in a case taken by a former DAERA employee. Given that case we would like to speak to a DAERA representative to ask for the Department's response to the recommendations in the report and what steps the department has taken to deal with the issues [REDACTED] raised with the Department.

We'd also like to know what steps have been taken to ensure the protection of whistleblowers and if the Department will be taking any disciplinary action against the [REDACTED] or [REDACTED]

Can you confirm receipt of this email and if you will have a DAERA representative available to come on the programme? We would hope to speak to them live at 1720 or we can look at pre-record options if the time is an issue.

Many thanks,
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 26 January 2023 13:31
To: McFlynn, Sharon; Godfrey, Katrina (DAERA – Perm Sec); [REDACTED]
Cc: G_DAERA PressOffice.Group, DAERA; [REDACTED] McNabb, Chris
Subject: Interview bid / media query : BBC Radio Ulster Evening Extra

Hi all

Please see below interview bid received from BBC Radio Ulster Evening Extra.

We intend to decline the interview bid.

Please also see additional questions (highlighted) and proposed response to question regarding disciplinary action. I presume the first part of the question regarding the protection of whistleblowers would be for DoF to answer.

Thank you
[REDACTED]

Interview bid

Evening Extra is following up on the report published yesterday of a plan to improve governance across the NI Civil Service. It was in response to findings from an external independent review undertaken by PwC to examine the handling of concerns and other matters raised in a case taken by a former DAERA employee. Given that case we would like to speak to a DAERA representative to ask for the Department's response to the recommendations in the report and what steps the department has taken to deal with the issues [REDACTED] raised with the Department.

We'd also like to know what steps have been taken to ensure the protection of whistleblowers and if the Department will be taking any disciplinary action against the [REDACTED] or [REDACTED]

It is not appropriate to comment on individual employee matters. Neither PwC's Lessons learned and recommendations report, nor the action plan, addresses the actions of individual civil servants. The NI Civil Service, as a responsible employer, does not comment on internal employment related matters, which may or may not arise. The requirements of employment law, the contractual obligations applying to every civil servant, and the obligation of fairness to all staff mean that any such matters must remain confidential in order to be lawful and fair and no individual civil servant or department may comment on these.

Can you confirm receipt of this email and if you will have a DAERA representative available to come on the programme? We would hope to speak to them live at 1720 or we can look at pre-record options if the time is an issue.

Many thanks,
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 26 January 2023 13:31
To: [REDACTED] G_DAERA PressOffice.Group, DAERA
Subject: RE: Evening Extra interview request re. 33-point action plan to improve governance across the NI Civil Service

Hi [REDACTED]

We have received your interview bid and additional questions and will respond as soon as possible

Thank you
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 26 January 2023 12:46
To: G_DAERA PressOffice.Group, DAERA <PressOffice.Group@daera-ni.gov.uk>
Subject: Evening Extra interview request re. 33-point action plan to improve governance across the NI Civil Service

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FOR INTERNAL NICS STAFF ONLY - If you have any concerns regarding the email please forward to spam@finance-ni.gov.uk.

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Can you confirm receipt of this email and if you will have a DAERA representative available to come on the programme? We would hope to speak to them live at 1720 or we can look at pre-record options if the time is an issue.

Many thanks,

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 26 January 2023 13:35
To: [REDACTED] McFlynn, Sharon; Godfrey, Katrina (DAERA – Perm Sec) [REDACTED]
Cc: G_DAERA PressOffice.Group, DAERA; [REDACTED] McNabb, Chris
Subject: RE: Interview bid / media query : BBC Radio Ulster Evening Extra

Hi all,

We have also had an interview request from Evening Extra. Focus was on how issues which led to the commissioning of this review will be dealt with going forward. I've sent it to HOCS for consideration but our advice is that it should be declined.

Thanks,
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 26 January 2023 13:31
To: McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>; Godfrey, Katrina (DAERA – Perm Sec) <Katrina.Godfrey@daera-ni.gov.uk>; Conlan, Ciarrai <Ciarrai.Conlan@finance-ni.gov.uk>
Cc: G_DAERA PressOffice.Group, DAERA <PressOffice.Group@daera-ni.gov.uk>; [REDACTED] McNabb, Chris <Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>
Subject: Interview bid / media query : BBC Radio Ulster Evening Extra

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Please also see additional questions (highlighted) and proposed response to question regarding disciplinary action. I presume the first part of the question regarding the protection of whistleblowers would be for DoF to answer.

Thank you
[REDACTED]

Interview bid

Evening Extra is following up on the report published yesterday of a plan to improve governance across the NI Civil Service. It was in response to findings from an external independent review undertaken by PwC to examine the handling of concerns and other matters raised in a case taken by a former DAERA employee. Given that case we

would like to speak to a DAERA representative to ask for the Department's response to the recommendations in the report and what steps the department has taken to deal with the issues [REDACTED] raised with the Department.

We'd also like to know what steps have been taken to ensure the protection of whistleblowers and if the Department will be taking any disciplinary action against the [REDACTED] or [REDACTED]

It is not appropriate to comment on individual employee matters. Neither PwC's Lessons learned and recommendations report, nor the action plan, addresses the actions of individual civil servants. The NI Civil Service, as a responsible employer, does not comment on internal employment related matters, which may or may not arise. The requirements of employment law, the contractual obligations applying to every civil servant, and the obligation of fairness to all staff mean that any such matters must remain confidential in order to be lawful and fair and no individual civil servant or department may comment on these.

Can you confirm receipt of this email and if you will have a DAERA representative available to come on the programme? We would hope to speak to them live at 1720 or we can look at pre-record options if the time is an issue.

Many thanks,



[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 26 January 2023 14:14
To: McFlynn, Sharon
Cc: G_DAERA PressOffice.Group, DAERA
Subject: RE: Interview bid / media query : BBC Radio Ulster Evening Extra

Hi Sharon

Further to the below, DoF have advised that they are content for DAERA to answer the question regarding the handling of whistleblowing within the Department.

Therefore, please see below proposed response to questions posed, for your consideration and advice.

Thanks again
[REDACTED]

Query

We'd also like to know what steps have been taken to ensure the protection of whistleblowers and if the Department will be taking any disciplinary action against the [REDACTED] or [REDACTED]

Proposed Response

The DAERA Whistleblowing guidance was last reviewed in 2019. It will be reviewed and updated in the coming weeks to ensure it reflects the new Raising Concerns framework.

The current DAERA Whistleblowing guidance makes clear that staff with concerns can approach their line manager, their next immediate line manager or alternatively their Head of Division. Guidance on escalation includes approaching the Finance Director, Corporate Services Director or Internal Audit. If a further escalation is required staff are advised that they can approach the Permanent Secretary or Deputy Secretary.

Within DAERA a Whistleblowing exercise is commissioned monthly across the Department to capture all new concerns raised, regardless of whether they are raised internally by staff or externally by customers and stakeholders. These concerns and the action taken in each case are presented to the ARAC for scrutiny and reported to the Permanent Secretary.

Training on the Raising a Concern Policy Framework will also be provided between now and the summer 2023. DAERA will also provide bespoke training for all DAERA staff at Grade 7 and above on handling concerns by September 2023.

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From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 26 January 2023 13:31
To: McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>; Godfrey, Katrina (DAERA – Perm Sec) <Katrina.Godfrey@daera-ni.gov.uk>; [REDACTED]
Cc: G DAERA PressOffice.Group, DAERA <PressOffice.Group@daera-ni.gov.uk>; [REDACTED] McNabb, Chris <Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>
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We intend to decline the interview bid.

Please also see additional questions (highlighted) and proposed response to question regarding disciplinary action. I presume the first part of the question regarding the protection of whistleblowers would be for DoF to answer.

Thank you
[REDACTED]

Interview bid

Evening Extra is following up on the report published yesterday of a plan to improve governance across the NI Civil Service. It was in response to findings from an external independent review undertaken by PwC to examine the handling of concerns and other matters raised in a case taken by a former DAERA employee. Given that case we would like to speak to a DAERA representative to ask for the Department's response to the recommendations in the report and what steps the department has taken to deal with the issues [REDACTED] raised with the Department.

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Many thanks,
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 26 January 2023 14:30
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: G_DAERA PressOffice.Group, DAERA; DOF PressOffice
Subject: FW: Interview bid / media query : BBC Radio Ulster Evening Extra

Hi [REDACTED]

As discussed, our officials have advised whistleblowers are protected by the law (the Employment Rights (NI) Order 1996) however the steps taken within DAERA in regards the protection of whistle-blowers would be for yourselves to answer.

David Hughes, the official here, is happy to speak to Sharon if you think it would be helpful.

Best wishes
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 26 January 2023 13:31
To: McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>; Godfrey, Katrina (DAERA – Perm Sec) <Katrina.Godfrey@daera-ni.gov.uk>; [REDACTED]
Cc: G DAERA PressOffice.Group, DAERA <PressOffice.Group@daera-ni.gov.uk>; [REDACTED] McNabb, Chris <Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>
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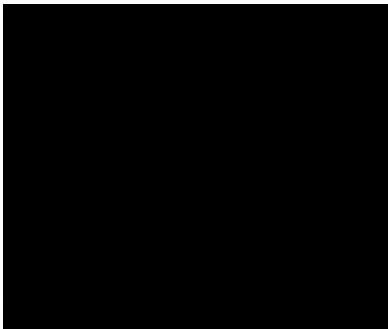
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Many thanks,



[REDACTED]

From: Godfrey, Katrina (DAERA – Perm Sec)
Sent: 26 January 2023 15:40
To: [REDACTED] McFlynn, Sharon; [REDACTED]
Cc: G_DAERA PressOffice.Group, DAERA; [REDACTED] McNabb, Chris
Subject: RE: Interview bid / media query : BBC Radio Ulster Evening Extra

Noted thanks

Katrina

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 26 January 2023 13:35
To: [REDACTED] McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>;
Godfrey, Katrina (DAERA – Perm Sec) <Katrina.Godfrey@daera-ni.gov.uk>; [REDACTED]
Cc: G DAERA PressOffice.Group, DAERA <PressOffice.Group@daera-ni.gov.uk>; [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] McNabb, Chris <Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>
Subject: RE: Interview bid / media query : BBC Radio Ulster Evening Extra

Hi all,

We have also had an interview request from Evening Extra. Focus was on how issues which led to the commissioning of this review will be dealt with going forward. I've sent it to HOCS for consideration but our advice is that it should be declined.

Thanks,
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 26 January 2023 13:31
To: McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>; Godfrey, Katrina (DAERA – Perm Sec) <Katrina.Godfrey@daera-ni.gov.uk>; [REDACTED]
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Many thanks,
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

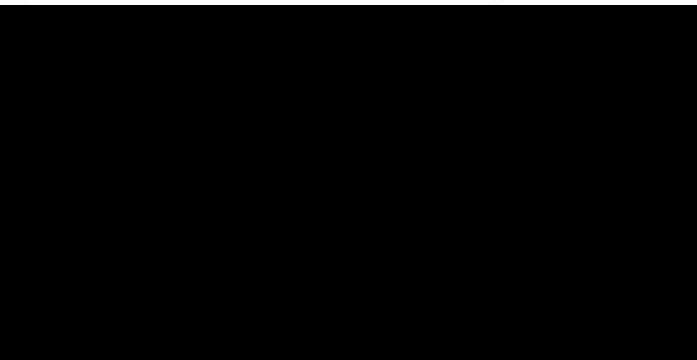
From: DAERA Perm Sec Corporate
Sent: 26 January 2023 16:04
To: DAERA Perm Sec Corporate; Godfrey, Katrina (DAERA – Perm Sec); Fulton, Norman; [REDACTED] Donnelly, Paul (DAERA); Reid, David (DAERA RAFSETBOR); DAERA Central Services Deputy Secretary; [REDACTED] Lyttle, Owen; [REDACTED] McFlynn, Sharon
Cc: G_DAERA PressOffice.Group, DAERA; DAERA PermSec
Subject: RE: WBR 30 January 2023 WBR Papers & Agenda - 9.30am via Webex Please confirm attendance
Attachments: Draft Agenda - WBR - 30 January 2023.DOCX; Permanent Secretary Diary Snapshot.DOCX; Note and Action Points - WBR - 23 January 2023.DOCX; WBR-Submission on FOI EIR Requests 19 - 25 January 2023.DOCX; Annex A - FOI EIR Weekly Update Report 19 - 25 January 2023.DOCX

All,

Please see attached agenda and papers, including minutes/ action points from last Monday's meeting.

Please confirm your attendance/ name of your deputy to corporatemailbox@daera-ni.gov.uk by noon tomorrow.

Many Thanks



Department of
**Agriculture, Environment
and Rural Affairs**
www.daera-ni.gov.uk

*Sustainability at the heart of a
living, working, active landscape
valued by everyone.*

WEEKLY BUSINESS REVIEW
Monday 30th January 2023 9.30am – 10.30am

Meeting is via Webex

AGENDA

No.	Time	Item	Paper
1	9.30 – 9.35	Note and Action Points from Previous Meeting	Paper attached
2	9.35 – 9.45	Chair's Business	Verbal
3	9.45 – 9.50	Perm Sec Diary Snapshot	Paper attached
The Week Ahead			
3	9.50 – 10.05	Grade 3 Forward Look	Verbal
4	10.05 – 10.15	Media Update	Verbal
5	10.15 – 10.20	Current FOIs	Paper attached
6	10.20 – 10.25	Decisions Likely to be Needed in the Coming Weeks	
Final Items			
7	10.25 – 10.30	AOB	Verbal



TITLE	Weekly Business Review
VENUE:	Via Webex
DATE	Monday 23 January 2023
Apologies: Tracey Teague [REDACTED]	Attendees: Katrina Godfrey (Chair) Norman Fulton Neal Gartland David Reid Owen Lyttle Paul Donnelly Brian Doherty Sharon McFlynn [REDACTED]
Minutes written by: [REDACTED]	Date: 23 January 2023

Note and Outstanding Action Points from Previous Meeting

Members agreed the note and action points from the previous meeting.

There was one action point outstanding relating to circulation of ICO decisions and Brian undertook to complete this as soon as possible. **[Action: Brian Doherty]**

Chair's Business

Katrina provided an update on the Budget Bill and on the work to develop budget proposals for 2023-24, noting that there would be a bilateral with DoF, on 6th February to inform the advice to the Secretary of State on setting a 2023-24 budget. She reminded colleagues to ensure any potential savings were identified and passed to Roger Downey.

Katrina advised that, in light of the specific challenges for the NICS in undertaking work associated with the REUL Bill in absence of the Executive a Northern Ireland Sub-Group on REUL reform had been established and a nominee was being sought from DAERA. Brian Doherty had been asked to make the necessary arrangements.

In that context, Brian also provided an update on reprioritisation of work programmes to free up a senior leader to co-ordinate the Department's approach to REUL.

Katrina informed the group that the reports from the PwC External Review would be published this week, alongside an updated NICS Raising Concerns Framework. A note would issue from HOCS to all staff.

Permanent Secretary Diary Snapshot

Diary update was provided - all to note that a meeting with [REDACTED] had now been arranged for 30th January as part of the current round of engagement with political parties.

Grade 3 Forward Look

Grade 3s/ Deputies provided updates as follows:

CSCPG – Brian Doherty

- Roger Downey would send a draft response to DoF on the zero based light exercise to Katrina for clearance, this week.
- 22 SCS expressed interest in CEF accountability training so a DAERA tailored event would be explored.
- Return to NICS HR on the vacancy priority list was sent last week, with a reduction of 23 posts. This would need to be further refined when 23/24 Budget was confirmed.
- Progress on the EAF accounts was pointing to them no longer being qualified by due to the error margin being below the qualification threshold but it was likely that the auditors would add emphasis of matter

FFG – Norman Fulton

- FAP Programme Board met last Tuesday to map roll out up to 2026. A further discussion would take place at TLT this Friday.
- Agreement had been reached to run a competition for agricultural inspectors.
- Submissions on the launch of the Regional Food Programme and Spirits/ Drinks Enforcement Regulations were being prepared.

RAFSET – David Reid

- Work was continuing with VSAHG in relation to the position on SPS infrastructure including in the context of the regulations recently made by Defra. NICS HR was also involved
- Officials would be attending a Home Office meeting on 15th February about implementation of Martyn's Law.
- The next stages in establishing the Rural Advisory Group were in hand.

EMFG – Owen Lyttle

- Advice from DSO was being sought regarding the recent correspondence from Global Feedback Limited
- The UK Government response to the Deposit Return Scheme consultation was published on Friday 20 January 23. DAERA Press Office has issued content. Initial reception seems to be positive.

- Data Collection Regulations submission would be sent this week to Katrina for consideration.
- The Climate Change Committee made a successful visit to NI last week.

NIEA – Paul Donnelly

- Update on Mobuoy and liaison with Press Office was continuing.
- Irregularities in soil sampling as part of the Nitrogen Action Plan were being investigated.
- The procurement process for a dangerous animals vet had not been successful and Paul would speak with Robert about other options.
- NIEA was considering how best to take forward any future tranches of the Environment Fund in a context where eNGOS were facing cost increases and where affordability and financial constraints presented real challenges in that regard.

VSAHG – Neal Gartland

- Neal highlighted the impact of the REUL Bill on some aspects of Animal Health Legislation and the action being taken.
- The outcome of the judicial review on the TB Eradication Scheme was expected shortly.
- DSO advice had been sought on recent correspondence in respect of BVD.
- Engagement was continuing with DEFRA on granting NI disease free status, in respect of AI.
- The Rule 9 statement for the Covid Inquiry 9 had required significant staff resources to complete but was almost ready.

Media Update

██████████ provided an update:

- Mobuoy was generating queries, and these were expected to continue.
- Outstanding decisions on legislation and BCPs were also generating queries.
- Lough Neagh queries continued to be received – with ██████ noting the complexities and levels of details involved.
- Social media engagement remained high, with last week's engagement including a focus on dogs; AI; Deposit Return Scheme; and equality and diversity posts.

Current FOIs

Noted.

Decisions Likely to be Needed in the Coming Weeks

Attendees provided updates on likely forthcoming EF decisions. A discussion would take place at this week's SCSG on the current guidance, and any potential updates.

AOB

None

Permanent Secretary Diary Snapshot

Date/Time	Organisation/Event title	Lead officials/Attendees (known)	Briefing due
30/01/2023 14.00 – 15.00	Recording of Cyber Security Video Message		N/A
30/01/2023 15.30 – 16.30	Engagement with Political Parties Entitled to form an Executive [REDACTED]	Grade 3s	
31/01/2023 09.30 – 12.30	NICS Board	NICS Board	
01/02/2023 12.00 – 16.00	DB Away Day		
02/02/2023 09.30 – 12.00	Young Farmers Clubs of Ulster	Norman Fulton	26/01/2023
07/02/2023 11.00 – 17.00	Ulster University/NICS PGC/MPA Module 3	Anthony Harbinson	

SUMMARY OF FOI / EIR REQUESTS AND RESPONSES: 19 - 25 January 2023

ANNEX A

NEW (NON-TOPICAL) REQUESTS RECEIVED AND LOGGED					
RECEIVED	TYPE	REQUESTER CATEGORY	REQUEST REFERENCE & SUMMARY	DUE DATE	BUSINESS AREA
20/01/2023	EIR	Media	DAERA/23-21 Number of water pollution reports, attendances and water quality tests since 2022.	17/01/2023	NIEA RED Water Management Unit
20/01/2023	EIR	Member of Public	DAERA/23-22 Copy of a consent provided to Mourne Mountains West Trustees in 2022 / 2023 for work carried out on the Western Mournes ASSI.	17/01/2023	NIEA NED Conservation Designation & Protection
23/01/2023	EIR	Member of Public	DAERA/23-23 Number of complaints received regarding breaches at Ballyhaskein /coastguard cottages, Millisle.	20/02/2023	NIEA NED Conservation Designation & Protection

RESPONSES NOTIFIED AS ISSUED		
REQUEST REFERENCE & SUMMARY	ISSUED	OUTCOME
DAERA/22-386 All details including the modelling methodology in relation to the different forms of recyclable waste collections in Northern Ireland.	17/01/2023	Withheld in full Reg 12(4)(d) – Incomplete / Unfinished
DAERA/22-377 All information held by NIEA in relation to investigations on Moneydarragh River, Annalong.	20/01/2023	Partial Release Regs 12(3) 13(1) - Personal Data
DAERA/22-338 All details on movement and management of Waste in NI; also include details of waste collection and treatment /disposal contracts for the last 5 years.	20/01/2023	Partial Release Reg 12(5)(e) - Commercial or industrial information

RESPONSES NOTIFIED AS ISSUED

REQUEST REFERENCE & SUMMARY	ISSUED	OUTCOME
DAERA/23-18 A list of anaerobic digestion facilities obtaining or withdrawing new standard permits, and new bespoke permits for 2022.	23/01/2023	Partial Release Reg 12(4)(c) – Information Not Held
DAERA/23-10 IPRI inspection reports for [REDACTED] from 2017 to date.	24/01/2023	Partial Release Regs 12(3) 13(1) - Personal Data

TOPICAL RESPONSES NOTIFIED AS ISSUED

REQUEST REFERENCE & SUMMARY	ISSUED	OUTCOME
DAERA/23-15 Number of fishing boats registered, fishermen, deckhands employed, the weight and value of fish landed for the last 5 calendar years in Northern Ireland.	25/01/2023	Released in full

TOPICAL LIVE FOI & EIR CASES

Due Date	Type	Requester	Summary of Request	Business Area	Current Position
03/02/2023	EIR	Member of Public	DAERA/23-8 Letter and ministerial submission and related further correspondence regarding an article in the Financial Times on 25 November 2022 entitled "Unionist politician tried to dilute UK Bill aimed at Northern Ireland Protocol."	FFG CAP Reform Branch	Under Consideration
06/02/2023	FOI	Media	DAERA/23-9 Decisions not taken because of the absence of a Minister and / or fully functioning Executive at your Department.	CSCPG Private Office	Under Consideration

TOPICAL LIVE FOI & EIR CASES

Due Date	Type	Requester	Summary of Request	Business Area	Current Position
07/02/2023	FOI	Public Representative	DAERA/23-11 Letter and related further correspondence regarding an article in the Financial Times on 25 November 2022 entitled "Unionist politician tried to dilute UK Bill aimed at Northern Ireland Protocol". Also, any other similar communications that were made with DEFRA along with copies of any requests that have been subsequently made to obtain a copy of the letter.	FFG CAP Reform Branch	Under Consideration
10/02/2023 (extended)	EIR	Media	DAERA/22-376 All documents held by NIEA relating to Granville Eco Park, Dungannon and Linergy, Granville, Dungannon from December 2021.	NIEA RED Industrial Pollution Radioactive Inspectorate	Under consideration (extension notified 06/01/23)
16/02/2023	EIR	Media	DAERA/23-20 (NEW) Reports, EIA screenings and enforcement notices produced for any enforcement cases between 2004 and 2013 concerning City and Industrial Waste Ltd or Campsie Sand and Gravel Ltd.	NIEA – RED Enforcement Branch	Under Consideration

INTERNAL REVIEWS - RECEIVED

Reference	Summary of Original Request	FOI / EIR	Due Date
None			

INTERNAL REVIEWS - RESPONSES ISSUED

Reference	Summary of Original Request & Outcome	FOI / EIR	Date Issued
None			

ICO APPEALS / COMPLAINTS

Appeal No	Original Ref	Details of Appeal	Possible Implications
IC-787176-D5S6	DAERA/20-192	<p>Original Request Notes and all other relevant information regarding formal EU infractions, transpositions, compliance and reporting.</p> <p>Original Decision Partial Release – some information withheld under: Reg 12(4)(d) incomplete / unfinished documents Reg 12(4)(e) internal communications Reg 12(5)(a) international relations Regs 12(3) 13(1) personal data</p> <p>Internal Review Decision Original decision upheld.</p>	Nothing identified at this time
IC-115551-D9J0	DAERA/21-102	<p>Original Request Information in relation to prosecutions relating to fires in Co Tyrone and Co Armagh resulting in pig deaths.</p> <p>Original Decision Withheld in full. Section 30 – Investigations conducted by a public authority Section 40 – Personal Data.</p> <p>Internal Review Decision Original decision upheld.</p>	Nothing identified at this time
IC-118810-L1N3	DAERA/20-359	<p>Original Request Information relating to an expulsion from CAFRE.</p> <p>Original Decision Refused. Section 14(1) – Vexatious.</p> <p>Internal Review Decision Original decision upheld</p>	Nothing identified at this time

FROM: [REDACTED]
Head of Data Protection and Information Management Branch

DATE: 26 January 2023

TO: **Weekly Business Review (WBR)**

**FREEDOM OF INFORMATION / ENVIRONMENTAL INFORMATION REGULATIONS
WEEKLY UPDATE REPORT 19 - 25 JANUARY 2023**

Summary

Issue: This paper provides summary detail at **Annex A** for the period Thursday 19 January 2022 to Wednesday 25 January 2023 on responses issued and requests received under the Freedom of Information Act (FOI) 2000 and the Environmental Information Regulations (EIR) 2004.

Timing: Routine

Recommendation: WBR is asked to note the summary detailed at **Annex A** relating to FOI and EIR requests received, responses issued, Internal Reviews, and ICO complaints.

Financial Implications: None.

Equality Implications: None.

FOI Implications: The summary detail is fully disclosable; names of officials could potentially be considered as third-party personal data and exempt from disclosure under FOI Section 40(2).

Vision: The detail in this report is linked to DAERA's commitment to the overarching statutory obligation to be open and transparent with the public in its decision-making processes.

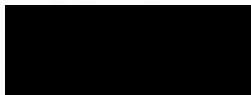
Background

1. The Department recorded **4 new requests** for information, **1** of which is considered **topical**, and is currently handling **26 live requests** under both information access regimes, **5** of which are topical.
2. The summary detail at **Annex A** includes information on any requests for and responses to Internal Reviews as well as information relating to any complaints made to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO); there are currently no appeals to the Information Tribunal that relate to the Department.

3. For new requests received and responses issued, any dates outside the relevant period will be due to delay in notifying Data Protection & Information Management Branch.

Recommendation

WBR is asked to note the summary detailed at **Annex A** relating to FOI and EIR requests received, responses issued, Internal Reviews, and ICO complaints.



Attachment

Annex A – 19/01/2023 – 25/01/2023 - FOI / EIR Requests Summary Details

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 26 January 2023 16:21
To: Godfrey, Katrina (DAERA – Perm Sec); McFlynn, Sharon
Cc: McNabb, Chris; [REDACTED]G_DAERA
PressOffice.Group, DAERA
Subject: RE : Interview bid : BBC Radio Ulster Evening Extra

Hi all

Please see below interview bid received from BBC Radio Ulster Evening Extra, which we intend to decline.

Thank you
[REDACTED]

Interview bid

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We'd also like to know what steps have been taken to ensure the protection of whistleblowers and if the Department will be taking any disciplinary action against the [REDACTED] or [REDACTED]

Can you confirm receipt of this email and if you will have a DAERA representative available to come on the programme? We would hope to speak to them live at 1720 or we can look at pre-record options if the time is an issue.

[REDACTED]

From: McFlynn, Sharon
Sent: 26 January 2023 16:34
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: G_DAERA PressOffice.Group, DAERA
Subject: RE: Interview bid / media query : BBC Radio Ulster Evening Extra

[REDACTED]

I am content that decline this bid. The questions set out refer to what would be covered in an interview should it be accepted. Therefore, as we will be declining the bid, no further action is required at this time.

Sharon

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 26 January 2023 14:14
To: McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>
Cc: G_DAERA PressOffice.Group, DAERA <PressOffice.Group@daera-ni.gov.uk>
Subject: RE: Interview bid / media query : BBC Radio Ulster Evening Extra

Hi Sharon

Further to the below, DoF have advised that they are content for DAERA to answer the question regarding the handling of whistleblowing within the Department.

Therefore, please see below proposed response to questions posed, for your consideration and advice.

Thanks again
[REDACTED]

Query

We'd also like to know what steps have been taken to ensure the protection of whistleblowers and if the Department will be taking any disciplinary action against the [REDACTED]

Proposed Response

The DAERA Whistleblowing guidance was last reviewed in 2019. It will be reviewed and updated in the coming weeks to ensure it reflects the new Raising Concerns framework.

The current DAERA Whistleblowing guidance makes clear that staff with concerns can approach their line manager, their next immediate line manager or alternatively their Head of Division. Guidance on escalation includes approaching the Finance Director, Corporate Services Director or Internal Audit. If a further escalation is required staff are advised that they can approach the Permanent Secretary or Deputy Secretary.

Within DAERA a Whistleblowing exercise is commissioned monthly across the Department to capture all new concerns raised, regardless of whether they are raised internally by staff or externally by customers and stakeholders. These concerns and the action taken in each case are presented to the ARAC for scrutiny and reported to the Permanent Secretary.

Training on the Raising a Concern Policy Framework will also be provided between now and the summer 2023. DAERA will also provide bespoke training for all DAERA staff at Grade 7 and above on handling concerns by September 2023.

It is not appropriate to comment on individual employee matters. Neither PwC's Lessons learned and recommendations report, nor the action plan, addresses the actions of individual civil servants. The NI Civil Service, as a responsible employer, does not comment on internal employment related matters, which may or may not arise. The requirements of employment law, the contractual obligations applying to every civil servant, and the obligation of fairness to all staff mean that any such matters must remain confidential in order to be lawful and fair and no individual civil servant or department may comment on these.

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 26 January 2023 13:31
To: McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>; Godfrey, Katrina (DAERA – Perm Sec) <Katrina.Godfrey@daera-ni.gov.uk>; Conlan, Ciarrai <Ciarrai.Conlan@finance-ni.gov.uk>
Cc: G_DAERA PressOffice.Group, DAERA <PressOffice.Group@daera-ni.gov.uk>; [REDACTED] McNabb, Chris <Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>
Subject: Interview bid / media query : BBC Radio Ulster Evening Extra

Hi all

Please see below interview bid received from BBC Radio Ulster Evening Extra.

We intend to decline the interview bid.

Please also see additional questions (highlighted) and proposed response to question regarding disciplinary action. I presume the first part of the question regarding the protection of whistleblowers would be for DoF to answer.

Thank you
[REDACTED]

Interview bid

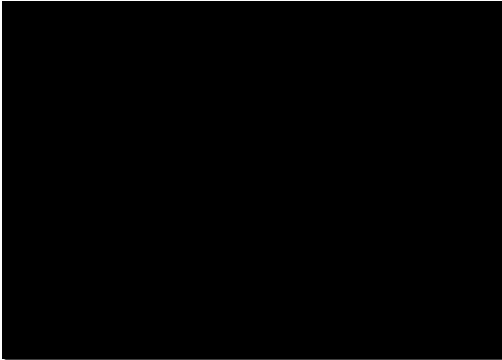
Evening Extra is following up on the report published yesterday of a plan to improve governance across the NI Civil Service. It was in response to findings from an external independent review undertaken by PwC to examine the handling of concerns and other matters raised in a case taken by a former DAERA employee. Given that case we would like to speak to a DAERA representative to ask for the Department's response to the recommendations in the report and what steps the department has taken to deal with the issues [REDACTED] raised with the Department.

We'd also like to know what steps have been taken to ensure the protection of whistleblowers and if the Department will be taking any disciplinary action against the [REDACTED] or [REDACTED]

It is not appropriate to comment on individual employee matters. Neither PwC's Lessons learned and recommendations report, nor the action plan, addresses the actions of individual civil servants. The NI Civil Service, as a responsible employer, does not comment on internal employment related matters, which may or may not arise. The requirements of employment law, the contractual obligations applying to every civil servant, and the obligation of fairness to all staff mean that any such matters must remain confidential in order to be lawful and fair and no individual civil servant or department may comment on these.

Can you confirm receipt of this email and if you will have a DAERA representative available to come on the programme? We would hope to speak to them live at 1720 or we can look at pre-record options if the time is an issue.

Many thanks,



[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 26 January 2023 16:35
To: McFlynn, Sharon
Cc: G_DAERA PressOffice.Group, DAERA
Subject: RE: Interview bid / media query : BBC Radio Ulster Evening Extra

Thanks again Sharon
[REDACTED]

From: McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>
Sent: 26 January 2023 16:34
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: G_DAERA PressOffice.Group, DAERA <PressOffice.Group@daera-ni.gov.uk>
Subject: RE: Interview bid / media query : BBC Radio Ulster Evening Extra

[REDACTED]

I am content that decline this bid. The questions set out refer to what would be covered in an interview should it be accepted. Therefore, as we will be declining the bid, no further action is required at this time.

Sharon

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 26 January 2023 14:14
To: McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>
Cc: G_DAERA PressOffice.Group, DAERA <PressOffice.Group@daera-ni.gov.uk>
Subject: RE: Interview bid / media query : BBC Radio Ulster Evening Extra

Hi Sharon

Further to the below, DoF have advised that they are content for DAERA to answer the question regarding the handling of whistleblowing within the Department.

Therefore, please see below proposed response to questions posed, for your consideration and advice.

Thanks again
[REDACTED]

Query

We'd also like to know what steps have been taken to ensure the protection of whistleblowers and if the Department will be taking any disciplinary action against the [REDACTED] or [REDACTED]

Proposed Response

The DAERA Whistleblowing guidance was last reviewed in 2019. It will be reviewed and updated in the coming weeks to ensure it reflects the new Raising Concerns framework.

The current DAERA Whistleblowing guidance makes clear that staff with concerns can approach their line manager, their next immediate line manager or alternatively their Head of Division. Guidance on escalation includes approaching the Finance Director, Corporate Services Director or Internal Audit. If a further escalation is required staff are advised that they can approach the Permanent Secretary or Deputy Secretary.

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Training on the Raising a Concern Policy Framework will also be provided between now and the summer 2023. DAERA will also provide bespoke training for all DAERA staff at Grade 7 and above on handling concerns by September 2023.

It is not appropriate to comment on individual employee matters. Neither PwC's Lessons learned and recommendations report, nor the action plan, addresses the actions of individual civil servants. The NI Civil Service, as a responsible employer, does not comment on internal employment related matters, which may or may not arise. The requirements of employment law, the contractual obligations applying to every civil servant, and the obligation of fairness to all staff mean that any such matters must remain confidential in order to be lawful and fair and no individual civil servant or department may comment on these.

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 26 January 2023 13:31
To: McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>; Godfrey, Katrina (DAERA – Perm Sec) <Katrina.Godfrey@daera-ni.gov.uk> [REDACTED]
Cc: G DAERA PressOffice.Group, DAERA <PressOffice.Group@daera-ni.gov.uk>; [REDACTED]; McNabb, Chris <Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>
Subject: Interview bid / media query : BBC Radio Ulster Evening Extra

Hi all

Please see below interview bid received from BBC Radio Ulster Evening Extra.

We intend to decline the interview bid.

Please also see additional questions (highlighted) and proposed response to question regarding disciplinary action. I presume the first part of the question regarding the protection of whistleblowers would be for DoF to answer.

Thank you
[REDACTED]

Interview bid

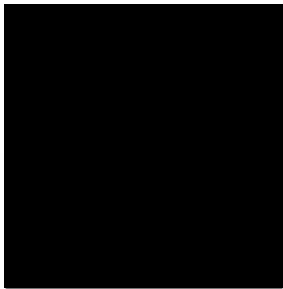
Evening Extra is following up on the report published yesterday of a plan to improve governance across the NI Civil Service. It was in response to findings from an external independent review undertaken by PwC to examine the handling of concerns and other matters raised in a case taken by a former DAERA employee. Given that case we would like to speak to a DAERA representative to ask for the Department's response to the recommendations in the report and what steps the department has taken to deal with the issues [REDACTED] raised with the Department.

We'd also like to know what steps have been taken to ensure the protection of whistleblowers and if the Department will be taking any disciplinary action against the [REDACTED] or [REDACTED]

It is not appropriate to comment on individual employee matters. Neither PwC's Lessons learned and recommendations report, nor the action plan, addresses the actions of individual civil servants. The NI Civil Service, as a responsible employer, does not comment on internal employment related matters, which may or may not arise. The requirements of employment law, the contractual obligations applying to every civil servant, and the obligation of fairness to all staff mean that any such matters must remain confidential in order to be lawful and fair and no individual civil servant or department may comment on these.

Can you confirm receipt of this email and if you will have a DAERA representative available to come on the programme? We would hope to speak to them live at 1720 or we can look at pre-record options if the time is an issue.

Many thanks,



[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 26 January 2023 16:48
To: TEO Press Office
Cc: G_DAERA PressOffice.Group, DAERA
Subject: Belfast Live query

Caution – This email has been received from outside the NICS network.
Please ensure you can verify the sender's name and email address.
Treat all attachments and links with caution.

FOR INTERNAL NICS STAFF ONLY - If you have any concerns regarding the email please forward to spam@finance-ni.gov.uk.

Hi,

It's [REDACTED] here from Belfast Live. I was wondering if you could assist with this?

TEO/DAERA recently published the PwC reports commissioned in response to the [REDACTED] case:

<https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/publications/external-independent-review-pwc-reports-and-nics-action-plan>

- May I ask, how much did these PwC reports cost?

Please let me know if you receive this. It would be great to get details before 1pm tomorrow.

Thanks again,

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

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[Redacted]

From: [Redacted]
Sent: 26 January 2023 16:54
To: DoF EIS Media Monitoring Unit
Cc: G_DAERA PressOffice.Group, DAERA
Subject: transcript

Folks can we please get a transcript of PWC report at 16.50 on Eve Extra?

Many thanks. [Redacted]

[Redacted]

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 26 January 2023 16:50
To: [REDACTED] G_DAERA PressOffice.Group, DAERA
Subject: RE: Evening Extra interview request re. 33-point action plan to improve governance across the NI Civil Service

Hi [REDACTED]

No one from the Department is available for interview.

Thank you
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 26 January 2023 12:46
To: G_DAERA PressOffice.Group, DAERA <PressOffice.Group@daera-ni.gov.uk>
Subject: Evening Extra interview request re. 33-point action plan to improve governance across the NI Civil Service

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FOR INTERNAL NICS STAFF ONLY - If you have any concerns regarding the email please forward to spam@finance-ni.gov.uk.

Hi,

Evening Extra is following up on the report published yesterday of a plan to improve governance across the NI Civil Service. It was in response to findings from an external independent review undertaken by PwC to examine the handling of concerns and other matters raised in a case taken by a former DAERA employee. Given that case we would like to speak to a DAERA representative to ask for the Department's response to the recommendations in the report and what steps the department has taken to deal with the issues [REDACTED] raised with the Department.

We'd also like to know what steps have been taken to ensure the protection of whistleblowers and if the Department will be taking any disciplinary action against the [REDACTED] or [REDACTED]

Can you confirm receipt of this email and if you will have a DAERA representative available to come on the programme? We would hope to speak to them live at 1720 or we can look at pre-record options if the time is an issue.

Many thanks,

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 26 January 2023 16:53
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED] G_DAERA PressOffice.Group, DAERA
Subject: RE: Interview bid : BBC Radio Ulster Evening Extra

Apologies [REDACTED] – and [REDACTED] will do
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 26 January 2023 16:52
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Interview bid : BBC Radio Ulster Evening Extra

Thanks [REDACTED]

Can you add [REDACTED] into CC list for any future queries.

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 26 January 2023 16:21
To: Godfrey, Katrina (DAERA – Perm Sec) <Katrina.Godfrey@daera-ni.gov.uk>; McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>
Cc: McNabb, Chris <Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; [REDACTED]

G_DAERA PressOffice.Group, DAERA <PressOffice.Group@daera-ni.gov.uk>

Subject: RE : Interview bid : BBC Radio Ulster Evening Extra

Hi all

Please see below interview bid received from BBC Radio Ulster Evening Extra, which we intend to decline.

Thank you
[REDACTED]

Interview bid

Evening Extra is following up on the report published yesterday of a plan to improve governance across the NI Civil Service. It was in response to findings from an external independent review undertaken by PwC to examine the handling of concerns and other matters raised in a case taken by a former DAERA employee. Given that case we would like to speak to a DAERA representative to ask for the Department's response to the recommendations in the report and what steps the department has taken to deal with the issues [REDACTED] raised with the Department.

We'd also like to know what steps have been taken to ensure the protection of whistleblowers and if the Department will be taking any disciplinary action against the [REDACTED] or [REDACTED]

Can you confirm receipt of this email and if you will have a DAERA representative available to come on the programme? We would hope to speak to them live at 1720 or we can look at pre-record options if the time is an issue.

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 26 January 2023 17:02
To: [REDACTED] TEO Press Office
Cc: G_DAERA PressOffice.Group, DAERA
Subject: RE: Belfast Live query

Hi [REDACTED]

We have received your query and will have a response with you as soon as possible

Thank you
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 26 January 2023 16:48
To: TEO Press Office <press.office@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>
Cc: G_DAERA PressOffice.Group, DAERA <PressOffice.Group@daera-ni.gov.uk>
Subject: Belfast Live query

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Hi,

It's [REDACTED] here from Belfast Live. I was wondering if you could assist with this?

TEO/DAERA recently published the PwC reports commissioned in response to the [REDACTED] case:

<https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/publications/external-independent-review-pwc-reports-and-nics-action-plan>

- May I ask, how much did these PwC reports cost?

Please let me know if you receive this. It would be great to get details before 1pm tomorrow.

Thanks again,
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

IMPORTANT NOTICE This email (including any attachments) is meant only for the intended recipient. It may also contain confidential and privileged information. If you are not the intended recipient, any reliance on, use, disclosure, distribution or copying of this email or attachments is strictly prohibited. Please notify the sender immediately by email if you have received this message by mistake and delete the email and all attachments.

Any views or opinions in this email are solely those of the author and do not necessarily represent those of Reach plc or its associated group companies (hereinafter referred to as "Reach Group"). Reach Group accept no liability for the content of this email, or for the consequences of any actions taken on the basis of the information provided, unless that information is subsequently confirmed in writing. Although every reasonable effort is made to keep its network free from viruses, Reach Group accept no liability for any virus transmitted by this email or any attachments and the recipient should use up-to-date virus checking software. Email to or from this address may be subject to interception or monitoring for operational reasons or for lawful business practices.

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 26 January 2023 17:07
To: McFlynn, Sharon; Godfrey, Katrina (DAERA – Perm Sec)
Cc: McNabb, Chris; [REDACTED] G_DAERA
PressOffice.Group, DAERA; [REDACTED]
Subject: Media Query - Belfast Live - PWC Report

Hi all

Please see below query from Belfast Live and proposed response, for your consideration.

The journalist has asked for a reply by 1pm tomorrow (Friday 27th)

Thank you
[REDACTED]

Query

TEO/DAERA recently published the PwC reports commissioned in response to the [REDACTED] case:

<https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/publications/external-independent-review-pwc-reports-and-nics-action-plan>

- May I ask, how much did these PwC reports cost?

Draft response

Final costs are currently being finalised and will be published in due course.

[REDACTED]

From: Godfrey, Katrina (DAERA – Perm Sec)
Sent: 26 January 2023 17:12
To: [REDACTED] McFlynn, Sharon
Cc: McNabb, Chris; [REDACTED] G_DAERA
PressOffice.Group, DAERA; [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Media Query - Belfast Live - PWC Report

Content thanks [REDACTED]

Katrina

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 26 January 2023 17:07
To: McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>; Godfrey, Katrina (DAERA – Perm Sec) <Katrina.Godfrey@daera-ni.gov.uk>
Cc: McNabb, Chris <Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] G_DAERA PressOffice.Group, DAERA <PressOffice.Group@daera-ni.gov.uk>; [REDACTED]
Subject: Media Query - Belfast Live - PWC Report

Hi all

Please see below query from Belfast Live and proposed response, for your consideration.

The journalist has asked for a reply by 1pm tomorrow (Friday 27th)

Thank you
[REDACTED]

Query

TEO/DAERA recently published the PwC reports commissioned in response to the [REDACTED] case:

<https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/publications/external-independent-review-pwc-reports-and-nics-action-plan>

- May I ask, how much did these PwC reports cost?

Draft response

Final costs are currently being finalised and will be published in due course.

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 26 January 2023 17:17
To: McFlynn, Sharon
Cc: McNabb, Chris; [REDACTED] G_DAERA
PressOffice.Group, DAERA; [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Media Query - Belfast Live - PWC Report

Hi all

This line has been cleared by Perm Sec, I will issue shortly.

Thanks
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 26 January 2023 17:07
To: McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>; Godfrey, Katrina (DAERA – Perm Sec) <Katrina.Godfrey@daera-ni.gov.uk>
Cc: McNabb, Chris <Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] G_DAERA PressOffice.Group, DAERA <PressOffice.Group@daera-ni.gov.uk>; [REDACTED]
Subject: Media Query - Belfast Live - PWC Report

Hi all

Please see below query from Belfast Live and proposed response, for your consideration.

The journalist has asked for a reply by 1pm tomorrow (Friday 27th)

Thank you
[REDACTED]

Query

TEO/DAERA recently published the PwC reports commissioned in response to the [REDACTED] case:

<https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/publications/external-independent-review-pwc-reports-and-nics-action-plan>

- May I ask, how much did these PwC reports cost?

Draft response

Final costs are currently being finalised and will be published in due course.

[REDACTED]

From: McNabb, Chris
Sent: 26 January 2023 17:19
To: [REDACTED] McFlynn, Sharon
Cc: [REDACTED] G_DAERA PressOffice.Group,
DAERA; [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Media Query - Belfast Live - PWC Report

Thx

Sent with BlackBerry Work
(www.blackberry.com)

From: [REDACTED]
Date: Thursday, 26 Jan 2023 at 5:16 pm
To: McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>
Cc: McNabb, Chris <Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>, [REDACTED] G DAERA
PressOffice.Group, DAERA <PressOffice.Group@daera-ni.gov.uk>, [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Media Query - Belfast Live - PWC Report

Hi all

This line has been cleared by Perm Sec, I will issue shortly.

Thanks
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 26 January 2023 17:07
To: McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>; Godfrey, Katrina (DAERA – Perm Sec)
<Katrina.Godfrey@daera-ni.gov.uk>
Cc: McNabb, Chris <Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] G_DAERA PressOffice.Group, DAERA <PressOffice.Group@daera-ni.gov.uk>; [REDACTED]
Subject: Media Query - Belfast Live - PWC Report

Hi all

Please see below query from Belfast Live and proposed response, for your consideration.

The journalist has asked for a reply by 1pm tomorrow (Friday 27th)

Thank you
[REDACTED]

Query

TEO/DAERA recently published the PwC reports commissioned in response to the [REDACTED] case:

<https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/publications/external-independent-review-pwc-reports-and-nics-action-plan>

- May I ask, how much did these PwC reports cost?

Draft response

Final costs are currently being finalised and will be published in due course.

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 26 January 2023 17:25
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: G_DAERA PressOffice.Group, DAERA
Subject: Media Query - Belfast Live - PWC

Hi [REDACTED]

Please see below response to your query

Thank you

Final costs are currently being finalised and will be published in due course.

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 25 January 2023 09:25
To: [REDACTED] McFlynn, Sharon
Subject: RE: Documents for DAERA website and Comms overview

Sharon

Just confirming we are working on this now and will respond with updates as soon as completed. Thank you for the wording for the webpage very helpful.

Kind regards

[REDACTED]

For the latest information on DAERA visit www.daera-ni.gov.uk



Department of
**Agriculture, Environment
and Rural Affairs**
www.daera-ni.gov.uk

*Sustainability at the heart of a
living, working, active landscape
valued by everyone.*

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 24 January 2023 23:04
To: McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>; [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Documents for DAERA website and Comms overview

Great stuff Sharon, thanks for all this and well done for getting it to this point!!

We will keep close tomorrow and do our best to make sure all runs to plan

[REDACTED]

From: McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>
Date: Tuesday, 24 Jan 2023, 9:56 pm
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: Documents for DAERA website and Comms overview

[REDACTED] and [REDACTED]

Please find attached the most up to date communications pack for tomorrow's announcement and publication of documents. It will give you an overview of the co-ordinated approach to comms and

includes an output tracker so we're all clear on who has responsibility for what. It does not include the DAERA specific comms to staff and the ARAC (which Katrina is taking care off and will issue first thing tomorrow morning-copy attached). The missing piece of the jigsaw is the action plan which remains in draft with one query still to be addressed. We are hopeful that it will be sorted by early tomorrow morning at the latest.

In terms of output and timing there are a number of tasks for which we have been assigned responsibility:

- **Action Plan for publication-** [REDACTED] has prepared a design mock up of the report and is on stand by to drop the text from the agreed action plan into it. He will be available from around 8:30 tomorrow morning to do this. It is a straightforward document and [REDACTED] is confident that he will be able to turn it around quickly. We will need to proof it very quickly and if time permits I will also circulate it to comms colleagues in DoF and HOCS office and ask for their assistance in doing same. When it is agreed we'll need a pdf copy for uploading to the website. It should be saved and appear on the website as 'Action Plan in response to Independent External Review'.
- **Publication of documents on DAERA website-** target time for docs to be uploaded and page set to live is 11:40.

Drawing on the pr and preface to the action plan, I have pulled together a few lines of introductory text for the page:

[Today we have published a 33 point action plan to improve governance across the NI Civil Service. The plan is in response to findings from an independent external review undertaken by PwC to examine the handling of concerns and other matters raised in a case taken by a former DAERA employee.

In May 2022, the Head of the Civil Service and the Permanent Secretaries for the Departments of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) and the Department of Finance (DoF), jointly commissioned an Independent External Review into the handling of concerns and other serious matters, raised in a case taken by a former DAERA employee.

The action plan and two reports setting out the findings from the review can be accessed in the documents below.]

The three reports should be presented in the following order-(i) Phase 1 Final Report; (ii) Phase 2:Lessons Learned and Recommendations report; and (iii) Action Plan in response to Independent External Review. The two PwC Reports are attached and, as per above, the action plan to follow.

[REDACTED] you have already provided a link to the landing page <https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/publications/external-independent-review-pwc-reports-and-nics-action-plan>

Please go ahead and arrange for as much as possible to set up on the page so that we can get it finalised quickly when the action plan arrives. Target time for go live is 11:40. Please

confirm when done so I can advise comms colleagues. You have also confirmed that you'll arrange for access to the page to be listed as a quick link on the DAERA home page once it goes live. This should be done after Katrina's note to staff has issued.

- **Note from Katrina to all DAERA staff-** HOCS all staff email and publication of it as a global intranet article are scheduled to go live at 11:45 (██████ to confirm when done) followed by the DAERA staff email at 11:55.

██████ I have attached a copy of the article which has been cleared by Katrina and legal. Hyperlinks to the docs have been inserted. If not done already, please arrange for this to be set up in the mailstyler template so it's ready to go. Again, please confirm when done so I can advise comms colleagues.

Following issue of the DAERA staff note, HOCS will issue an email to all MLAs and when this has been confirmed as done, the press release will issue at noon from TEO.

- **Media Queries:**

██████ in preparation for media queries, I have attached the most up to version of the potential questions doc. There is still some fine tuning to be done and a few answers still require agreement between DAERA and DoF. We can pick these up as we go but I thought it would be useful for us to have this document to hand. As discussed previously, we need to ensure there's a joined up approach on all media queries and I trust these will be handled as per BAU, linking in with other press offices and ensuring that each has early sight of queries received and involved as necessary in clearance of responses. Please ensure that I have early sight of the queries. All responses should be shared among press offices for info. Chris McNabb will keep a repository of all media queries and answers.

I have tried to wrap up as much as possible in this email so we'll all have it to hand as a point of reference. If you think I've overlooked anything or require clarification on any of the actions set out, please do let me know. Many thanks for your help and support in getting us to this point.

Sharon

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 25 January 2023 09:30
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: in strictest confidence
Attachments: DAERA - External Review-Phase 1 Final Report.pdf; DAERA - External Review-Phase 2 Lessons Learned and Recommendations (1).pdf; PwC Communications Pack FIN 250123 - USE.docx; External Review PS note to Staff.DOCX; DRAFT potential questions 180123.docx; Perm Sec -note to ARAC ER.docx

FOR YOUR EYES ONLY - DO NOT SHARE

All please see the up to date comms pack and the PWC reviews. Included in this are some potential lines for media queries but all will need to be considered against any queries that come in. I can already see some lines that might need tweaked but they are a starting point. I don't want queries going round the houses, we should pull the lines together from these docs (send to me to consider if I don't get to it first) and then get to Sharon, then Katrina to clear.

As per below – we will need to make sure TEO and DOF are sighted on our queries.

As you know I'm at GMount today with SCSG so in a good position to get queries moving and cleared so keep in touch.

Thanks

[REDACTED]

From: McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>
Sent: 24 January 2023 21:56
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: Documents for DAERA website and Comms overview

[REDACTED]

Please find attached the most up to date communications pack for tomorrow's announcement and publication of documents. It will give you an overview of the co-ordinated approach to comms and includes an output tracker so we're all clear on who has responsibility for what. It does not include the DAERA specific comms to staff and the ARAC (which Katrina is taking care off and will issue first thing tomorrow morning-copy attached). The missing piece of the jigsaw is the action plan which remains in draft with one query still to be addressed. We are hopeful that it will be sorted by early tomorrow morning at the latest.

In terms of output and timing there are a number of tasks for which we have been assigned responsibility:

- **Action Plan for publication-** [REDACTED] has prepared a design mock up of the report and is on stand by to drop the text from the agreed action plan into it. He will be available from around 8:30 tomorrow morning to do this. It is a straightforward document and [REDACTED] is confident that he will be able to turn it around quickly. We will need to proof it very quickly and if time permits I will also circulate it to comms colleagues in DoF and HOCS office and ask for their assistance in doing same. When it is agreed we'll need a pdf copy for

uploading to the website. It should be saved and appear on the website as 'Action Plan in response to Independent External Review'.

- **Publication of documents on DAERA website-** target time for docs to be uploaded and page set to live is **11:40**.

Drawing on the pr and preface to the action plan, I have pulled together a few lines of introductory text for the page:

[Today we have published a 33 point action plan to improve governance across the NI Civil Service. The plan is in response to findings from an independent external review undertaken by PwC to examine the handling of concerns and other matters raised in a case taken by a former DAERA employee.

In May 2022, the Head of the Civil Service and the Permanent Secretaries for the Departments of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) and the Department of Finance (DoF), jointly commissioned an Independent External Review into the handling of concerns and other serious matters, raised in a case taken by a former DAERA employee.

The action plan and two reports setting out the findings from the review can be accessed in the documents below.]

The three reports should be presented in the following order-(i) Phase 1 Final Report; (ii) Phase 2:Lessons Learned and Recommendations report; and (iii) Action Plan in response to Independent External Review. The two PwC Reports are attached and, as per above, the action plan to follow.

██████ you have already provided a link to the landing page <https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/publications/external-independent-review-pwc-reports-and-nics-action-plan>

Please go ahead and arrange for as much as possible to set up on the page so that we can get it finalised quickly when the action plan arrives. Target time for go live is 11:40. Please confirm when done so I can advise comms colleagues. You have also confirmed that you'll arrange for access to the page to be listed as a quick link on the DAERA home page once it goes live. This should be done after Katrina's note to staff has issued.

- **Note from Katrina to all DAERA staff-** HOCS all staff email and publication of it as a global intranet article are scheduled to go live at 11:45 (Ciarrai to confirm when done) followed by the DAERA staff email at **11:55**.

██████ I have attached a copy of the article which has been cleared by Katrina and legal. Hyperlinks to the docs have been inserted. If not done already, please arrange for this to be set up in the mailstyler template so it's ready to go. Again, please confirm when done so I can advise comms colleagues.

Following issue of the DAERA staff note, HOCS will issue an email to all MLAs and when this has been confirmed as done, the press release will issue at noon from TEO.

- **Media Queries:**

█ in preparation for media queries, I have attached the most up to version of the potential questions doc. There is still some fine tuning to be done and a few answers still require agreement between DAERA and DoF. We can pick these up as we go but I thought it would be useful for us to have this document to hand. As discussed previously, we need to ensure there's a joined up approach on all media queries and I trust these will be handled as per BAU, linking in with other press offices and ensuring that each has early sight of queries received and involved as necessary in clearance of responses. Please ensure that I have early sight of the queries. All responses should be shared among press offices for info. Chris McNabb will keep a repository of all media queries and answers.

I have tried to wrap up as much as possible in this email so we'll all have it to hand as a point of reference. If you think I've overlooked anything or require clarification on any of the actions set out, please do let me know. Many thanks for your help and support in getting us to this point.

Sharon

[REDACTED]

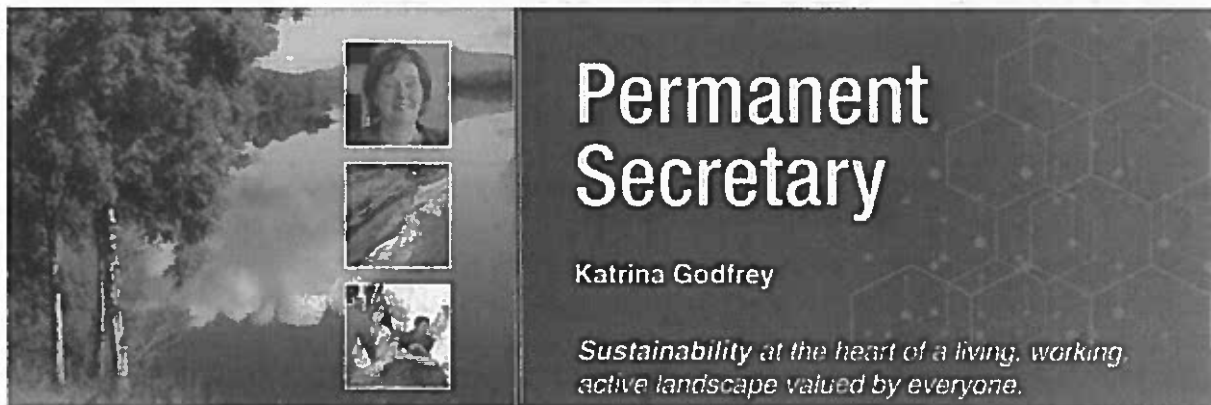
From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 25 January 2023 09:57
To: McFlynn, Sharon; [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Draft for info- Memo from Permanent Secretary to All DAERA Staff - PwC External Independent Review and NICS Raising a Concern Framework

Sharon

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Kind regards

[REDACTED]



Memo to all staff from Katrina Godfrey, Permanent Secretary

PwC EXTERNAL INDEPENDENT REVIEW AND NICS RAISING A CONCERN FRAMEWORK

Dear Colleagues,

I am writing to let you know that, today, the Department is publishing the reports from the external independent review carried out by PwC into how DAERA dealt with the concerns raised in the recent industrial tribunal case involving [REDACTED] and of the decision-making of both DAERA and DoF relating to this case.

As I said when we announced the review, it was important to take such a step in order to establish the facts and ensure lessons are identified, applied and factored into future handling of such cases.

The review has taken much longer to complete than I initially expected, but one result of the longer duration is that it has also identified a much wider set of lessons than I had first envisaged. Those lessons relate to how we handle concerns; the standard of some of our record keeping; and how we apply, review and update our core policies. There is also important learning in relation to how we define and discharge our responsibilities when decisions are needed on employment-related legal cases.

At the heart of this particular case was our handling of concerns raised by a former colleague. We simply must learn from this to prevent a similar situation from arising again in DAERA or in any other department. That is why, today, the Head of the Civil Service is also launching a new Raising a Concern Policy Framework which will apply across all departments. Within DAERA, I want us to lead by example in implementing and giving life to the new Raising a Concern procedures and will set out in the coming weeks how the framework will be applied across the Department, including in NIEA and in Forest Service.

In response to this and to the other issues raised in the PwC reports, we have agreed and are also publishing today a detailed action plan setting out how we intend, within DAERA and DoF and where applicable across all departments, to respond to the recommendations made in the second PwC report.

I have asked the chair of the Departmental Audit and Risk Assurance Committee (DARAC) to make the action plan a standing item on its agenda until I am satisfied that the DAERA actions have been completed and embedded and I am grateful for her agreement and for the support from DARAC and my Departmental Board as we work to respond to the findings of the PwC reports.

It is, however, important for me to recognise that, no matter how diligently we take forward our work to address the actions in that plan, our effectiveness will be defined not by a completed list of actions, but by our behaviours and by the culture we create in the teams to which we belong. Our real test of success will be when any colleague in any part of the Department who wants to raise a concern feels confident to do so and any manager receiving a concern knows what action to take and takes it. I will do all that I can to lead by example to build a culture fitting of the exemplar organisation that we strive to be, but I will need everyone's help to make sure that is the case across all parts of DAERA.



Katrina Godfrey
PERMANENT SECRETARY

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active landscape valued by everyone.*



Department of
**Agriculture, Environment
and Rural Affairs**

[REDACTED]

From: McFlynn, Sharon
Sent: 25 January 2023 10:05
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Draft for info- Memo from Permanent Secretary to All DAERA Staff - PwC External Independent Review and NICS Raising a Concern Framework

[REDACTED]

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Sharon

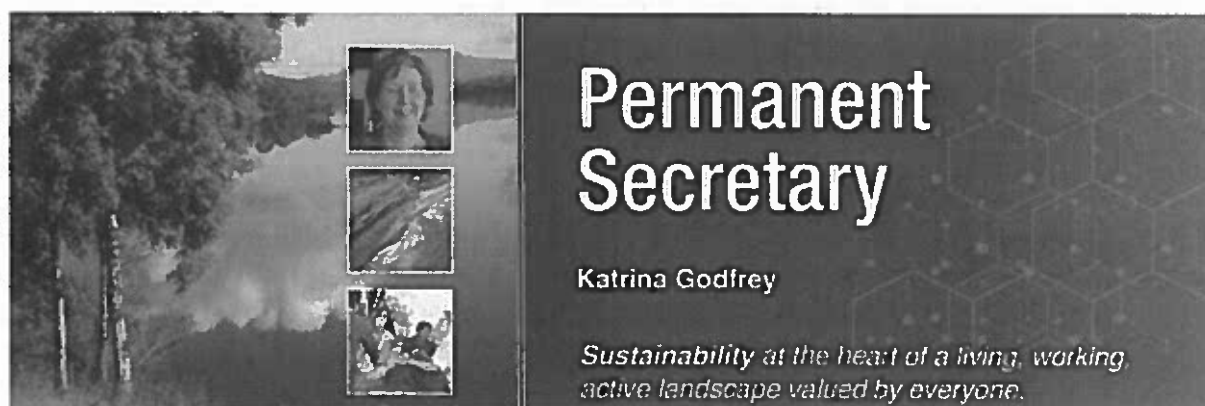
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To: McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>; [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
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Department of
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[REDACTED]

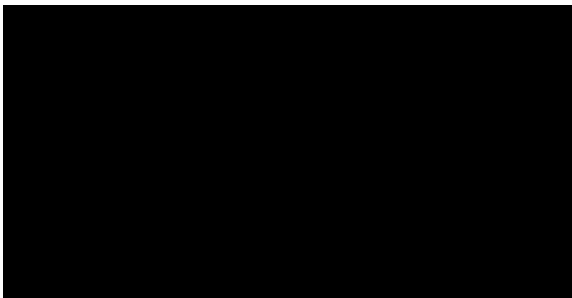
From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 25 January 2023 10:14
To: McFlynn, Sharon; [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Draft for info- Memo from Permanent Secretary to All DAERA Staff - PwC External Independent Review and NICS Raising a Concern Framework

Sharon

Just to note there was angst re this on publishing the ToR re getting the terminology correct which refer to Terms of reference published for External Independent Review | Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (daera-ni.gov.uk)

I don't want to confuse matters but for consistency should the PR be changed to reflect the language previously used?

Kind regards



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Department of
**Agriculture, Environment
and Rural Affairs**
www.daera-ni.gov.uk

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From: McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>
Sent: 25 January 2023 10:05
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Draft for info- Memo from Permanent Secretary to All DAERA Staff - PwC External Independent Review and NICS Raising a Concern Framework

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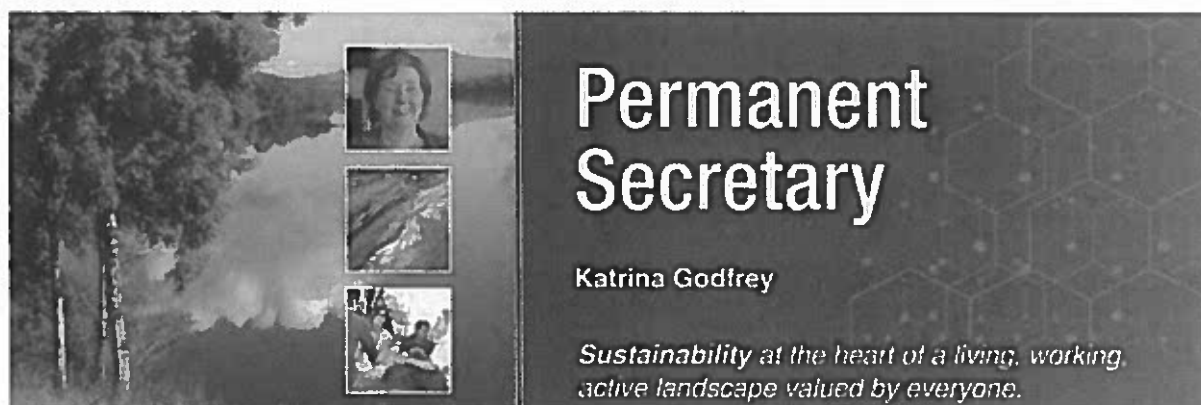
From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 25 January 2023 09:57
To: McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>; [REDACTED]

Cc: [REDACTED]
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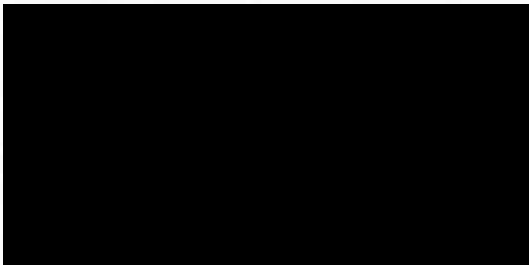
From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 25 January 2023 10:15
To: McFlynn, Sharon; [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: FW: Priority1 updating the webpage and issue with Phase 1 report pdf
Attachments: DAERA - External Review-Phase 1 Final Report.pdf

Sharon

Please see screen shot of the webpage for information- we will add the action plan once received.

[REDACTED] has noticed that the attached report header states *Strictly private and confidential* so we need a version with that removed.

Kind regards



For the latest information on DAERA visit www.daera-ni.gov.uk

External Independent Review - PWC Reports and NICS Action Plan

Date published: 25 January 2023

Today we have published a 33 point action plan to improve governance across the NI Civil Service. The plan is in response to findings from an independent external review undertaken by PwC to examine the handling of concerns and other matters raised in a case taken by a former DAERA employee.

Details

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The action plan and two reports setting out the findings from the review can be accessed in the documents below.

Documents



[Phase 1: Final Report](#)

PDF (498 KB)



[Phase 2: Lessons Learned and Recommendations](#)

PDF (155 KB)

[Help viewing documents](#)

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 25 January 2023 09:39

To: [REDACTED]

Cc: [REDACTED]

Subject: Priority1 updating the webpage

[REDACTED]

Sharon has confirmed that the target time for the web page to go live is **11.40 am**. In advance of this can you please make the following updates to the page:

1. Please include the following explanatory text:

Today we have published a 33 point action plan to improve governance across the NI Civil Service. The plan is in response to findings from an independent external review undertaken by PwC to examine the handling of concerns and other matters raised in a case taken by a former DAERA employee.

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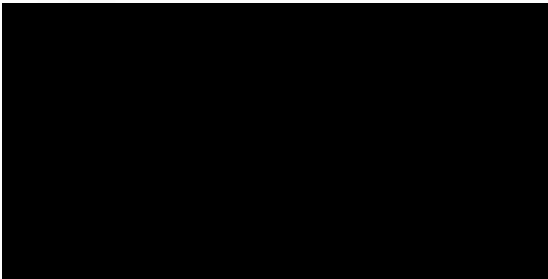
I will arrange with the web team to add the link to the page to the quick links section.

Once you have made the changes can you confirm please and provide me with a screen shot of the page? Appreciate there will still be an omission as we don't have the AP but it will give an indication of how it will look.

Any problems let me know.

Many thanks

Kind regards



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[REDACTED]

From: McFlynn, Sharon
Sent: 25 January 2023 10:21
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: FW: Action Plan - 25 January 2023
Attachments: Action Plan - 24 January 2023.DOCX

[REDACTED]

Final document attached. Over to you to work your magic. Thanks.

Sharon

From: Hughes, David (DoF) <David.Hughes@finance-ni.gov.uk>
Sent: 25 January 2023 10:19
To: Byrne, Jayne <Jayne.Byrne@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>
Cc: Godfrey, Katrina (DAERA – Perm Sec) <Katrina.Godfrey@daera-ni.gov.uk>; Gibson, Neil <Neil.Gibson@finance-ni.gov.uk>; Brady, Jayne <HOCS@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; Crilly, Louise <Louise.Crilly@finance-ni.gov.uk>; McCavigan, Tracey <Tracey.McCavigan@finance-ni.gov.uk>; McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>; Sayee, Natasha <Natasha.Sayee@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; McNabb, Chris <Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; McLaughlin, Mark (DOF) <Mark.McLaughlin@finance-ni.gov.uk>
Subject: Action Plan - 25 January 2023

Updated to reflect the procurement issue

[REDACTED]

From: McFlynn, Sharon
Sent: 25 January 2023 10:26
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Priority1 updating the webpage and issue with Phase 1 report pdf

[REDACTED]

Thanks for highlighting and thanks to [REDACTED] for spotting. I've asked for a copy to be forwarded ASAP.

Sharon

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 25 January 2023 10:15
To: McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>; [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: FW: Priority1 updating the webpage and issue with Phase 1 report pdf

Sharon

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Date published 25 January 2023

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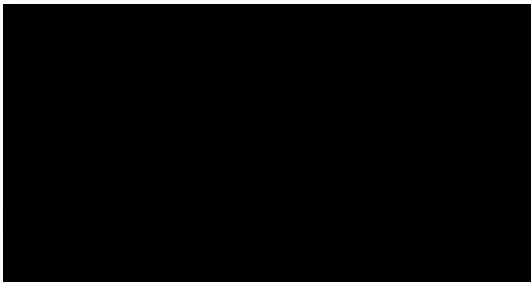
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[REDACTED]

From: McFlynn, Sharon
Sent: 25 January 2023 11:06
To: McNabb, Chris; Sayee, Natasha; McCavigan, Tracey; McLaughlin, Mark (DOF)
Subject: RE: Press release for PWC

Chris,

Noted. Thanks.

Sharon

From: McNabb, Chris <Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>
Sent: 25 January 2023 11:05
To: McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>; Sayee, Natasha <Natasha.Sayee@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; McCavigan, Tracey <Tracey.McCavigan@finance-ni.gov.uk>; McLaughlin, Mark (DOF) <Mark.McLaughlin@finance-ni.gov.uk>
Subject: RE: Press release for PWC

Sharon

On reflection, I'm making those changes for consistency on the PR

chris

From: McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>
Sent: 25 January 2023 10:18
To: Sayee, Natasha <Natasha.Sayee@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; McCavigan, Tracey <Tracey.McCavigan@finance-ni.gov.uk>; McNabb, Chris <Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; McLaughlin, Mark (DOF) <Mark.McLaughlin@finance-ni.gov.uk>
Subject: RE: Press release for PWC

Hi all,

I don't want to confuse matters but want to ensure we get the terminology right. The published ToR refers to the review as an external independent review (as opposed to an independent external review) [Terms of reference published for External Independent Review | Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs \(daera-ni.gov.uk\)](#)

For consistency should the PR be changed to reflect the language previously used?

Sharon

From: Sayee, Natasha <Natasha.Sayee@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>
Sent: 25 January 2023 09:50
To: McCavigan, Tracey <Tracey.McCavigan@finance-ni.gov.uk>; McNabb, Chris <Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; McLaughlin, Mark (DOF) <Mark.McLaughlin@finance-ni.gov.uk>; McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>
Subject: RE: Press release for PWC

Hi Tracey,

See version approved last night by Oversight Group. Tracey this is strictly embargoed until 1205hrs today. Please note this time could shift slightly.

Many thanks,

Natasha

From: McCavigan, Tracey <Tracey.McCavigan@finance-ni.gov.uk>

Sent: 25 January 2023 08:59

To: Sayee, Natasha <Natasha.Sayee@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; McNabb, Chris <Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; McLaughlin, Mark (DOF) <Mark.McLaughlin@finance-ni.gov.uk>; McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>

Subject: Press release for PWC

Just checking if the final version of the press release is ready so I can share with PWC ahead of publication as planned.

Happy to discuss

Tracey

Tracey McCavigan
Group Head of Internal Audit and Fraud Investigation Services
Hillview Buildings | Stormont Estate | Belfast | BT4 3TA
☎ (028) 91 279669 Ext: 59669

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 25 January 2023 11:09
To: McFlynn, Sharon
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Action Plan - 25 January 2023
Attachments: Action Plan in response to Independent External Review - Draft 2.pdf

Hi all

Please see attached updated full accessible PDF document which if all is good is ready for publishing.

Grateful if someone could run their eye over it all just to double check that I haven't missed anything before sending on.

Also, some of the links I don't have access/aren't live yet, grateful if these could also be double checked.

Any queries, let me know.

Cheers

[REDACTED]

From: McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>
Sent: 25 January 2023 10:21
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: FW: Action Plan - 25 January 2023

[REDACTED]

Final document attached. Over to you to work your magic. Thanks.

Sharon

From: Hughes, David (DoF) <David.Hughes@finance-ni.gov.uk>
Sent: 25 January 2023 10:19
To: Byrne, Jayne <Jayne.Byrne@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>
Cc: Godfrey, Katrina (DAERA – Perm Sec) <Katrina.Godfrey@daera-ni.gov.uk>; Gibson, Neil <Neil.Gibson@finance-ni.gov.uk>; Brady, Jayne <HOCS@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; Crilly, Louise <Louise.Crilly@finance-ni.gov.uk>; McCavigan, Tracey <Tracey.McCavigan@finance-ni.gov.uk>; McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>; Sayee, Natasha <Natasha.Sayee@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; McNabb, Chris <Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; McLaughlin, Mark (DOF) <Mark.McLaughlin@finance-ni.gov.uk>
Subject: Action Plan - 25 January 2023

Updated to reflect the procurement issue

[REDACTED]

From:

Sent:

[REDACTED]
25 January 2023 11:11

To:

Subject:

[REDACTED]
DRAFT potential questions 180123 (003)

Attachments:

DRAFT potential questions 180123 (003).docx

This is the latest version I have.

[REDACTED]

External Review Report publication

Report production

In May DAERA stated the review was expected to be completed by end of July 2022.

- When was the review completed?
- The final reports were received on January 9 2023

- When was this report first received by the NICS?
-
- When was the final report provided?
- The final reports were received on 09 January 2023.
-
- What were the steps in between?
-
- Why has it taken until now to publish the findings?
-
- How much was the report expected to cost?
- It was anticipated that the two reports would cost up to £107,500.
-
- How much did it cost?
- Final costs are currently being finalised and will be published in due course.
-
- If it was above projected cost – why?
- Final costs are currently being finalised and will be published in due course.
-
- HOCS said this was a personal priority – could this not have been handled much quicker?

- We received the final reports on January 9 2023 and are publishing them today.

- I accept that it took longer than originally anticipated to get to the point of having final reports but there are steps we all had to work through to get to this stage.

- My focus is delivering on the Action Plan so that the gaps identified in the report can be addressed.
-
- Do the NICS think this report meets the objectives and will make a difference?

Commented [MS1]: Has this figure been disclosed before?

Commented [DR2R1]: I recall emails around publishing the cost and there was an agreement to do so in due course. However, I'm not aware that this amount has been disclosed.

Commented [MS3]: These are the draft lines prepared by Chris McNabb for the list of top 20 questions for HOCS

Formatted: Indent: Left: 1.27 cm, No bullets or numbering

Commented [CC4]: TEO / DAERA to provide responses

Access to information to compile report

The report states:

"We were not responsible for identifying the relevant documentation, nor determining the completeness of the document population provided to us. In addition, we have not sought clarification from relevant officials on the actions taken by persons involved in the case. In the absence of doing so, it has not been possible to determine conclusively, the extent of compliance with relevant policies, procedures and processes."

"Subsequent to the issue of our draft report, however, the Review Oversight Group asked key parties 2 to provide a written response to it. We have considered the comments made, updating our report to correct any potential factual inaccuracies identified or to add additional clarity. We have also considered additional documentation located by the Departmental Solicitor's Office ("DSO") when asked to respond to our draft report."

- **Were the report authors given access to all the information they needed? DAERA /TEO to insert response**
- **Why was additional documentation only located by DSO at review stage? What assurance can you give that other documentation hasn't gone unlocated?**
The additional documentation referred to consisted of a small number of hand written consultation notes that had not been attached to the main hard copy file due to oversight arising from the unprecedented working practices required during the pandemic.

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The report states:

"As agreed, no stakeholder interviews were held as part of fieldwork, ... We are therefore unable to draw conclusions for all areas in scope?"

- **Who made the decision to not hold stakeholder interviewers and why? DAERA /TEO to insert response**

Formatted: Highlight

The report states:

"Following discussions with DoF, we have been instructed to omit from this report reference to any privileged information that we may have reviewed."

- **Why were the report authors asked to omit references to privileged information?**
The detail was fully considered by the review team in drawing their conclusions. Some information is covered by legal professional privilege and should not be included in a report for external publication.

The report states:

"We have not been asked to provide an opinion on the adequacy of action taken?"

- **Why were the report authors not asked to provide an opinion on the action taken in this case?**
The actions taken in this case have already been the subject of an Industrial Tribunal. This report is about identifying lessons learnt.

Report findings & associated actions

- **Has / will any disciplinary action be taken against anyone as a result of this report? DAERA to insert response**

- [REDACTED]

Commented [MS5]: Draft line prepared by Chris McNabb for the list of top 20 questions for HOCS.

What action will be taken to address the report findings?

An Action plan is published with the report, addressing both the specific recommendations of the PwC Lessons Learnt report and the wider systemic issues identified in the review.

Who will oversee this? TEO to insert response

- **Who ultimately owns the policies that should have been updated?**
Managing Public Money, the NICS Handbook and the Code of Ethics are the responsibility of the Department of Finance.

The DAERA Enforcement Policy and DAERA Whistleblowing Policy are the responsibility of that Department.

- **Has the report been shared with [REDACTED]? DAERA /TEO to insert response**
[DN: will it be shared at point of publication through legal teams?]
- **If not are there any plans to do so? DAERA /TEO to insert response**

Record keeping

The report states:

"In addition, more broadly, from the documentation reviewed, there appears to be a gap in notes of key meetings/consultations, or written follow-up notes by way of an alternative record of the meetings/consultations, which we would expect as a means of keeping an audit trail of key discussions and decisions."

- **The report indicates a lack of record keeping which was also raised as part of the RHI Inquiry. What action has been taken to address this following RHI?**

The requirement to keep accurate official records has been reinforced through a revision to the NICS Code of Ethics. The revised Code of Ethics includes an explicit requirement that staff must "keep accurate official records, including minutes of ministerial meetings, and handle information as openly and transparently as possible within the legal framework". A breach of the Code of Ethics may be treated as a disciplinary matter.

A data protection and information management hub has been launched on the NICS intranet with links to NICS Record Management Policy, Record Management Governance Framework, Email Management policy and guidance.

A records management training strategy for the NICS has been developed and a new e-learning package and guidance is being developed.

The report states:

"We also note that there is no evidence of a communication to witnesses in relation to the preservation of emails, notes or any documents that could be considered relevant to the claim."

- **Were witnesses advised to preserve emails, notes, documents?**
On receipt of the Tribunal claim form a letter was issued by DSO which included a requirement to preserve and provide all relevant documentation.

Policies and procedures

The report states:

"There is no evidence to demonstrate that three of the five policies had been reviewed within the last 9 years."

- **When were the Managing Public Money NI, NICS Code of Ethics, NICS HR Handbook, DAERA Whistleblowing Policies and Procedures and DAERA Enforcement Policy last reviewed?**
Managing Public Money – currently under review – this will be complete in April 2023
Code of Ethics – reviewed December 2021, published February 2022
NICS HR Handbook – under continuous Review. Discipline, Grievance, Dignity at Work, Recruitment and Special Leave policies have all been reviewed in the past year and a review of Sickness Absence is near completion.
DAERA to provide response on their policies

The DAERA Whistleblowing guidance was last reviewed in 2019. [The 2014 version of the Whistleblowing guidance was supplied to PwC as this was the version that was in place when the concerns were raised between February 2017 and February 2018]

The DAERA Enforcement Policy was last reviewed in 2014. As part of the Action Plan, this policy will be reviewed and updated, published on the DAERA website and communicated to DAERA staff and stakeholders by May 2023.

Commented [MS6]: This is the version on the DAERA website. It doesn't have an owner assigned to it so I have not been able to identify a policy lead to confirm this statement.

The report states:

"There is no guidance in place for line managers to help them assess where line of business concerns may require internal escalation to ensure they are being dealt with appropriately. Furthermore, escalated matters are not recorded in a central document."

- **What guidance is in place to help line managers?**
Guidance is available to managers on handling concerns that are raised with them.

[DN: DoF hasn't asked us to provide input to this answer but we may want to include the following as a supplementary bullet point:

The current DAERA Whistleblowing guidance advises that staff with concerns can approach their line manager, their next immediate line manager or alternatively their Head of Division. Guidance on escalation includes approaching the Finance Director, Corporate Services Director or Internal Audit. If a further escalation is required staff are advised that they can approach the Permanent Secretary or Deputy Secretary.]

Publication of the overarching NICS Raising a Concern Policy Framework and associated training will provide additional guidance for staff.

- **What procedures are in place to record escalated matters centrally?**
All departments currently keep a record of concerns raised with the department.

This practice is confirmed by the new Policy Framework, whether the concern is raised internally or externally, and whether it is raised explicitly as a concern or comes to be treated as a concern in due course.

Arrangements will be put in place for information about the number and type of concerns raised with departments to be reported to the NICS Board, allowing system-wide learning to be identified.

[DN: DoF hasn't asked us to provide input to this answer but we may want to include the following as a supplementary bullet point:

Within DAERA a Whistleblowing exercise is commissioned monthly across the Department to capture all new concerns raised. These concerns are reported to the Permanent Secretary and the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee.]

- **Are there plans to introduce training?**

Training on the Raising a Concern Policy Framework will be provided as part of the roll-out of the, between now and the Summer 2023.

DAERA will also provide bespoke training for all DAERA staff at Grade 7 and above on handling concerns by September 2023.

- **Who will do it and by when?**

DoF will provide training to designated officers and their teams. Training of others will be managed at a departmental level, reflecting the overarching arrangements for the NICS and the specific arrangements within the individual Department.

Whistleblowing procedures

The report states:

"...we note that none of the concerns were recorded in the relevant Departmental Whistleblowing Registers, including by the claimant?

- **Why were the concerns raised not recorded in the Departmental Whistleblowing Registers? DAERA to insert response,**

-

- **Is the current NICS whistleblowing policy sufficient and are appropriate procedures in place?**

Each Department has a whistleblowing policy. These were reviewed recently by the Internal Audit service. In addition, an overarching policy framework has been introduced to support Departments, to secure consistency, and to provide assurance to those who wish to raise a concern.

- **Are the policy and procedures easily accessible to all NICS staff?**

Whistleblowing policies are accessible on departments' intranet sites.

- **Are you confident that line managers know what to do?**

Many managers will be familiar with handling concerns that are raised with them, and for those who are less familiar with their department's policies, these are easily available, and there will be colleagues able to advise.

The publication of the Raising a Concern policy framework will be an opportunity to refresh colleagues' understanding of the policy, and for staff to be trained.

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DoF will provide training to designated officers and their teams. Training of others will be managed at a departmental level, reflecting the overarching arrangements for the NICS and the specific arrangements within the individual Department.

Training

The report states:

"We have not had visibility of all training that is provided or the completion rates but we are aware of the following training modules are available: A Framework for Ethical Decision Making, NICS Online Induction Programme on Equal Opportunities and Conduct, Public Interest Disclosure – Whistleblowing and Unconscious Bias."

- **What are the completion rates for these courses? Are these training courses mandatory?**
 - Framework for Ethical Decision Making – this is an online Resource which is available to all staff. Completion rates are recorded for face to face/virtual training courses and for e-learning training packages, as this is an online resource access data is not recorded.
 - Online Induction Programme on Equal Opportunities and Conduct – mandatory for new staff. Completion in 2021/22 year was 405 and in the 2022/23 year to date is 215. This is an e-Learning Induction Programme which includes training on Equal Opportunities and Conduct.
 - Public Interest Disclosure – Whistleblowing – not a mandatory course, completion in 2021/22 year was 366 and in the 2022/23 year to date is 287.
 - Unconscious Bias – was rolled out as a one off mandatory course to all staff. Members of the SCS received classroom based training in late 2016/early 2017. Staff at EO2 grade and above were to complete the e-Learning package which was rolled out in January 2022. Currently 79.7% of NICS staff are certified, i.e. have completed the package. DfC are the only Department who have made this mandatory for all new staff and was rolled out via the LInKS learning management system in January 2022.

DSO

Merits of the claim

The report states:

"From the documentation we have reviewed, we have not seen any evidence of advice from the legal team on the merits of claim."

"We note that Counsel's fee note dated 2 July 2020 does not include reference to time spend advising or drafting a merits of claim note."

- **Did DSO set out the merits of the claim?**

Oral advice was provided on the merits of the claim by Counsel at meetings with DAERA held on 7 October 2019, 24 January 2020 and 4 February 2020.
- **Would DSO normally set out the merits of the claim?**

In employment litigation cases DSO would where practicable and appropriate provide advice on the merits of a claim to NICSHR/the client Department.

Appealing the case

The report states:

"The notice of appeal was lodged by DSO on 2 November 2021. Based on the initial documentation we reviewed, in addition to that subsequently provided, it remains unclear who made the decision to do so."

"In regard to the initial decision to appeal, there is a paucity of documentation currently available to support this decision and therefore to determine whether it was a transparent process, such as would be required by Managing Public Money Northern Ireland."

- **Who made the decision to appeal the case?**
The decision to appeal was made by DAERA officials during a meeting with DSO and Counsel held on 28th September 2021.
- **Did they have the necessary authority?**
Individual departments have different delegated approval limits. It is the responsibility of the Department seeking legal representation to have the necessary approvals in place.
- **Was the decision maker conflicted?**
DAERA to insert response
As stated in the report, it remains unclear who made the decision to appeal.

Commented [MS7]: The report states it remains unclear who made the decision. This line is contrary to that finding.

The report states:

"It appears that the former Permanent Secretary of DAERA was not aware of the decision to appeal (but may retrospectively have agreed with the decision to do so). Therefore an established approval process does not appear to have been followed."

- **Was an established approval process followed? If not, why not?**
DAERA to insert response
As stated in the report, an established approval process does not appear to have been followed.

Record keeping

The report states:

"We note, however, that in its written response to our draft report, DSO stated that 'oral advice on the merits was given [by Counsel in a meeting with the Chief Veterinary Officer on 7 October 2019] ...although this advice is not recorded in the notes of the meeting?'"

- **Why was oral advice on the merits of the case not recorded in notes of the meeting?**
During consultations both solicitor and counsel will engage with the client, with a primary focus on understanding the issues and providing advice. It is not always possible for the solicitor to take a verbatim record of all discussions which take place during these meetings.
- **Is record keeping being reviewed and or monitored NICs wide?**
The NICS Code of Ethics requires staff to keep accurate records. A breach of the Code of Ethics may be treated as a disciplinary matter.

- One recommendation [in relation recording/deleting movements of cattle] remains outstanding. Implementation will require an amendment to domestic legislation due to application of the EU Animal Health Law in Northern Ireland. In the absence of a Minister, this matter is currently being considered under the Executive Formation etc Act 2022 and accompanying guidance. Once that process is complete, officials will seek legal advice to ensure the policy is in full compliance with the legislation.

Commented [MS9]: Neal included full details of the recommendation but I have taken them out. Posted below FYI

"Rec 4.1 Recording / Deleting Movements of Cattle

"Management should develop:

- a) A policy to deal with the issue of deletions and amendments of cattle movement records; seeking appropriate legal advice to ensure it is fully compliant with all relevant legislation;
- b) Instructions/guidance for markets around deletion/amendment of moves to help achieve compliance with this policy; and
- c) Appropriate checks over markets to ensure they are complying with policy/legislative requirements.

"Implementation of the recommendation will require an amendment to domestic legislation due to application of the EU Animal Health Law in Northern Ireland. In the absence of a Minister, this matter is currently being considered under the Executive Formation etc Act 2022 and accompanying guidance. Once that process is complete, officials will seek legal advice to ensure the policy is in full compliance with the legislation."

[REDACTED]

From: McFlynn, Sharon
Sent: 25 January 2023 11:17
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: RE: Priority1 updating the webpage and issue with Phase 1 report pdf
Attachments: DAERA External Review_Phase 1 Final Report_.pdf

Folks,

Updated doc attached.

Sharon

From: McFlynn, Sharon
Sent: 25 January 2023 10:26
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: CM: RE: Priority1 updating the webpage and issue with Phase 1 report pdf

[REDACTED]

Thanks for highlighting and thanks to [REDACTED] for spotting. I've asked for a copy to be forwarded ASAP.

Sharon

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 25 January 2023 10:15
To: McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk> [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: FW: Priority1 updating the webpage and issue with Phase 1 report pdf

Sharon

Please see screen shot of the webpage for information- we will add the action plan once received.

[REDACTED] has noticed that the attached report header states *Strictly private and confidential* so we need a version with that removed.

Kind regards

[REDACTED]

External Independent Review - PWC Reports and NICS Action Plan

Date published 25 January 2023

Today we have published a 33 point action plan to improve governance across the NI Civil Service. The plan is in response to findings from an independent external review undertaken by PwC to examine the handling of concerns and other matters raised in a case taken by a former DAERA employee.

Details

In May 2022, the Head of the Civil Service and the Permanent Secretaries of the Departments of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA), the Department of Finance (DoF), jointly commissioned an Independent External Review into the handling of concerns and other serious matters, raised in a case taken by a former DAERA employee.

The action plan and two reports setting out the findings from the review can be accessed in the documents below.

Documents



[Phase 1: Final Report](#)

PDF (498 KB)



[Phase 2: Lessons Learned and Recommendations](#)

PDF (155 KB)

[Help viewing documents](#)

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 25 January 2023 09:39

To: [REDACTED]

Cc: [REDACTED]

Subject: Priority1 updating the webpage

Paul

Sharon has confirmed that the target time for the web page to go live is **11.40 am**. In advance of this can you please make the following updates to the page:

1. Please include the following explanatory text:

Today we have published a 33 point action plan to improve governance across the NI Civil Service. The plan is in response to findings from an independent external review undertaken by

PwC to examine the handling of concerns and other matters raised in a case taken by a former DAERA employee.

In May 2022, the Head of the Civil Service and the Permanent Secretaries for the Departments of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) and the Department of Finance (DoF), jointly commissioned an Independent External Review into the handling of concerns and other serious matters raised in a case taken by a former DAERA employee.

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2. Please then add the three reports in the following order-
 - (i) Phase 1 Final Report;
 - (ii) Phase 2:Lessons Learned and Recommendations report; and
 - (iii) Action Plan in response to Independent External Review.The two PwC Reports are attached and, as per above, the action plan to follow.

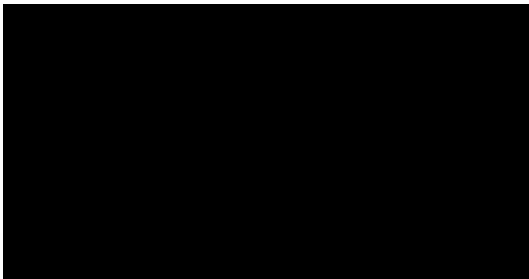
I will arrange with the web team to add the link to the page to the quick links section.

Once you have made the changes can you confirm please and provide me with a screen shot of the page? Appreciate there will still be an omission as we don't have the AP but it will give an indication of how it will look.

Any problems let me know.

Many thanks

Kind regards



For the latest information on DAERA visit www.daera-ni.gov.uk



Sustainability at the heart of a living, working, active landscape valued by everyone.

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 25 January 2023 11:21
To: McFlynn, Sharon [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: RE: Priority1 updating the webpage and issue with Phase 1 report pdf

Hi all

I have now replaced this on the draft web page.

[REDACTED]

From: McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>
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Folks,

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Date published 25 January 2023

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In May 2022, the Head of the Civil Service and the Permanent Secretaries of the Departments of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DEARA) and the Department of Finance (DoF), jointly commissioned an Independent External Review into the handling of concerns and other serious matters, raised in a case taken by a former DAERA employee.

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[REDACTED]

For the latest information on DAERA visit www.daera-ni.gov.uk

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 25 January 2023 11:25
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: FW: Action Plan - 25 January 2023
Attachments: Action Plan in response to Independent External Review - Draft 2.pdf

Can you QUICKLY proof this for any clangers

[REDACTED]

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Sent: 25 January 2023 11:09
To: McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Action Plan - 25 January 2023

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Grateful if someone could run their eye over it all just to double check that I haven't missed anything before sending on.

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Any queries, let me know.

Cheers

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To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: FW: Action Plan - 25 January 2023

[REDACTED]

Final document attached. Over to you to work your magic. Thanks.

Sharon

From: Hughes, David (DoF) <David.Hughes@finance-ni.gov.uk>
Sent: 25 January 2023 10:19
To: Byrne, Jayne <Jayne.Byrne@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>
Cc: Godfrey, Katrina (DAERA – Perm Sec) <Katrina.Godfrey@daera-ni.gov.uk>; Gibson, Neil <Neil.Gibson@finance-ni.gov.uk>; Brady, Jayne <HOCS@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; Crilly, Louise <Louise.Crilly@finance-ni.gov.uk>; McCavigan, Tracey <Tracey.McCavigan@finance-ni.gov.uk>; McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>; Sayee, Natasha <Natasha.Sayee@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; McNabb, Chris <Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-

ni.gov.uk>; McLaughlin, Mark (DOF) <Mark.McLaughlin@finance-ni.gov.uk>

Subject: Action Plan - 25 January 2023

Updated to reflect the procurement issue

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 25 January 2023 11:43
To: Sayee, Natasha; McFlynn, Sharon; McNabb, Chris; McLaughlin, Mark (DOF); [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: All Comms Docs

Hi all

Raising a Concern Framework now live [Raising a Concern Policy Framework | Department of Finance \(finance-ni.gov.uk\)](#)

[REDACTED] staff comms can't issue until DAERA docs are live – can you advise when they are?

Thanks
[REDACTED]

From: Sayee, Natasha <Natasha.Sayee@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>
Sent: 23 January 2023 14:03
To: McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>; McNabb, Chris <Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; McLaughlin, Mark (DOF) <Mark.McLaughlin@finance-ni.gov.uk>; [REDACTED]
Cc: Stewart, Chris (TEO) <chris.stewart@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; Byrne, Jayne <Jayne.Byrne@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>
Subject: All Comms Docs

Hi All,

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Q&A doc [Q&A DOCUMENT 18-01-23](#)

Comms Output Tracker  [COMMS OUTPUT TRACKER.docx](#) - as you have progressed your item please mark 'complete' – allowing next step to move forward

Many thanks all,

Natasha

Natasha Sayee (she/her)
Director of Marketing, Outreach & Internal Communications

The Executive Office
Stormont Castle

Tel: ☎ 028 90 378 202 (Internal extension 88202) / 07775017210

E-mail: ✉ natasha.sayee@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk

[REDACTED]

From: McFlynn, Sharon
Sent: 25 January 2023 11:43
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: FW: Memo from the Permanent Secretary
Attachments: Memo from the Permanent Secretary.pdf

FYI

S

From: DAERA PermSec <perm.sec@daera-ni.gov.uk>
Sent: 25 January 2023 11:42
To: DAERA Central Services Deputy Secretary <csdeputysecretary@daera-ni.gov.uk>; Fulton, Norman <Norman.Fulton@daera-ni.gov.uk>; [REDACTED] Donnelly, Paul (DAERA) <Paul.Donnelly@daera-ni.gov.uk>; Reid, David (DAERA RAFSETBOR) <DavidP.Reid@daera-ni.gov.uk>; Teague, Tracey <Tracey.Teague@daera-ni.gov.uk>; Downey, Roger <Roger.Downey@daera-ni.gov.uk>; Clarke, Kathryn (DAERA) <Kathryn.Clarke@daera-ni.gov.uk>; [REDACTED]
Cc: DAERA PermSec <perm.sec@daera-ni.gov.uk>; McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>; O'Boyle, John Joe <johnjoe.oboyle@daera-ni.gov.uk>; [REDACTED]
Subject: Memo from the Permanent Secretary

Good Morning,

Please find attached memo from Katrina.

Regards,

[REDACTED]



Department of
**Agriculture, Environment
and Rural Affairs**
www.daera-ni.gov.uk

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living, working, active landscape
valued by everyone.*

All e-mails and attachments issued by the Office of the Permanent Secretary must be filed appropriately by the responsible business area. The Office does not keep official records of such correspondence.

From the Permanent Secretary
Katrina Godfrey



Department of

**Agriculture, Environment
and Rural Affairs**

www.daera-ni.gov.uk

Dundonald House
Upper Newtownards Road
Ballymiscaw
Belfast BT4 3SB
Tel: 028 905 24608

Email: perm.sec@daera-ni.gov.uk

From: Katrina Godfrey

Date: 25 January 2023

To: DAERA Departmental Board

cc: Sharon McFlynn

John Joe O'Boyle

PWC EXTERNAL REVIEW - REPORTS AND ACTION PLAN

1. As many of you will be aware, we will publish later today the reports from the external review carried out by PwC following the completion of the tribunal processes for the case involving [REDACTED] and an action plan designed to address the recommendations flowing from the review. We are also publishing a new NICS Raising a Concern Policy Framework which sets out for departments, for the first time, a single approach to dealing with concerns raised.
2. Notes to all NICS staff from the Head of the Civil Service and to all DAERA staff from me will issue shortly and these will contain the links to the reports, action plan and policy framework.
3. Moving swiftly towards implementation of the DAERA actions in the plan is a key priority for me and I have asked Brian and Fiona to lead the process of commissioning the work needed to deliver those actions and setting up the necessary reporting mechanisms so that progress can be tracked and reported, both internally and, on a quarterly basis, publicly. They will work with Paul and John Joe to ensure that the department's two agencies also have the necessary arrangements in place to deliver actions and to scrutinise and report progress and that there is a joined up approach across the department.
4. It is important, given the nature of my responsibilities as Departmental Accounting Officer, that I can have assurance on progress in delivering the action plan. Our Departmental

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If you are deaf or have a hearing difficulty you can contact the Department via the Next Generation Text Relay Service by dialling 18001 + telephone number.



**INVESTORS
IN PEOPLE**

Audit and Risk Assurance Committee will therefore play a key role in applying scrutiny and challenge in that regard and I am very grateful to Sharon for her support as the Chair of DARAC and for the role that DARAC will play in reviewing progress in delivering all of the actions that fall to, or are relevant to, DAERA. I also intend that the 2023-24 Internal Audit work programme will include, as a priority piece of work, a validation exercise to confirm actions reported as delivered.

5. We already have good reporting mechanisms from [REDACTED] as DARAC chair to the Departmental Board and will be able to discuss further as a Board when we meet next month. In the meantime, I would like to say thank you to board colleagues for your support as we reflect on the reports, deliver the actions and apply any learning. Our goal here must be to use the experience and learning from this case as an opportunity to improve how we do things; to double down on the importance of good record-keeping; and to build further the confidence of our staff and customers that, when concerns are raised, our focus is on listening, acting and improving.



KATRINA GODFREY
PERMANENT SECRETARY

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If you are deaf or have a hearing difficulty you can contact the Department via the Next Generation Text Relay Service by dialling 18001 + telephone number.



[REDACTED]

From: McFlynn, Sharon
Sent: 25 January 2023 11:44
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: FW: All Comms Docs

All,

FYI

S

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 25 January 2023 11:43
To: Sayee, Natasha <Natasha.Sayee@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>; McNabb, Chris <Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; McLaughlin, Mark (DOF) <Mark.McLaughlin@finance-ni.gov.uk>; [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: All Comms Docs

Hi all

Raising a Concern Framework now live [Raising a Concern Policy Framework | Department of Finance \(finance-ni.gov.uk\)](#)

[REDACTED] - staff comms can't issue until DAERA docs are live – can you advise when they are?


Thanks
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

From: Sayee, Natasha <Natasha.Sayee@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>
Sent: 23 January 2023 14:03
To: McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>; McNabb, Chris <Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; McLaughlin, Mark (DOF) <Mark.McLaughlin@finance-ni.gov.uk>; [REDACTED]
Cc: Stewart, Chris (TEO) <chris.stewart@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; Byrne, Jayne <Jayne.Byrne@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>
Subject: All Comms Docs

Hi All,

Just a reminder:

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Q&A doc [Q&A DOCUMENT 18-01-23](#)

Comms Output Tracker  [COMMS OUTPUT TRACKER.docx](#) - as you have progressed your item please mark 'complete' – allowing next step to move forward

Many thanks all,

Natasha

Natasha Sayee (she/her)
Director of Marketing, Outreach & Internal Communications

The Executive Office
Stormont Castle
Tel: ☎ 028 90 378 202 (Internal extension 88202) / 07775017210
E-mail: ✉ natasha.sayee@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 25 January 2023 11:46
To: [REDACTED] McFlynn, Sharon
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Action Plan - 25 January 2023
Attachments: Action Plan in response to Independent External Review - LR comments.pdf

[REDACTED]

I have 3 additional changes marked as comments in the attached.

Kind regards

[REDACTED]

For the latest information on DAERA visit www.daera-ni.gov.uk



Department of
**Agriculture, Environment
and Rural Affairs**
www.daera-ni.gov.uk

*Sustainability at the heart of a
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valued by everyone.*

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 25 January 2023 11:16
To: McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Action Plan - 25 January 2023

No probs, I will hold off on resending for a few mins to let you all check.

[REDACTED]

From: McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>
Sent: 25 January 2023 11:15
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Action Plan - 25 January 2023

[REDACTED]

As discussed Independent external Review needs changed to External Independent Review in title, headers and throughout the report. We'll proof now for anything else.

Sharon

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 25 January 2023 11:09
To: McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Action Plan - 25 January 2023

Hi all

Please see attached updated full accessible PDF document which if all is good is ready for publishing.

Grateful if someone could run their eye over it all just to double check that I haven't missed anything before sending on.

Also, some of the links I don't have access/aren't live yet, grateful if these could also be double checked.

Any queries, let me know.

Cheers

[REDACTED]

From: McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>
Sent: 25 January 2023 10:21
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: FW: Action Plan - 25 January 2023

[REDACTED]

Final document attached. Over to you to work your magic. Thanks.

Sharon

From: Hughes, David (DoF) <David.Hughes@finance-ni.gov.uk>
Sent: 25 January 2023 10:19
To: Byrne, Jayne <Jayne.Byrne@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>
Cc: Godfrey, Katrina (DAERA – Perm Sec) <Katrina.Godfrey@daera-ni.gov.uk>; Gibson, Neil <Neil.Gibson@finance-ni.gov.uk>; Brady, Jayne <HOCS@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; Crilly, Louise <Louise.Crilly@finance-ni.gov.uk>; McCavigan, Tracey <Tracey.McCavigan@finance-ni.gov.uk>; McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>; Sayee, Natasha <Natasha.Sayee@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; McNabb, Chris <Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; McLaughlin, Mark (DOF) <Mark.McLaughlin@finance-ni.gov.uk>
Subject: Action Plan - 25 January 2023

Updated to reflect the procurement issue

[REDACTED]

From: Sayee, Natasha
Sent: 25 January 2023 11:49
To: [REDACTED] McFlynn, Sharon; McNabb, Chris; McLaughlin, Mark (DOF);
[REDACTED]
Subject: RE: All Comms Docs

Hi All,

Been in touch with Sharon – she will confirm when items are live. They are doing best.

Sorry to [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] for any inconvenience.

Kind regards,

Natasha

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 25 January 2023 11:43
To: Sayee, Natasha <Natasha.Sayee@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>; McNabb, Chris <Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; McLaughlin, Mark (DOF) <Mark.McLaughlin@finance-ni.gov.uk>; [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: All Comms Docs

Hi all

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[REDACTED] staff comms can't issue until DAERA docs are live – can you advise when they are?

Thanks
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

From: Sayee, Natasha <Natasha.Sayee@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>
Sent: 23 January 2023 14:03
To: McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>; McNabb, Chris <Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; McLaughlin, Mark (DOF) <Mark.McLaughlin@finance-ni.gov.uk>; [REDACTED]
Cc: Stewart, Chris (TEO) <chris.stewart@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; Byrne, Jayne <Jayne.Byrne@executiveoffice-

ni.gov.uk>

Subject: All Comms Docs

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Q&A doc [Q&A DOCUMENT 18-01-23](#)

Comms Output Tracker  [COMMS OUTPUT TRACKER.docx](#) - as you have progressed your item please mark 'complete' – allowing next step to move forward

Many thanks all,

Natasha

Natasha Sayee (she/her)

Director of Marketing, Outreach & Internal Communications

The Executive Office

Stormont Castle

Tel: ☎ 028 90 378 202 (Internal extension 88202) / 07775017210

E-mail: ✉ natasha.sayee@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 25 January 2023 11:50
To: Sayee, Natasha; McFlynn, Sharon; McNabb, Chris; McLaughlin, Mark (DOF); [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: All Comms Docs

No problem at all

We will go live once available.

[REDACTED]

From: Sayee, Natasha <Natasha.Sayee@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>
Sent: 25 January 2023 11:49
To: [REDACTED]; McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>; McNabb, Chris <Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; McLaughlin, Mark (DOF) <Mark.McLaughlin@finance-ni.gov.uk>; [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: All Comms Docs

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Sorry to [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] for any inconvenience.

Kind regards,

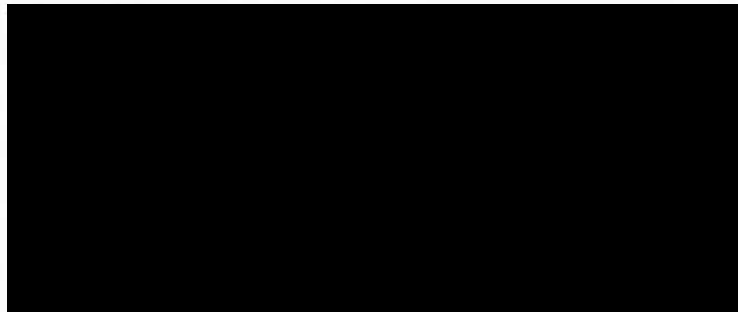
Natasha

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 25 January 2023 11:43
To: Sayee, Natasha <Natasha.Sayee@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>; McNabb, Chris <Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; McLaughlin, Mark (DOF) <Mark.McLaughlin@finance-ni.gov.uk>; [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: All Comms Docs

Hi all

██████████ staff comms can't issue until DAERA docs are live – can you advise when they are?

Thanks



From: Sayee, Natasha <Natasha.Sayee@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>

Sent: 23 January 2023 14:03

To: McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>; McNabb, Chris <Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; McLaughlin, Mark (DOF) <Mark.McLaughlin@finance-ni.gov.uk>; ██████████

Cc: Stewart, Chris (TEO) <chris.stewart@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; Byrne, Jayne <Jayne.Byrne@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>

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Many thanks all,

Natasha

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Director of Marketing, Outreach & Internal Communications

The Executive Office
Stormont Castle

Tel: ☎ 028 90 378 202 (Internal extension 88202) / 07775017210

E-mail: ✉ natasha.sayee@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk

[REDACTED]

From: McNabb, Chris
Sent: 25 January 2023 11:53
To: [REDACTED] Sayee, Natasha; McFlynn, Sharon; McLaughlin, Mark (DOF);
[REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: All Comms Docs

All

We'll not issue release until I hear from you that it is good to go

Likely to slip to a bit after 12 now

Chris

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 25 January 2023 11:50
To: Sayee, Natasha <Natasha.Sayee@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>; McNabb, Chris <Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; McLaughlin, Mark (DOF) <Mark.McLaughlin@finance-ni.gov.uk>; [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
Subject: RE: All Comms Docs

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[REDACTED]

From: Sayee, Natasha <Natasha.Sayee@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>
Sent: 25 January 2023 11:49
To: [REDACTED] McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>;
McNabb, Chris <Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; McLaughlin, Mark (DOF) <Mark.McLaughlin@finance-ni.gov.uk>; [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
Subject: RE: All Comms Docs

Hi All,

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Sorry to [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] for any inconvenience.

Kind regards,

Natasha

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Sent: 25 January 2023 11:43

To: Sayee, Natasha <Natasha.Sayee@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>; McNabb, Chris <Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; McLaughlin, Mark (DOF) <Mark.McLaughlin@finance-ni.gov.uk>; [REDACTED]

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Sent: 23 January 2023 14:03

To: McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>; McNabb, Chris <Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; McLaughlin, Mark (DOF) <Mark.McLaughlin@finance-ni.gov.uk>; [REDACTED]

Cc: Stewart, Chris (TEO) <chris.stewart@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; Byrne, Jayne <Jayne.Byrne@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>

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Natasha

Natasha Sayee (she/her)
Director of Marketing, Outreach & Internal Communications

The Executive Office
Stormont Castle

Tel: ☎ 028 90 378 202 (Internal extension 88202) / 07775017210

E-mail: ✉ natasha.sayee@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 25 January 2023 11:53
To: [REDACTED] McFlynn, Sharon
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Action Plan - 25 January 2023
Attachments: Action Plan in response to External Independent Review - January 2023.pdf

Hi all

See attached with all updates done, if all is good, this version is suitable for publishing.

Cheers

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 25 January 2023 11:46
To: [REDACTED] McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Action Plan - 25 January 2023

[REDACTED]

I have 3 additional changes marked as comments in the attached.

Kind regards

[REDACTED]

For the latest information on DAERA visit www.daera-ni.gov.uk



Sustainability at the heart of a living, working, active landscape valued by everyone.

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 25 January 2023 11:16
To: McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Action Plan - 25 January 2023

No probs, I will hold off on resending for a few mins to let you all check.

[REDACTED]

From: McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>
Sent: 25 January 2023 11:15
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Action Plan - 25 January 2023

[REDACTED]

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Sharon

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 25 January 2023 11:09
To: McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Action Plan - 25 January 2023

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From: McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>
Sent: 25 January 2023 10:21
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Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: FW: Action Plan - 25 January 2023

[REDACTED]

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Sent: 25 January 2023 10:19
To: Byrne, Jayne <Jayne.Byrne@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>
Cc: Godfrey, Katrina (DAERA – Perm Sec) <Katrina.Godfrey@daera-ni.gov.uk>; Gibson, Neil <Neil.Gibson@finance-ni.gov.uk>

ni.gov.uk>; Brady, Jayne <HOCS@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; Crilly, Louise <Louise.Crilly@finance-ni.gov.uk>;
McCavigan, Tracey <Tracey.McCavigan@finance-ni.gov.uk>; McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>;
Sayee, Natasha <Natasha.Sayee@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; McNabb, Chris <Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>;
McLaughlin, Mark (DOF) <Mark.McLaughlin@finance-ni.gov.uk>
Subject: Action Plan - 25 January 2023

Updated to reflect the procurement issue

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 25 January 2023 12:03
To: McNabb, Chris; [REDACTED] Sayee, Natasha; McFlynn, Sharon; McLaughlin, Mark (DOF); [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: All Comms Docs

All of our comms are now live on the website.

Thanks

[REDACTED]

From: McNabb, Chris <Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>
Sent: 25 January 2023 11:53
To: [REDACTED] Sayee, Natasha <Natasha.Sayee@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>; McLaughlin, Mark (DOF) <Mark.McLaughlin@finance-ni.gov.uk>; [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Cc: [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
Subject: RE: All Comms Docs

All

We'll not issue release until I hear from you that it is good to go

Likely to slip to a bit after 12 now

Chris

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 25 January 2023 11:50
To: Sayee, Natasha <Natasha.Sayee@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>; McNabb, Chris <Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; McLaughlin, Mark (DOF) <Mark.McLaughlin@finance-ni.gov.uk>; [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Subject: RE: All Comms Docs

No problem at all

We will go live once available.

[REDACTED]

[Redacted]

From: Sayee, Natasha <Natasha.Sayee@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>

Sent: 25 January 2023 11:49

To: [Redacted] McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>; McNabb, Chris <Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; McLaughlin, Mark (DOF) <Mark.McLaughlin@finance-ni.gov.uk>; [Redacted]

Subject: RE: All Comms Docs

Hi All,

Been in touch with Sharon – she will confirm when items are live. They are doing best.

Sorry to [Redacted] and [Redacted] for any inconvenience.

Kind regards,

Natasha

From: [Redacted]

Sent: 25 January 2023 11:43

To: Sayee, Natasha <Natasha.Sayee@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>; McNabb, Chris <Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; McLaughlin, Mark (DOF) <Mark.McLaughlin@finance-ni.gov.uk>; [Redacted]

Subject: RE: All Comms Docs

Hi all

Raising a Concern Framework now live [Raising a Concern Policy Framework | Department of Finance \(finance-ni.gov.uk\)](#)

[Redacted] staff comms can't issue until DAERA docs are live – can you advise when they are?

Thanks

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

From: Sayee, Natasha <Natasha.Sayee@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>

Sent: 23 January 2023 14:03

To: McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>; McNabb, Chris <Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; McLaughlin, Mark (DOF) <Mark.McLaughlin@finance-ni.gov.uk>; Conlan, Ciarraí

[REDACTED]
Cc: Stewart, Chris (TEO) <chris.stewart@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; Byrne, Jayne <Jayne.Byrne@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>

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Q&A doc [Q&A DOCUMENT 18-01-23](#)

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Many thanks all,

Natasha

Natasha Sayee (she/her)
Director of Marketing, Outreach & Internal Communications

The Executive Office
Stormont Castle

Tel: ☎ 028 90 378 202 (Internal extension 88202) / 07775017210

E-mail: ✉ natasha.sayee@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 25 January 2023 12:05
To: McFlynn, Sharon; [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: All Comms Docs

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HoCs note
+10mins Katrina's note
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Kind regards

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Sent: 25 January 2023 11:44
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Cc: [REDACTED]
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Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: All Comms Docs

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E-mail: ✉ natasha.sayee@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk

[REDACTED]

From: NICS No_Reply Corporate Communications
Sent: 25 January 2023 12:07
Subject: Message from Head of Civil Service - Action plan published in response to external review

Dear Colleagues,

A 33-point action plan to improve governance across the NI Civil Service has been published today.

The plan is in response to findings from an external independent review undertaken by PwC, to examine the handling of concerns and other matters, raised in a case taken by a former DAERA employee.

Commissioned by DAERA on behalf of the Department's Permanent Secretary Katrina Godfrey, the Department of Finance Permanent Secretary Neil Gibson and myself as the Head of the Civil Service, the reports and action plan are being shared with staff, trade unions, MLAs and the NI Audit Office.

Together, we welcome the findings in the reports and as a Service are committed to learning from this review and addressing the issues identified. We remain on a journey of continuous improvement and the action plan sets out our response to the review recommendations.

We will implement each of the 33 actions so that there is greater confidence that we are delivering the best possible service for you our workforce and the public.

The External Review highlights issues in the recording and escalating of concerns, the application of some policies and the way in which employment related legal cases are managed by the organisation.

Concerns must always be raised, listened to and acted upon in the proper manner. It is critical that every civil servant maintains proper records and that all policies are up-to-date. These are the foundations of good governance.

A new NICS Raising a Concern Policy Framework has also been published. These guidelines for Departments set out, for the first time, a single, overarching approach to dealing with concerns raised.

A refreshed Civil Service Code of Ethics will be embedded into performance management processes, which includes the obligation on all civil servants to keep proper records.

Neither PwC's Lessons learned and recommendations report, nor the action plan, addresses the actions of individual civil servants. The NI Civil Service, as a responsible employer, does not comment on internal employment related matters, which may or may not arise.

The Permanent Secretaries of DAERA and DoF will monitor the status of actions and have already asked their respective Departmental Audit Committees to scrutinise progress. Quarterly progress reports will be published on their respective websites.

The review also identifies areas for improvement in the culture of the service. Real success requires behavioural and cultural change and work is already underway to empower and support you in effectively delivering the work of government and to develop a more inclusive workplace culture.

While the review and action plan focus on how we can improve, it is important not to lose sight of the excellent work of civil servants who deliver for the public here.

I hope that none of this detracts from the pride you should rightly take in the very important work you do.

Thank you for your support,

Jayne Brady

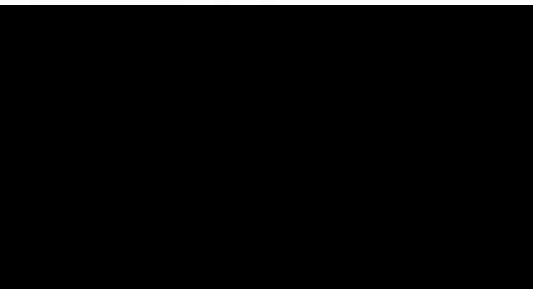
JAYNE BRADY
Head of the Northern Ireland Civil Service

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 25 January 2023 12:08
To: McFlynn, Sharon; [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: All Comms Docs

No problem will do.

Kind regards



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Sent: 25 January 2023 12:07
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: All Comms Docs

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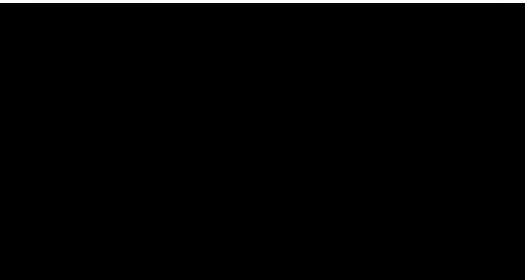
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To: [REDACTED]

Cc: [REDACTED]
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Stormont Castle
Tel: ☎ 028 90 378 202 (Internal extension 88202) / 07775017210

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 25 January 2023 12:09
To: McFlynn, Sharon; [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
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To: McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>; [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
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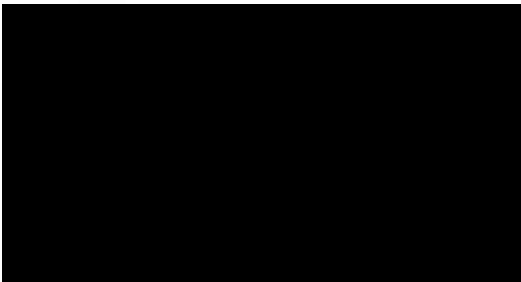
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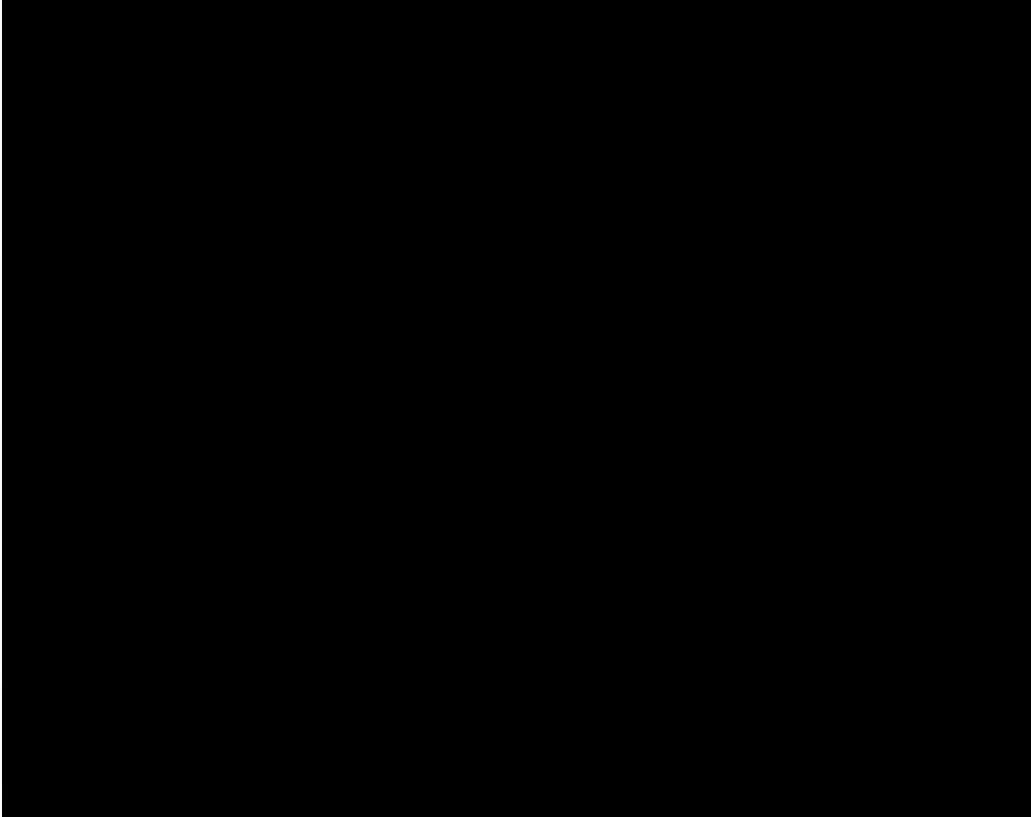
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E-mail: ✉ natasha.sayee@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk

[REDACTED]

From: Brady, Jayne
Sent: 25 January 2023 12:18
To:



Subject: Letter from Jayne Brady - Publication of action plan in response to internal review
Attachments: Jayne Brady to MLAs - publication of action plan in response to external review.docx

Dear Members,

I attach a letter from Jayne Brady, Head of the Northern Ireland Civil Service for your attention.

Kind regards,

Roisin Coleman, for Jayne Brady



The
Executive Office

www.executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk

Jayne Brady
Head of the Civil Service
Room FD.34, Stormont Castle
Stormont Estate, Belfast
BT4 3TT, Northern Ireland
Tel: 028 9037 8133

25 January 2023

Dear Members,

The Northern Ireland Civil Service publishes action plan in response to external review

A 33-point action plan to improve governance across the NI Civil Service has been published today.

The plan is in response to findings from an external independent review undertaken by PwC to examine the handling of concerns and other matters raised in a case taken by a former DAERA employee.

Commissioned by DAERA on behalf of the Department's Permanent Secretary Katrina Godfrey, the Department of Finance Permanent Secretary Neil Gibson and myself as the Head of the Civil Service, the reports and action plan are being shared with staff, trade unions, the NI Audit Office and all MLAs.

We welcome the findings in the two reports which we have published in full. We had previously committed to publishing only the outcomes of the review but have gone further. Regrettably, this has taken longer but has resulted in greater transparency.

We will implement each of the 33 actions so that there is greater confidence that we are delivering the best possible service for our workforce and the public.

The external review highlights issues in the recording and escalating of concerns, the application of some policies and the way in which employment related legal cases are managed by the organisation.

Concerns must always be raised, listened to and acted upon in the proper manner. It is critical that every civil servant maintains proper records and that all policies are up-to-date. These are the foundations of good governance.

INVESTORS IN PEOPLE™
We invest in people Silver

The personal information (e.g., name, personal email/home postal address) included in your correspondence, which the Executive Office now holds, will be handled in accordance with data protection legislation. It will be kept secure and only shared with relevant officials for the purpose of providing a response. This information will be retained for no longer than is necessary, and in line with the Department's retention and disposal schedule.

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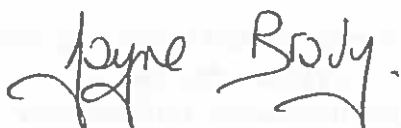
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Kind regards,

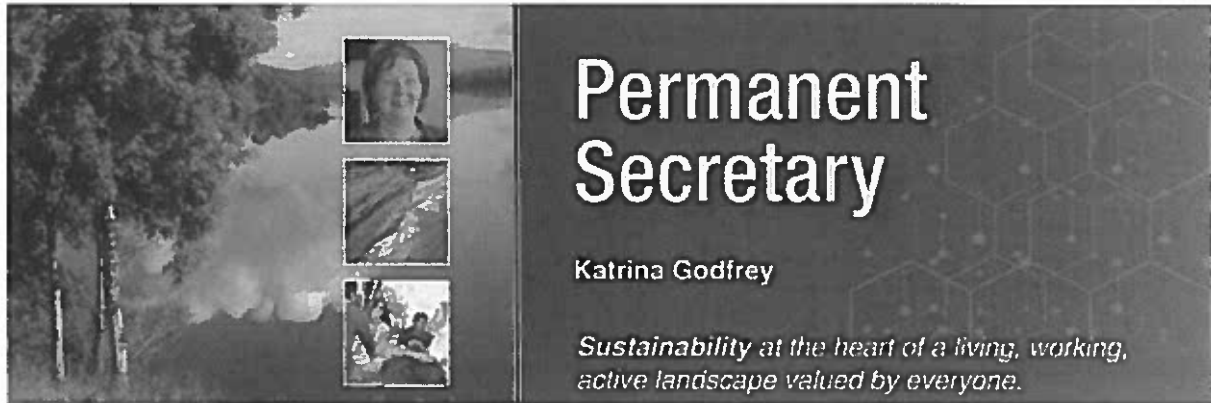
A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jayne Brady". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'J' and 'B'.

JAYNE BRADY
Head of the Northern Ireland Civil Service

INVESTORS IN PEOPLE™
We invest in people Silver

The personal information (e.g., name, personal email/home postal address) included in your correspondence, which the Executive Office now holds, will be handled in accordance with data protection legislation. It will be kept secure and only shared with relevant officials for the purpose of providing a response. This information will be retained for no longer than is necessary, and in line with the Department's retention and disposal schedule.

From: DAERA Internal Comms
Sent: 25 January 2023 12:10
Subject: Memo from Permanent Secretary to All DAERA Staff - PwC External Independent Review and NICS Raising a Concern Framework



Memo to all staff from Katrina Godfrey, Permanent Secretary

PwC EXTERNAL INDEPENDENT REVIEW AND NICS RAISING A CONCERN FRAMEWORK

Dear Colleagues,

I am writing to let you know that, today, the Department is publishing the reports from the external independent review carried out by PwC into how DAERA dealt with the concerns raised in the recent industrial tribunal case involving [REDACTED] and of the decision-making of both DAERA and DoF relating to this case.

As I said when we announced the review, it was important to take such a step in order to establish the facts and ensure lessons are identified, applied and factored into future handling of such cases.

The review has taken much longer to complete than I initially expected, but one result of the longer duration is that it has also identified a much wider set of lessons than I had first envisaged. Those lessons relate to how we handle concerns; the standard of some of our record keeping; and how we apply, review and update our core policies. There is also important learning in relation to how we define and discharge our responsibilities when decisions are needed on employment-related legal cases.

At the heart of this particular case was our handling of concerns raised by a former colleague. We simply must learn from this to prevent a similar situation from arising again in DAERA or in any other department. That is why, today, the Head of the Civil Service is also launching a new Raising a Concern Policy Framework which will apply across all departments. Within DAERA, I want us to lead by example in implementing and giving life to the new Raising a Concern procedures and will set out in the coming

weeks how the framework will be applied across the Department, including in NIEA and in Forest Service.

In response to this and to the other issues raised in the PwC reports, we have agreed and are also publishing today a detailed action plan setting out how we intend, within DAERA and DoF and where applicable across all departments, to respond to the recommendations made in the second PwC report.

I have asked the chair of the Departmental Audit and Risk Assurance Committee (DARAC) to make the action plan a standing item on its agenda until I am satisfied that the DAERA actions have been completed and embedded and I am grateful for her agreement and for the support from DARAC and my Departmental Board as we work to respond to the findings of the PwC reports.

It is, however, important for me to recognise that, no matter how diligently we take forward our work to address the actions in that plan, our effectiveness will be defined not by a completed list of actions, but by our behaviours and by the culture we create in the teams to which we belong. Our real test of success will be when any colleague in any part of the Department who wants to raise a concern feels confident to do so and any manager receiving a concern knows what action to take and takes it. I will do all that I can to lead by example to build a culture fitting of the exemplar organisation that we strive to be, but I will need everyone's help to make sure that is the case across all parts of DAERA.



Katrina Godfrey
PERMANENT SECRETARY

*Sustainability at the heart of a living, working,
active landscape valued by everyone.*



Department of
**Agriculture, Environment
and Rural Affairs**

[REDACTED]

From: McFlynn, Sharon
Sent: 25 January 2023 12:11
To: [REDACTED] McNabb, Chris; [REDACTED] Sayee, Natasha;
McLaughlin, Mark (DOF); [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: All Comms Docs

All,

Our perm sec message has issued.

Sharon

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 25 January 2023 12:03
To: McNabb, Chris <Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; [REDACTED]
Sayee, Natasha <Natasha.Sayee@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>;
McLaughlin, Mark (DOF) <Mark.McLaughlin@finance-ni.gov.uk>; [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: All Comms Docs

All of our comms are now live on the website.

Thanks

[REDACTED]

From: McNabb, Chris <Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>
Sent: 25 January 2023 11:53
To: [REDACTED]; Sayee, Natasha <Natasha.Sayee@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>; McLaughlin, Mark (DOF) <Mark.McLaughlin@finance-ni.gov.uk>; [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: All Comms Docs

All

We'll not issue release until I hear from you that it is good to go

Likely to slip to a bit after 12 now

Chris

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 25 January 2023 11:50
To: Sayee, Natasha <Natasha.Sayee@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>; McNabb, Chris <Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; McLaughlin, Mark (DOF)

<Mark.McLaughlin@finance-ni.gov.uk> [REDACTED]

Subject: RE: All Comms Docs

No problem at all

We will go live once available.

From: Sayee, Natasha <Natasha.Sayee@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>

Sent: 25 January 2023 11:49

To: [REDACTED] McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>; McNabb, Chris <Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; McLaughlin, Mark (DOF) <Mark.McLaughlin@finance-ni.gov.uk> [REDACTED]

Subject: RE: All Comms Docs

Hi All,

Been in touch with Sharon – she will confirm when items are live. They are doing best.

Sorry to [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] for any inconvenience.

Kind regards,

Natasha

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 25 January 2023 11:43

To: Sayee, Natasha <Natasha.Sayee@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>; McNabb, Chris <Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; McLaughlin, Mark (DOF) <Mark.McLaughlin@finance-ni.gov.uk> [REDACTED]

Subject: RE: All Comms Docs

Hi all

Raising a Concern Framework now live [Raising a Concern Policy Framework | Department of Finance \(finance-ni.gov.uk\)](https://www.finance-ni.gov.uk/raising-a-concern-policy-framework)

[REDACTED] staff comms can't issue until DAERA docs are live – can you advise when they are?

Thanks
[REDACTED]



From: Sayee, Natasha <Natasha.Sayee@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>

Sent: 23 January 2023 14:03

To: McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>; McNabb, Chris <Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; McLaughlin, Mark (DOF) <Mark.McLaughlin@finance-ni.gov.uk>; 

Cc: Stewart, Chris (TEO) <chris.stewart@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; Byrne, Jayne <Jayne.Byrne@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>

Subject: All Comms Docs

Hi All,

Just a reminder:

Clean Comms – (going to oversight group this afternoon for approval)  [PwC Communications FINAL DRAFT .docx](#)

Q&A doc [Q&A DOCUMENT 18-01-23](#)

Comms Output Tracker  [COMMS OUTPUT TRACKER.docx](#) - as you have progressed your item please mark 'complete' – allowing next step to move forward

Many thanks all,

Natasha

Natasha Sayee (she/her)
Director of Marketing, Outreach & Internal Communications

The Executive Office
Stormont Castle

Tel: ☎ 028 90 378 202 (Internal extension 88202) / 07775017210

E-mail: ✉ natasha.sayee@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 25 January 2023 12:13
To: [REDACTED] McFlynn, Sharon; [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: All Comms Docs

Thanks [REDACTED] and I echo Sharon's well done for a fantastic job to the whole Team.

Kind regards

[REDACTED]

For the latest information on DAERA visit www.daera-ni.gov.uk



Department of
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and Rural Affairs**
www.daera-ni.gov.uk

*Sustainability at the heart of a
living, working, active landscape
valued by everyone.*

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 25 January 2023 12:10
To: [REDACTED] McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>; [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: All Comms Docs

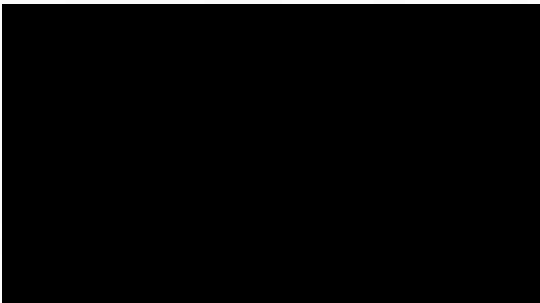
That is sent now [REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 25 January 2023 12:09
To: McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>; [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: All Comms Docs

Folks

I have just received the HoCS message so go ahead and issue Katrina's to staff pls

Kind regards



For the latest information on DAERA visit www.daera-ni.gov.uk



Department of
**Agriculture, Environment
and Rural Affairs**
www.daera-ni.gov.uk

*Sustainability at the heart of a
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From: [Redacted]

Sent: 25 January 2023 12:08

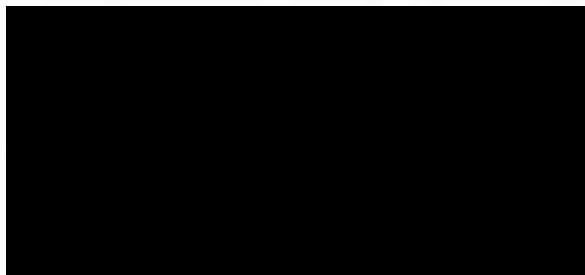
To: McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk> [Redacted]

Cc: [Redacted]

Subject: RE: All Comms Docs

No problem will do.

Kind regards



For the latest information on DAERA visit www.daera-ni.gov.uk



Department of
**Agriculture, Environment
and Rural Affairs**
www.daera-ni.gov.uk

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From: McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>

Sent: 25 January 2023 12:07

To: [Redacted]

Cc: [REDACTED]

Subject: RE: All Comms Docs

[REDACTED]

At this stage, I wouldn't wait 10mins after HOCS to issue Katrina's note- do it as soon as we can. Pr has already been shared under embargo until 12:05 so we need to move swiftly.

Thanks to all for a brilliant job done.

Sharon

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 25 January 2023 12:05

To: McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>; [REDACTED]

Cc: [REDACTED]

Subject: RE: All Comms Docs

Sharon

[REDACTED] aware we are now live and is advising NICS colleagues.

Presume agreed timing

HoCs note

+10mins Katrina's note

+5mins PR

Kind regards

[REDACTED]

For the latest information on DAERA visit www.daera-ni.gov.uk



Department of
**Agriculture, Environment
and Rural Affairs**
www.daera-ni.gov.uk

*Sustainability at the heart of a
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valued by everyone.*

From: McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>

Sent: 25 January 2023 11:44

To: [REDACTED]

Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: FW: All Comms Docs

All,

FYI

S

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 25 January 2023 11:43
To: Sayee, Natasha <Natasha.Sayee@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>; McNabb, Chris <Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; McLaughlin, Mark (DOF) <Mark.McLaughlin@finance-ni.gov.uk>; [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: All Comms Docs

Hi all

Raising a Concern Framework now live [Raising a Concern Policy Framework | Department of Finance \(finance-ni.gov.uk\)](#)

[REDACTED] staff comms can't issue until DAERA docs are live – can you advise when they are?

Thanks
[REDACTED]

From: Sayee, Natasha <Natasha.Sayee@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>
Sent: 23 January 2023 14:03
To: McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>; McNabb, Chris <Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; McLaughlin, Mark (DOF) <Mark.McLaughlin@finance-ni.gov.uk>; [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
Cc: Stewart, Chris (TEO) <chris.stewart@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; Byrne, Jayne <Jayne.Byrne@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>
Subject: All Comms Docs

Hi All,

Just a reminder:

Clean Comms – (going to oversight group this afternoon for approval)  [PwC Communications FINAL DRAFT .docx](#)

Q&A doc [Q&A DOCUMENT 18-01-23](#)

Comms Output Tracker  COMMS OUTPUT TRACKER.docx - as you have progressed your item please mark 'complete' – allowing next step to move forward

Many thanks all,

Natasha

Natasha Sayee (she/her)
Director of Marketing, Outreach & Internal Communications

The Executive Office
Stormont Castle

Tel: ☎ 028 90 378 202 (Internal extension 88202) / 07775017210

E-mail: ✉ natasha.sayee@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk

[REDACTED]

From: Sayee, Natasha
Sent: 25 January 2023 12:19
To: McFlynn, Sharon; [REDACTED] McNabb, Chris; [REDACTED]
McLaughlin, Mark (DOF) [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: All Comms Docs

Mlas email has issued.

Chris you're good to go with PR.

n

From: McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>
Sent: 25 January 2023 12:11
To: [REDACTED] McNabb, Chris
<Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; [REDACTED] Sayee, Natasha
<Natasha.Sayee@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; McLaughlin, Mark (DOF) <Mark.McLaughlin@finance-ni.gov.uk>;
[REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
Subject: RE: All Comms Docs

All,

Our perm sec message has issued.

Sharon

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 25 January 2023 12:03
To: McNabb, Chris <Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; [REDACTED]
Sayee, Natasha <Natasha.Sayee@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>;
McLaughlin, Mark (DOF) <Mark.McLaughlin@finance-ni.gov.uk>; [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
Subject: RE: All Comms Docs

All of our comms are now live on the website.

Thanks

From: McNabb, Chris <Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>
Sent: 25 January 2023 11:53
To: [REDACTED] Sayee, Natasha <Natasha.Sayee@executiveoffice-
ni.gov.uk>; McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>; McLaughlin, Mark (DOF)
<Mark.McLaughlin@finance-ni.gov.uk>; [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Cc: [REDACTED]

Subject: RE: All Comms Docs

All

We'll not issue release until I hear from you that it is good to go

Likely to slip to a bit after 12 now

Chris

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 25 January 2023 11:50

To: Sayee, Natasha <Natasha.Sayee@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>; McNabb, Chris <Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; McLaughlin, Mark (DOF) <Mark.McLaughlin@finance-ni.gov.uk>; [REDACTED]

Subject: RE: All Comms Docs

No problem at all

We will go live once available.

[REDACTED]

From: Sayee, Natasha <Natasha.Sayee@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>

Sent: 25 January 2023 11:49

To: [REDACTED]; McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>; McNabb, Chris <Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; McLaughlin, Mark (DOF) <Mark.McLaughlin@finance-ni.gov.uk>; [REDACTED]

Subject: RE: All Comms Docs

Hi All,

Been in touch with Sharon – she will confirm when items are live. They are doing best.

Sorry to [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] for any inconvenience.

Kind regards,

Natasha

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 25 January 2023 11:43
To: Sayee, Natasha <Natasha.Sayee@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>; McNabb, Chris <Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; McLaughlin, Mark (DOF) <Mark.McLaughlin@finance-ni.gov.uk>; [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: All Comms Docs

Hi all

Raising a Concern Framework now live [Raising a Concern Policy Framework | Department of Finance \(finance-ni.gov.uk\)](#)

[REDACTED] staff comms can't issue until DAERA docs are live – can you advise when they are?

Thanks
[REDACTED]

From: Sayee, Natasha <Natasha.Sayee@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>
Sent: 23 January 2023 14:03
To: McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>; McNabb, Chris <Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; McLaughlin, Mark (DOF) <Mark.McLaughlin@finance-ni.gov.uk>; [REDACTED]
Cc: Stewart, Chris (TEO) <chris.stewart@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; Byrne, Jayne <Jayne.Byrne@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>
Subject: All Comms Docs

Hi All,

Just a reminder:

Clean Comms – (going to oversight group this afternoon for approval)  [PwC Communications FINAL DRAFT .docx](#)

Q&A doc [Q&A DOCUMENT 18-01-23](#)

Comms Output Tracker  [COMMS OUTPUT TRACKER.docx](#) - as you have progressed your item please mark 'complete' – allowing next step to move forward

Many thanks all,

Natasha

Natasha Sayee (she/her)
Director of Marketing, Outreach & Internal Communications

The Executive Office
Stormont Castle

Tel: ☎ 028 90 378 202 (Internal extension 88202) / 07775017210

E-mail: ✉ natasha.sayee@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk

[REDACTED]

From: McNabb, Chris
Sent: 25 January 2023 12:20
To: Sayee, Natasha; McFlynn, Sharon; [REDACTED]
McLaughlin, Mark (DOF); [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: All Comms Docs

Thanks -

From: Sayee, Natasha <Natasha.Sayee@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>
Sent: 25 January 2023 12:19
To: McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk> [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] McNabb, Chris <Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; [REDACTED]
ni.gov.uk>; McLaughlin, Mark (DOF) <Mark.McLaughlin@finance-ni.gov.uk>; [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Cc: [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
Subject: RE: All Comms Docs

Mlas email has issued.

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From: McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>
Sent: 25 January 2023 12:11
To: [REDACTED] McNabb, Chris
<Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; [REDACTED] Sayee, Natasha
<Natasha.Sayee@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; McLaughlin, Mark (DOF) <Mark.McLaughlin@finance-ni.gov.uk>;
[REDACTED]

Cc: [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
Subject: RE: All Comms Docs

All,

Our perm sec message has issued.

Sharon

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 25 January 2023 12:03
To: McNabb, Chris <Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; [REDACTED]
Sayee, Natasha <Natasha.Sayee@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>;
McLaughlin, Mark (DOF) <Mark.McLaughlin@finance-ni.gov.uk> [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Cc: [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
Subject: RE: All Comms Docs

All of our comms are now live on the website.

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From: McNabb, Chris <Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>

Sent: 25 January 2023 11:53

To: [REDACTED]; Sayee, Natasha <Natasha.Sayee@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>; McLaughlin, Mark (DOF) <Mark.McLaughlin@finance-ni.gov.uk>; [REDACTED]

Cc: [REDACTED]

Subject: RE: All Comms Docs

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Chris

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Sent: 25 January 2023 11:50

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Sent: 25 January 2023 11:49

To: [REDACTED]; McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>; McNabb, Chris <Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; McLaughlin, Mark (DOF) <Mark.McLaughlin@finance-ni.gov.uk>; [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
Subject: RE: All Comms Docs

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Natasha

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 25 January 2023 11:43
To: Sayee, Natasha <Natasha.Sayee@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>; McNabb, Chris <Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; McLaughlin, Mark (DOF) <Mark.McLaughlin@finance-ni.gov.uk>; [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: All Comms Docs

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Thanks
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

From: Sayee, Natasha <Natasha.Sayee@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>
Sent: 23 January 2023 14:03
To: McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>; McNabb, Chris <Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; McLaughlin, Mark (DOF) <Mark.McLaughlin@finance-ni.gov.uk>; [REDACTED]
Cc: Stewart, Chris (TEO) <chris.stewart@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; Byrne, Jayne <Jayne.Byrne@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>
Subject: All Comms Docs

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Q&A doc Q&A DOCUMENT 18-01-23

Comms Output Tracker  COMMS OUTPUT TRACKER.docx - as you have progressed your item please mark 'complete' – allowing next step to move forward

Many thanks all,

Natasha

Natasha Sayee (she/her)
Director of Marketing, Outreach & Internal Communications

The Executive Office
Stormont Castle

Tel: ☎ 028 90 378 202 (Internal extension 88202) / 07775017210

E-mail: ✉ natasha.sayee@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk

From: TEO EIS NewsService
Sent: 25 January 2023 12:20
To: TEO EIS NewsService
Subject: TEO News Release - CIVIL SERVICE PUBLISHES ACTION PLAN IN RESPONSE TO EXTERNAL REVIEW

THE EXECUTIVE OFFICE

25 January 2023

Civil Service publishes action plan in response to external review

A 33-point action plan to improve governance across the NI Civil Service has been published today.

The plan is in response to findings from an external independent review undertaken by PwC to examine the handling of concerns and other matters raised in a case taken by a former DAERA employee.

Commissioned by DAERA on behalf of the Department's Permanent Secretary Katrina Godfrey, the Department of Finance Permanent Secretary Neil Gibson and the Head of the Civil Service Jayne Brady, the reports and action plan have been shared with staff, trade unions, MLAs and the NI Audit Office.

Jayne Brady said: "I welcome the findings in the reports. As a Service, we are committed to learning from this review and addressing the issues identified.

"We remain on a journey of continuous improvement and the action plan sets out our response to the review recommendations.

"We will implement each of the 33 actions so that there is greater confidence that we are delivering the best possible service for the public and our workforce."

The external review highlights issues in the recording and escalating of concerns, the application of some policies and the way in which employment related legal cases are managed by the NICS.

A new NICS Raising a Concern Policy Framework has also been published. These guidelines for Departments set out, for the first time, a single, overarching approach to dealing with concerns raised.

A refreshed Civil Service Code of Ethics, which includes the obligation on all civil servants to keep proper records, will be embedded into performance management processes.

Neither PwC's Lessons learned and recommendations report, nor the Action Plan, addresses the actions of individual civil servants. The NI Civil Service, as a responsible employer, does not comment on internal employment related matters, which may or may not arise.

The Permanent Secretaries of DAERA and DoF will monitor the status of actions and have already asked their respective Departmental Audit Committees to scrutinise progress. Quarterly progress reports will be published on their respective websites.

The review also identifies areas for improvement in the culture of the service.

Jayne Brady said: "Concerns must always be raised, listened to and acted upon in the proper manner. It is critical that every civil servant maintains proper records and that all policies are up-to-date. These are the foundations of good governance.

"Some of the issues identified in this review, particularly in relation to record-keeping, were previously highlighted by the Inquiry into the Renewable Heat Incentive Scheme (RHI) report. This is not good enough and as leaders of the NI Civil Service, we will rigorously pursue progress against the recommendations.

"Improving the application of policies and procedures is a starting point, but real success requires behavioural and cultural change. Work is already underway to empower and support civil servants in effectively delivering the work of government and to develop an inclusive workplace culture."

Notes to Editors:

1. The PwC reports were commissioned by DAERA, on behalf of the Department's Permanent Secretary, the Department of Finance Permanent Secretary and the Head of the Civil Service. The reports and action plan are available here: <https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/publications/external-independent-review-pwc-reports-and-nics-action-plan>
2. The Terms of Reference committed to the publication of the outcomes of the review. The decision was taken in the interest of transparency for both papers of the External Independent Review in full. This has taken longer than initially anticipated.
3. Neither PwC's Lessons learned and recommendations report, nor the action plan, addresses the actions of individual civil servants. The NI Civil Service, as a responsible employer, does not comment on internal employment related matters, which may or may not arise. The requirements of employment law, the contractual obligations applying to every civil servant, and the obligation of fairness to all staff mean that any such matters must remain confidential in order to be lawful and fair and no individual civil servant or department may comment on these.
4. Link to NICS Code of Ethics: [NICS Code of Ethics | Department of Finance \(finance-ni.gov.uk\)](https://www.finance-ni.gov.uk/publications/nics-code-of-ethics)
5. Link to the new NICS Raising a Concern Policy Framework: <https://www.finance-ni.gov.uk/publications/raising-concern-policy-framework>
6. The full costs of the review are currently being finalised and will be published in due course on the DAERA website.
7. Media queries should be directed to the TEO press office via email at press.office@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk
8. The Executive Information Service operates an out of hours service for media enquiries only between 1800hrs and 0800hrs Monday to Friday and at weekends and public holidays. The duty press officer can be contacted on 028 9037 8110.

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If you wish to unsubscribe from this service please email EIS.info@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 25 January 2023 12:21
To: McFlynn, Sharon
Subject: FW: TEO News Release - CIVIL SERVICE PUBLISHES ACTION PLAN IN RESPONSE TO EXTERNAL REVIEW

From: TEO EIS NewsService <EIS.NewsService@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>
Date: Wednesday, 25 Jan 2023, 12:20 pm
To: TEO EIS NewsService <EIS.NewsService@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>
Subject: TEO News Release - CIVIL SERVICE PUBLISHES ACTION PLAN IN RESPONSE TO EXTERNAL REVIEW

THE EXECUTIVE OFFICE

25 January 2023

Civil Service publishes action plan in response to external review

A 33-point action plan to improve governance across the NI Civil Service has been published today.

The plan is in response to findings from an external independent review undertaken by PwC to examine the handling of concerns and other matters raised in a case taken by a former DAERA employee.

Commissioned by DAERA on behalf of the Department's Permanent Secretary Katrina Godfrey, the Department of Finance Permanent Secretary Neil Gibson and the Head of the Civil Service Jayne Brady, the reports and action plan have been shared with staff, trade unions, MLAs and the NI Audit Office.

Jayne Brady said: "I welcome the findings in the reports. As a Service, we are committed to learning from this review and addressing the issues identified.

"We remain on a journey of continuous improvement and the action plan sets out our response to the review recommendations.

"We will implement each of the 33 actions so that there is greater confidence that we are delivering the best possible service for the public and our workforce."

The external review highlights issues in the recording and escalating of concerns, the application of some policies and the way in which employment related legal cases are managed by the NICS.

A new NICS Raising a Concern Policy Framework has also been published. These guidelines for Departments set out, for the first time, a single, overarching approach to dealing with concerns raised.

A refreshed Civil Service Code of Ethics, which includes the obligation on all civil servants to keep proper records, will be embedded into performance management processes.

Neither PwC's Lessons learned and recommendations report, nor the Action Plan, addresses the actions of individual civil servants. The NI Civil Service, as a responsible employer, does not comment on internal employment related matters, which may or may not arise.

The Permanent Secretaries of DAERA and DoF will monitor the status of actions and have already asked their respective Departmental Audit Committees to scrutinise progress. Quarterly progress reports will be published on their respective websites.

The review also identifies areas for improvement in the culture of the service.

Jayne Brady said: "Concerns must always be raised, listened to and acted upon in the proper manner. It is critical that every civil servant maintains proper records and that all policies are up-to-date. These are the foundations of good governance.

"Some of the issues identified in this review, particularly in relation to record-keeping, were previously highlighted by the Inquiry into the Renewable Heat Incentive Scheme (RHI) report. This is not good enough and as leaders of the NI Civil Service, we will rigorously pursue progress against the recommendations.

"Improving the application of policies and procedures is a starting point, but real success requires behavioural and cultural change. Work is already underway to empower and support civil servants in effectively delivering the work of government and to develop an inclusive workplace culture."

Notes to Editors:

1. The PwC reports were commissioned by DAERA, on behalf of the Department's Permanent Secretary, the Department of Finance Permanent Secretary and the Head of the Civil Service. The reports and action plan are available here: <https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/publications/external-independent-review-pwc-reports-and-nics-action-plan>
2. The Terms of Reference committed to the publication of the outcomes of the review. The decision was taken in the interest of transparency for both papers of the External Independent Review in full. This has taken longer than initially anticipated.
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4. Link to NICS Code of Ethics: [NICS Code of Ethics | Department of Finance \(finance-ni.gov.uk\)](https://www.finance-ni.gov.uk)
5. Link to the new NICS Raising a Concern Policy Framework: <https://www.finance-ni.gov.uk/publications/raising-concern-policy-framework>
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This is an automated distribution service - please do not reply to this email address.

If you wish to unsubscribe from this service please email EIS.info@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk

[REDACTED]

From: Sayee, Natasha
Sent: 25 January 2023 12:21
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: McFlynn, Sharon; McLaughlin, Mark (DOF); Conlan, Ciarra; [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] McNabb, Chris
Subject: FW: Letter from Jayne Brady - Publication of action plan in response to internal review
Attachments: Jayne Brady to MLAs - publication of action plan in response to external review.docx

Hello [REDACTED]

Can the office please advise all copied of any queries/comments from MLAs resulting from this correspondence.

Thank you very much for all the help with this.

Kind regards,

Natasha

From: Brady, Jayne <HOCS@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>

Sent: 25 January 2023 12:18

[REDACTED]



Subject: Letter from Jayne Brady - Publication of action plan in response to internal review

Dear Members,

I attach a letter from Jayne Brady, Head of the Northern Ireland Civil Service for your attention.

Kind regards,

Roisin Coleman, for Jayne Brady

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 25 January 2023 12:22
To: McNabb, Chris; Sayee, Natasha; McFlynn, Sharon; [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] McLaughlin, Mark (DOF); [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: All Comms Docs

Hi all,
Press release has issued.
Thanks,
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

From: McNabb, Chris <Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>
Sent: 25 January 2023 12:20
To: Sayee, Natasha <Natasha.Sayee@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>; [REDACTED] [REDACTED]
<Ciarrai.Conlan@finance-ni.gov.uk>; McLaughlin, Mark (DOF) <Mark.McLaughlin@finance-ni.gov.uk>; [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: All Comms Docs

Thanks -

From: Sayee, Natasha <Natasha.Sayee@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>
Sent: 25 January 2023 12:19
To: McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>; [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] McNabb, Chris <Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] McLaughlin, Mark (DOF) <Mark.McLaughlin@finance-ni.gov.uk>; [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: All Comms Docs

Mlas email has issued.

Chris you're good to go with PR.

n

From: McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>
Sent: 25 January 2023 12:11

To: [REDACTED] McNabb, Chris
<Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; [REDACTED] Sayee, Natasha
<Natasha.Sayee@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; McLaughlin, Mark (DOF) <Mark.McLaughlin@finance-ni.gov.uk>;
[REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
Subject: RE: All Comms Docs

All,

Our perm sec message has issued.

Sharon

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 25 January 2023 12:03
To: McNabb, Chris <Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; [REDACTED]
Sayee, Natasha <Natasha.Sayee@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>;
McLaughlin, Mark (DOF) <Mark.McLaughlin@finance-ni.gov.uk>; [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
Subject: RE: All Comms Docs

All of our comms are now live on the website.

Thanks

From: McNabb, Chris <Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>
Sent: 25 January 2023 11:53
To: [REDACTED] Sayee, Natasha <Natasha.Sayee@executiveoffice-
ni.gov.uk>; McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>; McLaughlin, Mark (DOF)
<Mark.McLaughlin@finance-ni.gov.uk>; [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
Subject: RE: All Comms Docs

All

We'll not issue release until I hear from you that it is good to go

Likely to slip to a bit after 12 now

Chris

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 25 January 2023 11:50
To: Sayee, Natasha <Natasha.Sayee@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-
ni.gov.uk>; McNabb, Chris <Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; McLaughlin, Mark (DOF)
<Mark.McLaughlin@finance-ni.gov.uk>; [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
Subject: RE: All Comms Docs

No problem at all

We will go live once available.



From: Sayee, Natasha <Natasha.Sayee@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>
Sent: 25 January 2023 11:49
To: [redacted] McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>; McNabb, Chris <Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; McLaughlin, Mark (DOF) <Mark.McLaughlin@finance-ni.gov.uk>; [redacted]
[redacted]
Subject: RE: All Comms Docs

Hi All,

Been in touch with Sharon – she will confirm when items are live. They are doing best.

Sorry to [redacted] and [redacted] for any inconvenience.

Kind regards,

Natasha

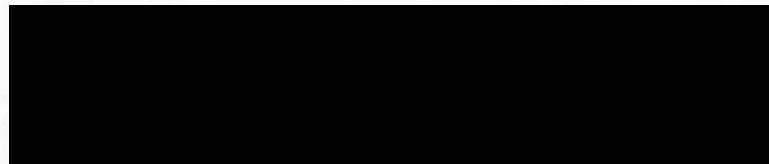
From: [redacted]
Sent: 25 January 2023 11:43
To: Sayee, Natasha <Natasha.Sayee@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>; McNabb, Chris <Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; McLaughlin, Mark (DOF) <Mark.McLaughlin@finance-ni.gov.uk>; [redacted]
Subject: RE: All Comms Docs

Hi all

Raising a Concern Framework now live [Raising a Concern Policy Framework | Department of Finance \(finance-ni.gov.uk\)](https://www.finance-ni.gov.uk)

[redacted] staff comms can't issue until DAERA docs are live – can you advise when they are?

Thanks



[REDACTED]

From: Sayee, Natasha <Natasha.Sayee@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>

Sent: 23 January 2023 14:03

To: McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>; McNabb, Chris <Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; McLaughlin, Mark (DOF) <Mark.McLaughlin@finance-ni.gov.uk>; [REDACTED]

Cc: Stewart, Chris (TEO) <chris.stewart@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; Byrne, Jayne <Jayne.Byrne@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>

Subject: All Comms Docs

Hi All,

Just a reminder:

Clean Comms – (going to oversight group this afternoon for approval)  [PwC Communications FINAL DRAFT .docx](#)

Q&A doc [Q&A DOCUMENT 18-01-23](#)

Comms Output Tracker  [COMMS OUTPUT TRACKER.docx](#) - as you have progressed your item please mark 'complete' – allowing next step to move forward

Many thanks all,

Natasha

Natasha Sayee (she/her)
Director of Marketing, Outreach & Internal Communications

The Executive Office
Stormont Castle

Tel: ☎ 028 90 378 202 (Internal extension 88202) / 07775017210

E-mail: ✉ natasha.sayee@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 25 January 2023 12:35
To: [REDACTED] McNabb, Chris; Sayee, Natasha; McFlynn, Sharon; [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] McLaughlin, Mark (DOF)
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: All Comms Docs

All, Intranet story published with video and circulated to departments for their homepages.

Thanks

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 25 January 2023 12:22
To: McNabb, Chris <Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; Sayee, Natasha <Natasha.Sayee@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>; [REDACTED] McLaughlin, Mark (DOF) <Mark.McLaughlin@finance-ni.gov.uk>; [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: All Comms Docs

Hi all,
Press release has issued.
Thanks,
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

From: McNabb, Chris <Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>

Sent: 25 January 2023 12:20

To: Sayee, Natasha <Natasha.Sayee@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>; [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]; McLaughlin, Mark (DOF) <Mark.McLaughlin@finance-ni.gov.uk>; [REDACTED]

Cc: [REDACTED]

Subject: RE: All Comms Docs

Thanks -

From: Sayee, Natasha <Natasha.Sayee@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>

Sent: 25 January 2023 12:19

To: McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>; [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] McNabb, Chris <Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] McLaughlin, Mark (DOF) <Mark.McLaughlin@finance-ni.gov.uk>; [REDACTED]

Cc: [REDACTED]

Subject: RE: All Comms Docs

Mlas email has issued.

Chris you're good to go with PR.

n

From: McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>

Sent: 25 January 2023 12:11

To: [REDACTED] McNabb, Chris

<Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; [REDACTED]

Sayee, Natasha <Natasha.Sayee@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; McLaughlin, Mark (DOF) <Mark.McLaughlin@finance-ni.gov.uk>; [REDACTED]

Cc: [REDACTED]

Subject: RE: All Comms Docs

All,

Our perm sec message has issued.

Sharon

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 25 January 2023 12:03

To: McNabb, Chris <Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; [REDACTED]

Sayee, Natasha <Natasha.Sayee@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>;

McLaughlin, Mark (DOF) <Mark.McLaughlin@finance-ni.gov.uk>; [REDACTED]

Cc: [REDACTED]

Subject: RE: All Comms Docs

All of our comms are now live on the website.

Thanks

From: McNabb, Chris <Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>

Sent: 25 January 2023 11:53

To: [REDACTED] Sayee, Natasha <Natasha.Sayee@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>; McLaughlin, Mark (DOF) <Mark.McLaughlin@finance-ni.gov.uk>; [REDACTED]

Cc: [REDACTED]

Subject: RE: All Comms Docs

All

We'll not issue release until I hear from you that it is good to go

Likely to slip to a bit after 12 now

Chris

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 25 January 2023 11:50

To: Sayee, Natasha <Natasha.Sayee@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>; McNabb, Chris <Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; McLaughlin, Mark (DOF) <Mark.McLaughlin@finance-ni.gov.uk>; [REDACTED]

Subject: RE: All Comms Docs

No problem at all

We will go live once available.

From: Sayee, Natasha <Natasha.Sayee@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>

Sent: 25 January 2023 11:49

To: [REDACTED] McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>; McNabb, Chris <Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; McLaughlin, Mark (DOF) <Mark.McLaughlin@finance-ni.gov.uk>; [REDACTED]

Subject: RE: All Comms Docs

Hi All,

Been in touch with Sharon – she will confirm when items are live. They are doing best.

Sorry to [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] for any inconvenience.

Kind regards,

Natasha

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 25 January 2023 11:43
To: Sayee, Natasha <Natasha.Sayee@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>; McNabb, Chris <Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; McLaughlin, Mark (DOF) <Mark.McLaughlin@finance-ni.gov.uk>; [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: All Comms Docs

Hi all

Raising a Concern Framework now live [Raising a Concern Policy Framework | Department of Finance \(finance-ni.gov.uk\)](#)

[REDACTED] staff comms can't issue until DAERA docs are live – can you advise when they are?

Thanks

[REDACTED]

From: Sayee, Natasha <Natasha.Sayee@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>
Sent: 23 January 2023 14:03
To: McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>; McNabb, Chris <Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; McLaughlin, Mark (DOF) <Mark.McLaughlin@finance-ni.gov.uk>; [REDACTED]
Cc: Stewart, Chris (TEO) <chris.stewart@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; Byrne, Jayne <Jayne.Byrne@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>
Subject: All Comms Docs

Hi All,

Just a reminder:

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Q&A doc [Q&A DOCUMENT 18-01-23](#)

Comms Output Tracker  COMMS OUTPUT TRACKER.docx - as you have progressed your item please mark 'complete' – allowing next step to move forward

Many thanks all,

Natasha

Natasha Sayee (she/her)
Director of Marketing, Outreach & Internal Communications

The Executive Office
Stormont Castle

Tel: ☎ 028 90 378 202 (Internal extension 88202) / 07775017210

E-mail: ✉ natasha.sayee@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk

[Redacted]

From: Sayee, Natasha
Sent: 25 January 2023 12:36
To: [Redacted] McNabb, Chris; McFlynn, Sharon; [Redacted]
[Redacted] McLaughlin, Mark (DOF)
Cc: [Redacted]
Subject: RE: All Comms Docs

Thank you so much for this [Redacted] and thank you to [Redacted] for sorting the video.

I really appreciate it.

N

From: [Redacted]
Sent: 25 January 2023 12:35
To: [Redacted] McNabb, Chris <Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; Sayee, Natasha <Natasha.Sayee@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>; [Redacted] McLaughlin, Mark (DOF) <Mark.McLaughlin@finance-ni.gov.uk>
Cc: [Redacted]
Subject: RE: All Comms Docs

All, Intranet story published with video and circulated to departments for their homepages.

Thanks

[Redacted]

From: [Redacted]
Sent: 25 January 2023 12:22
To: McNabb, Chris <Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; Sayee, Natasha <Natasha.Sayee@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>; [Redacted] McLaughlin, Mark (DOF) <Mark.McLaughlin@finance-ni.gov.uk>; [Redacted]
Cc: [Redacted]
Subject: RE: All Comms Docs

Hi all,
Press release has issued.
Thanks,

[REDACTED]

From: McNabb, Chris <Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>
Sent: 25 January 2023 12:20
To: Sayee, Natasha <Natasha.Sayee@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>; [REDACTED];
[REDACTED] McLaughlin, Mark (DOF) <Mark.McLaughlin@finance-ni.gov.uk>; [REDACTED]

Cc: [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
Subject: RE: All Comms Docs

Thanks -

From: Sayee, Natasha <Natasha.Sayee@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>
Sent: 25 January 2023 12:19
To: McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>; [REDACTED]
ni.gov.uk>; McNabb, Chris <Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] McLaughlin, Mark (DOF) <Mark.McLaughlin@finance-ni.gov.uk>; [REDACTED]

Cc: [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
Subject: RE: All Comms Docs

Mlas email has issued.

Chris you're good to go with PR.

n

From: McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>
Sent: 25 January 2023 12:11
To: [REDACTED] McNabb, Chris
<Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; [REDACTED] Sayee, Natasha
<Natasha.Sayee@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; McLaughlin, Mark (DOF) <Mark.McLaughlin@finance-ni.gov.uk>;
[REDACTED]

Cc: [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
Subject: RE: All Comms Docs

All,

Our perm sec message has issued.

Sharon

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 25 January 2023 12:03
To: McNabb, Chris <Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; [REDACTED]
Sayee, Natasha <Natasha.Sayee@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>;
McLaughlin, Mark (DOF) <Mark.McLaughlin@finance-ni.gov.uk>; [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
Subject: RE: All Comms Docs

All of our comms are now live on the website.

Thanks

[REDACTED]

From: McNabb, Chris <Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>
Sent: 25 January 2023 11:53
To: [REDACTED] Sayee, Natasha <Natasha.Sayee@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>; McLaughlin, Mark (DOF) <Mark.McLaughlin@finance-ni.gov.uk>; [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
Subject: RE: All Comms Docs

All

We'll not issue release until I hear from you that it is good to go

Likely to slip to a bit after 12 now

Chris

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 25 January 2023 11:50
To: Sayee, Natasha <Natasha.Sayee@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>; McNabb, Chris <Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; McLaughlin, Mark (DOF) <Mark.McLaughlin@finance-ni.gov.uk>; [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
Subject: RE: All Comms Docs

No problem at all

We will go live once available.

[REDACTED]



From: Sayee, Natasha <Natasha.Sayee@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>

Sent: 25 January 2023 11:49

To: [Redacted]; McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>; McNabb, Chris <Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; McLaughlin, Mark (DOF) <Mark.McLaughlin@finance-ni.gov.uk>; [Redacted]

Subject: RE: All Comms Docs

Hi All,

Been in touch with Sharon – she will confirm when items are live. They are doing best.

Sorry to [Redacted] and [Redacted] for any inconvenience.

Kind regards,

Natasha

From: [Redacted]

Sent: 25 January 2023 11:43

To: Sayee, Natasha <Natasha.Sayee@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>; McNabb, Chris <Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; McLaughlin, Mark (DOF) <Mark.McLaughlin@finance-ni.gov.uk>; [Redacted]

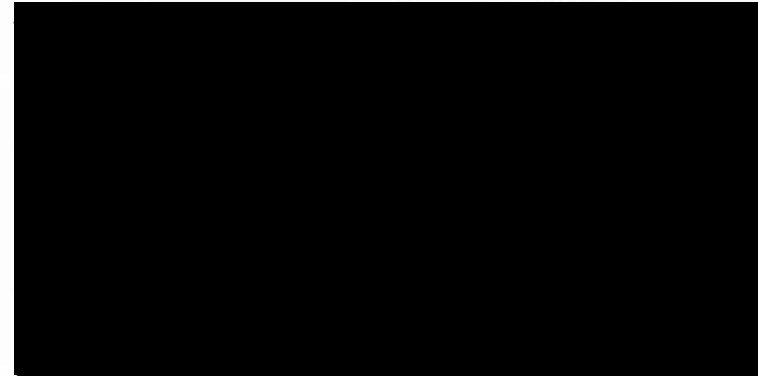
Subject: RE: All Comms Docs

Hi all

Raising a Concern Framework now live [Raising a Concern Policy Framework | Department of Finance \(finance-ni.gov.uk\)](#)

[Redacted] staff comms can't issue until DAERA docs are live – can you advise when they are?

Thanks



From: Sayee, Natasha <Natasha.Sayee@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>

Sent: 23 January 2023 14:03

To: McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>; McNabb, Chris <Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; McLaughlin, Mark (DOF) <Mark.McLaughlin@finance-ni.gov.uk>; [REDACTED]

Cc: Stewart, Chris (TEO) <chris.stewart@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; Byrne, Jayne <Jayne.Byrne@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>

Subject: All Comms Docs

Hi All,

Just a reminder:

Clean Comms – (going to oversight group this afternoon for approval)  PwC Communications FINAL DRAFT .docx

Q&A doc Q&A DOCUMENT 18-01-23

Comms Output Tracker  COMMS OUTPUT TRACKER.docx - as you have progressed your item please mark 'complete' – allowing next step to move forward

Many thanks all,

Natasha

Natasha Sayee (she/her)

Director of Marketing, Outreach & Internal Communications

The Executive Office

Stormont Castle

Tel: ☎ 028 90 378 202 (Internal extension 88202) / 07775017210

E-mail: ✉ natasha.sayee@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 25 January 2023 14:01
To: G_DAERA PressOffice.Group, DAERA
Subject: PwC report

Caution – This email has been received from outside the NICS network. Please ensure you can verify the sender's name and email address. Treat all attachments and links with caution.
FOR INTERNAL NICS STAFF ONLY - If you have any concerns regarding the email please forward to spam@finance-ni.gov.uk.

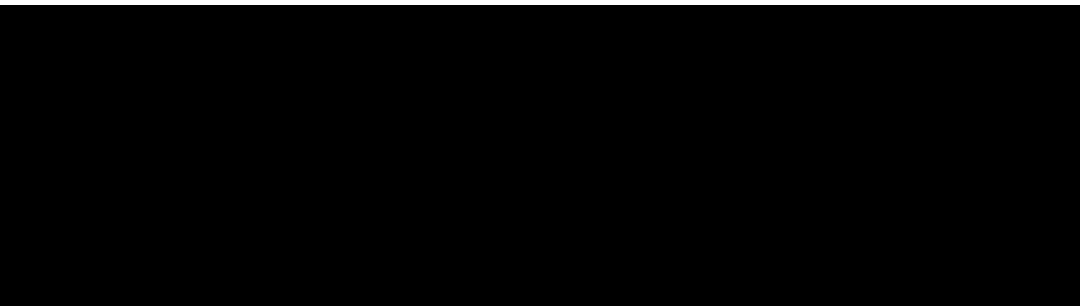
Good afternoon,

In relation to the PwC report into the treatment of [REDACTED] I have several questions:

- 1) Do [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] remain in post working for the department?
- 2) Does either [REDACTED] as members of the senior civil service, face disciplinary action?
- 3) Was the decision not to suspend them taken by Katrina Godfrey?
- 4) Neither [REDACTED] has even been named in the report, despite the department's acceptance of the fact they acted appallingly. Why is that so?

My deadline for this is 5pm.

Thanks,



Belfast Telegraph



Tell it like it is.



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Mediahuis UK limited,
33 Clarendon Road,
Belfast, BT1 3BG
United Kingdom

Switchboard +44 (0)28 90264000

Registered in the United Kingdom No: 01908967

This footnote also confirms that this email message has been swept by Microsoft Exchange Online Protection for the presence of computer viruses.

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 25 January 2023 14:07
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: G_DAERA PressOffice.Group, DAERA
Subject: RE: PwC report

Thanks [REDACTED] will come back to you.

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 25 January 2023 14:01
To: G_DAERA PressOffice.Group, DAERA <PressOffice.Group@daera-ni.gov.uk>
Subject: PwC report

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[REDACTED]

Belfast Telegraph

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This footnote also confirms that this email message has been swept by Microsoft Exchange Online Protection for the presence of computer viruses.

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 25 January 2023 14:15
To: [REDACTED] McNabb, Chris
Cc: McFlynn, Sharon; G_DAERA PressOffice.Group, DAERA
Subject: FW: PwC report

Hi both, please see query below from Bel Tel – looks like one for me in general unless you think otherwise?

If so, line likely to be rehash of NTE. Below for info

Thanks

[REDACTED]

QUERY

In relation to the PwC report into the treatment of [REDACTED] I have several questions:

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[REDACTED]

From: McNabb, Chris
Sent: 25 January 2023 14:21
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: McFlynn, Sharon; G_DAERA PressOffice.Group, DAERA; [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: PwC report

[REDACTED]

Please copy in both [REDACTED] into media lines.

Yes, agree with your approach and the line as it in the NTE should be the response – I wouldn't look to rearrange it

[REDACTED] – please let HOCS office know this is in and that DAERA will respond in line with the press office line

[REDACTED] - you'll obviously have to go through the clearance process within DAERA

Thanks

Chris

From: [REDACTED]
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[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 25 January 2023 14:23
To: McNabb, Chris; [REDACTED]
Cc: McFlynn, Sharon; G_DAERA PressOffice.Group, DAERA; [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: PwC report

Many thanks – will be clearing through Perm sec as BAU.

[REDACTED]

From: McNabb, Chris <Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>
Sent: 25 January 2023 14:21

To: [REDACTED]
Cc: McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>; G_DAERA PressOffice.Group, DAERA <PressOffice.Group@daera-ni.gov.uk>; [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: PwC report

[REDACTED]

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[REDACTED]

From: McNabb, Chris
Sent: 25 January 2023 14:23
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: McFlynn, Sharon; G_DAERA PressOffice.Group, DAERA; [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: PwC report

thx

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 25 January 2023 14:23
To: McNabb, Chris <Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; [REDACTED]
Cc: McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>; G_DAERA PressOffice.Group, DAERA <PressOffice.Group@daera-ni.gov.uk>; [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: PwC report

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Cc: McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>; G_DAERA PressOffice.Group, DAERA <PressOffice.Group@daera-ni.gov.uk>; [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: PwC report

[REDACTED]

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Subject: FW: PwC report

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[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 25 January 2023 14:28
To: Godfrey, Katrina (DAERA – Perm Sec)
Cc: G_DAERA PressOffice.Group, DAERA; DAERA PermSec; McFlynn, Sharon
Subject: FW: PwC report

Hi Katrina, please see Bel Tel query below and the proposed line.

Grateful for your consideration.

[REDACTED]

QUERY

In relation to the PwC report into the treatment of [REDACTED] I have several questions:

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DRAFT RESPONSE

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[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 25 January 2023 14:42
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: McFlynn, Sharon; G_DAERA PressOffice.Group, DAERA; [REDACTED]
McNabb, Chris; [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: PwC report

Thanks [REDACTED]

From: McNabb, Chris <Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>
Sent: 25 January 2023 14:21
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>; G_DAERA PressOffice.Group, DAERA <PressOffice.Group@daera-ni.gov.uk>; [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: PwC report

[REDACTED]

Please copy in both [REDACTED] into media lines.

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[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 25 January 2023 14:58
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: G_DAERA PressOffice.Group, DAERA; [REDACTED]
Subject: DUTY PRESS OFFICER - TEO News Release - CIVIL SERVICE PUBLISHES ACTION PLAN IN RESPONSE TO EXTERNAL REVIEW

Hi [REDACTED]

Understand you are on duty tonight.
TEO have issued this PR today but if you have any queries can you contact, Chris, DoF and DAERA.
[REDACTED] handling it from our side.

Thanks
[REDACTED]

From: TEO EIS NewsService <EIS.NewsService@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>
Sent: 25 January 2023 12:20
To: TEO EIS NewsService <EIS.NewsService@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>
Subject: TEO News Release - CIVIL SERVICE PUBLISHES ACTION PLAN IN RESPONSE TO EXTERNAL REVIEW

THE EXECUTIVE OFFICE

25 January 2023

Civil Service publishes action plan in response to external review

A 33-point action plan to improve governance across the NI Civil Service has been published today.

The plan is in response to findings from an external independent review undertaken by PwC to examine the handling of concerns and other matters raised in a case taken by a former DAERA employee.

Commissioned by DAERA on behalf of the Department's Permanent Secretary Katrina Godfrey, the Department of Finance Permanent Secretary Neil Gibson and the Head of the Civil Service Jayne Brady, the reports and action plan have been shared with staff, trade unions, MLAs and the NI Audit Office.

Jayne Brady said: "I welcome the findings in the reports. As a Service, we are committed to learning from this review and addressing the issues identified.

"We remain on a journey of continuous improvement and the action plan sets out our response to the review recommendations.

"We will implement each of the 33 actions so that there is greater confidence that we are delivering the best possible service for the public and our workforce."

The external review highlights issues in the recording and escalating of concerns, the application of some policies and the way in which employment related legal cases are managed by the NICS.

A new NICS Raising a Concern Policy Framework has also been published. These guidelines for Departments set out, for the first time, a single, overarching approach to dealing with concerns raised.

A refreshed Civil Service Code of Ethics, which includes the obligation on all civil servants to keep proper records, will be embedded into performance management processes.

Neither PwC's Lessons learned and recommendations report, nor the Action Plan, addresses the actions of individual civil servants. The NI Civil Service, as a responsible employer, does not comment on internal employment related matters, which may or may not arise.

The Permanent Secretaries of DAERA and DoF will monitor the status of actions and have already asked their respective Departmental Audit Committees to scrutinise progress. Quarterly progress reports will be published on their respective websites.

The review also identifies areas for improvement in the culture of the service.

Jayne Brady said: "Concerns must always be raised, listened to and acted upon in the proper manner. It is critical that every civil servant maintains proper records and that all policies are up-to-date. These are the foundations of good governance.

"Some of the issues identified in this review, particularly in relation to record-keeping, were previously highlighted by the Inquiry into the Renewable Heat Incentive Scheme (RHI) report. This is not good enough and as leaders of the NI Civil Service, we will rigorously pursue progress against the recommendations.

"Improving the application of policies and procedures is a starting point, but real success requires behavioural and cultural change. Work is already underway to empower and support civil servants in effectively delivering the work of government and to develop an inclusive workplace culture."

Notes to Editors:

1. The PwC reports were commissioned by DAERA, on behalf of the Department's Permanent Secretary, the Department of Finance Permanent Secretary and the Head of the Civil Service. The reports and action plan are available here: <https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/publications/external-independent-review-pwc-reports-and-nics-action-plan>
2. The Terms of Reference committed to the publication of the outcomes of the review. The decision was taken in the interest of transparency for both papers of the External Independent Review in full. This has taken longer than initially anticipated.
3. Neither PwC's Lessons learned and recommendations report, nor the action plan, addresses the actions of individual civil servants. The NI Civil Service, as a responsible employer, does not comment on internal employment related matters, which may or may not arise. The requirements of employment law, the contractual obligations applying to every civil servant, and the obligation of fairness to all staff mean that any such matters must remain confidential in order to be lawful and fair and no individual civil servant or department may comment on these.
4. Link to NICS Code of Ethics: [NICS Code of Ethics | Department of Finance \(finance-ni.gov.uk\)](https://www.finance-ni.gov.uk/publications/nics-code-of-ethics)
5. Link to the new NICS Raising a Concern Policy Framework: <https://www.finance-ni.gov.uk/publications/raising-concern-policy-framework>
6. The full costs of the review are currently being finalised and will be published in due course on the DAERA website.
7. Media queries should be directed to the TEO press office via email at press.office@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk
8. The Executive Information Service operates an out of hours service for media enquiries only between 1800hrs and 0800hrs Monday to Friday and at weekends and public holidays. The duty press officer can be contacted on 028 9037 8110.

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[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 25 January 2023 14:59
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: G_DAERA PressOffice.Group, DAERA; [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: DUTY PRESS OFFICER - TEO News Release - CIVIL SERVICE PUBLISHES ACTION PLAN IN RESPONSE TO EXTERNAL REVIEW

Sorry, old email address popped up for [REDACTED]
Use this one.

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 25 January 2023 14:58
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: G DAERA PressOffice.Group, DAERA <PressOffice.Group@daera-ni.gov.uk>; [REDACTED]
Subject: DUTY PRESS OFFICER - TEO News Release - CIVIL SERVICE PUBLISHES ACTION PLAN IN RESPONSE TO EXTERNAL REVIEW

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[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 25 January 2023 15:17
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: McNabb, Chris; [REDACTED] TEO Press Office
Subject: FW: TEO News Release - CIVIL SERVICE PUBLISHES ACTION PLAN IN RESPONSE TO EXTERNAL REVIEW

To see query we have received from Irish News – likely response will be yes but with officials for their views.

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 25 January 2023 15:00
To: McNabb, Chris <Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>
Subject: FW: TEO News Release - CIVIL SERVICE PUBLISHES ACTION PLAN IN RESPONSE TO EXTERNAL REVIEW

Chris to see – who do I send this to? HOCS? And copy DAERA and DoF in?

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 25 January 2023 14:46
To: TEO EIS NewsService <EIS.NewsService@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>
Subject: Re: TEO News Release - CIVIL SERVICE PUBLISHES ACTION PLAN IN RESPONSE TO EXTERNAL REVIEW

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25 January 2023

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Jayne Brady said: "I welcome the findings in the reports. As a Service, we are committed to learning from this review and addressing the issues identified.

"We remain on a journey of continuous improvement and the action plan sets out our response to the review recommendations.

"We will implement each of the 33 actions so that there is greater confidence that we are delivering the best possible service for the public and our workforce."

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A new NICS Raising a Concern Policy Framework has also been published. These guidelines for Departments set out, for the first time, a single, overarching approach to dealing with concerns raised.

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[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 25 January 2023 15:27
To: Godfrey, Katrina (DAERA – Perm Sec)
Cc: G_DAERA PressOffice.Group, DAERA; DAERA PermSec; McFlynn, Sharon
Subject: RE: PwC report

Please note, Katrina and I have discussed and she has approved this line for issue.

Many thanks

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 25 January 2023 14:28
To: Godfrey, Katrina (DAERA – Perm Sec) <Katrina.Godfrey@daera-ni.gov.uk>
Cc: G_DAERA PressOffice.Group, DAERA <PressOffice.Group@daera-ni.gov.uk>; DAERA PermSec <perm.sec@daera-ni.gov.uk>; McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>
Subject: FW: PwC report

Hi Katrina, please see Bel Tel query below and the proposed line.

Grateful for your consideration.

[REDACTED]

QUERY

In relation to the PwC report into the treatment of [REDACTED] I have several questions:

- 1) Do [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] remain in post working for the department?
- 2) Does either [REDACTED] as members of the senior civil service, face disciplinary action?
- 3) Was the decision not to suspend them taken by Katrina Godfrey?
- 4) Neither [REDACTED] has even been named in the report, despite the department's acceptance of the fact they acted appallingly. Why is that so?

DRAFT RESPONSE

“It is not appropriate to comment on individual employee matters. Neither PwC’s Lessons learned and recommendations report, nor the action plan, addresses the actions of individual civil servants. The NI Civil Service, as a responsible employer, does not comment on internal employment related matters, which may or may not arise. The requirements of employment law, the contractual obligations applying to every civil servant, and the obligation of fairness to all staff mean that any such matters must remain confidential in order to be lawful and fair and no individual civil servant or department may comment on these.”

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 25 January 2023 15:27
To: McNabb, Chris; [REDACTED]
Cc: McFlynn, Sharon; G_DAERA PressOffice.Group, DAERA; [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: PwC report

Line cleared by Perm Sec.

Will issue now

From: McNabb, Chris <Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>
Sent: 25 January 2023 14:23
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>; G_DAERA PressOffice.Group, DAERA <PressOffice.Group@daera-ni.gov.uk>; [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: PwC report

thx

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 25 January 2023 14:23
To: McNabb, Chris <Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; [REDACTED]
Cc: McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>; G_DAERA PressOffice.Group, DAERA <PressOffice.Group@daera-ni.gov.uk>; [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: PwC report

Many thanks – will be clearing through Perm sec as BAU.

From: McNabb, Chris <Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>
Sent: 25 January 2023 14:21
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>; G_DAERA PressOffice.Group, DAERA <PressOffice.Group@daera-ni.gov.uk>; [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: PwC report

[REDACTED]

Please copy in both [REDACTED] into media lines.

Yes, agree with your approach and the line as it in the NTE should be the response – I wouldn't look to rearrange it

[REDACTED] – please let HOCS office know this is in and that DAERA will respond in line with the press office line

██████████ – you'll obviously have to go through the clearance process within DAERA

Thanks

Chris

From: ██████████
Sent: 25 January 2023 14:15
To: ██████████ McNabb, Chris <Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>
Cc: McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>; G_DAERA PressOffice.Group, DAERA <PressOffice.Group@daera-ni.gov.uk>
Subject: FW: PwC report

Hi both, please see query below from Bel Tel – looks like one for me in general unless you think otherwise?

If so, line likely to be rehash of NTE. Below for info

Thanks

██████████
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In relation to the PwC report into the treatment of ██████████ I have several questions:

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My deadline for this is 5pm.

DRAFT LINE

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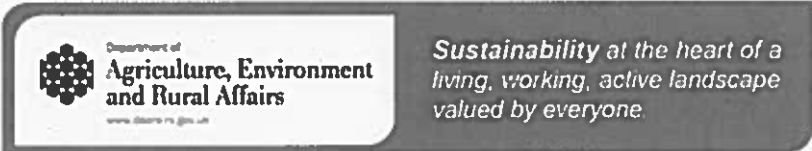
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 25 January 2023 15:50
To: [REDACTED] G_DAERA PressOffice.Group, DAERA
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Dragonfly &UTV

Great [REDACTED], thanks for the update
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 25 January 2023 15:49
To: [REDACTED] G_DAERA PressOffice.Group, DAERA <PressOffice.Group@daera-ni.gov.uk>
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Dragonfly &UTV

All - Just heard we have been bumped off tonight's UTV news due to sport and Oscars. Piece being re-edited as we speak and plan is to run it on Friday.



[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 25 January 2023 16:04
To: Brady, Jayne
Cc: [REDACTED] McNabb, Chris; Stewart, Chris (TEO); McCavigan, Tracey; [REDACTED] McFlynn, Sharon; [REDACTED] McLaughlin, Mark (DOF); Sayee, Natasha
Subject: FW: TEO News Release - CIVIL SERVICE PUBLISHES ACTION PLAN IN RESPONSE TO EXTERNAL REVIEW

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[REDACTED]

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Sent: 25 January 2023 16:16
To: [REDACTED] Brady, Jayne; Crilly, Louise
Cc: [REDACTED] McNabb, Chris; Stewart, Chris (TEO); McCavigan, Tracey; [REDACTED] McFlynn, Sharon; [REDACTED] McLaughlin, Mark (DOF)
Subject: RE: TEO News Release - CIVIL SERVICE PUBLISHES ACTION PLAN IN RESPONSE TO EXTERNAL REVIEW

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[REDACTED]

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Cc: [REDACTED] McNabb, Chris; Stewart, Chris (TEO); McCavigan, Tracey; [REDACTED] McFlynn, Sharon; [REDACTED] McLaughlin, Mark (DOF)
Subject: RE: TEO News Release - CIVIL SERVICE PUBLISHES ACTION PLAN IN RESPONSE TO EXTERNAL REVIEW

All, Jayne had indicated that she was content with the response but I'll await legal view – I think Louise is now on leave?

[REDACTED]

From: Sayee, Natasha <Natasha.Sayee@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>
Sent: 25 January 2023 16:16
To: [REDACTED] Brady, Jayne <HOCS@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; Crilly, Louise <Louise.Crilly@finance-ni.gov.uk>
Cc: Coleman, Roisin <Roisin.Coleman@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; [REDACTED] McNabb, Chris <Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; Stewart, Chris (TEO) <chris.stewart@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; McCavigan, Tracey <Tracey.McCavigan@finance-ni.gov.uk>; [REDACTED] McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>; [REDACTED] McLaughlin, Mark (DOF) <Mark.McLaughlin@finance-ni.gov.uk>
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Cc: Coleman, Roisin <Roisin.Coleman@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; [REDACTED] McNabb, Chris <Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; Stewart, Chris (TEO) <chris.stewart@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; McCavigan, Tracey <Tracey.McCavigan@finance-ni.gov.uk>; Conlan, [REDACTED] McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>; [REDACTED] McLaughlin, Mark (DOF) <Mark.McLaughlin@finance-ni.gov.uk>; Sayee, Natasha <Natasha.Sayee@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>
Subject: FW: TEO News Release - CIVIL SERVICE PUBLISHES ACTION PLAN IN RESPONSE TO EXTERNAL REVIEW

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Grateful for your views.

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 25 January 2023 14:46

To: TEO EIS NewsService <EIS.NewsService@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>

Subject: Re: TEO News Release - CIVIL SERVICE PUBLISHES ACTION PLAN IN RESPONSE TO EXTERNAL REVIEW

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[REDACTED]

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"We will implement each of the 33 actions so that there is greater confidence that we are delivering the best possible service for the public and our workforce."

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"Improving the application of policies and procedures is a starting point, but real success requires behavioural and cultural change. Work is already underway to empower and support civil servants in effectively delivering the work of government and to develop an inclusive workplace culture."

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[REDACTED]

From: Crilly, Louise
Sent: 25 January 2023 16:24
To: Brady, Jayne; Sayee, Natasha; [REDACTED]
Cc: Coleman, Roisin; [REDACTED] McNabb, Chris; Stewart, Chris (TEO); McCavigan, Tracey; [REDACTED] McFlynn, Sharon; [REDACTED] McLaughlin, Mark (DOF)
Subject: RE: TEO News Release - CIVIL SERVICE PUBLISHES ACTION PLAN IN RESPONSE TO EXTERNAL REVIEW

Im here and will revert in the next few minutes

From: Brady, Jayne <HOCS@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>
Sent: 25 January 2023 16:23
To: Sayee, Natasha <Natasha.Sayee@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] Crilly, Louise <Louise.Crilly@finance-ni.gov.uk>
Cc: Coleman, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] McNabb, Chris <Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; Stewart, Chris (TEO) <chris.stewart@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; McCavigan, Tracey <Tracey.McCavigan@finance-ni.gov.uk>; [REDACTED]
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[REDACTED]

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Sent: 25 January 2023 16:16
To: [REDACTED] Brady, Jayne <HOCS@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; Crilly, Louise <Louise.Crilly@finance-ni.gov.uk>
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Hi Louise,

Can you please assist.

Kind regards,

Natasha

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<chris.stewart@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; McCavigan, Tracey <Tracey.McCavigan@finance-ni.gov.uk>

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[REDACTED]

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To: Brady, Jayne; Sayee, Natasha; [REDACTED]
Cc: Coleman, Roisin; [REDACTED] McNabb, Chris; Stewart, Chris (TEO); McCavigan, Tracey; [REDACTED] McFlynn, Sharon; [REDACTED] McLaughlin, Mark (DOF)
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[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 25 January 2023 16:29
To: [REDACTED] G_DAERA PressOffice.Group, DAERA
Subject: RE: PwC report

[REDACTED] thanks for your query.

Please see line below for your use.

Thanks

[REDACTED]

A DAERA spokesman said: "It is not appropriate to comment on individual employee matters. Neither PwC's Lessons learned and recommendations report, nor the action plan, addresses the actions of individual civil servants. The NI Civil Service, as a responsible employer, does not comment on internal employment related matters, which may or may not arise. The requirements of employment law, the contractual obligations applying to every civil servant, and the obligation of fairness to all staff mean that any such matters must remain confidential in order to be lawful and fair and no individual civil servant or department may comment on these."

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 25 January 2023 14:01
To: G_DAERA PressOffice.Group, DAERA <PressOffice.Group@daera-ni.gov.uk>
Subject: PwC report

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Good afternoon,

In relation to the PwC report into the treatment of [REDACTED], I have several questions:

- 1) Do [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] remain in post working for the department?
- 2) Does either [REDACTED] as members of the senior civil service, face disciplinary action?
- 3) Was the decision not to suspend them taken by Katrina Godfrey?
- 4) Neither [REDACTED] has even been named in the report, despite the department's acceptance of the fact they acted appallingly. Why is that so?

My deadline for this is 5pm.

Thanks,

[REDACTED]



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United Kingdom

Switchboard +44 (0)28 90264000

Registered in the United Kingdom No: 01908967

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[REDACTED]

From: McCavigan, Tracey
Sent: 25 January 2023 16:29
To: Crilly, Louise; Brady, Jayne; Sayee, Natasha; [REDACTED]
Cc: Coleman, Roisin; [REDACTED]; McNabb, Chris; Stewart, Chris (TEO); [REDACTED]
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They didn't have open access to records. They were provided with access to all relevant documentation.

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From: Sayee, Natasha <Natasha.Sayee@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>
Sent: 25 January 2023 16:16
To: [REDACTED]; Brady, Jayne <HOCS@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; Crilly, Louise <Louise.Crilly@finance-ni.gov.uk>
Cc: [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] McNabb, Chris <Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; Stewart, Chris (TEO) <chris.stewart@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; McCavigan, Tracey <Tracey.McCavigan@finance-ni.gov.uk>; [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>; [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] McLaughlin, Mark (DOF) <Mark.McLaughlin@finance-ni.gov.uk>

Subject: RE: TEO News Release - CIVIL SERVICE PUBLISHES ACTION PLAN IN RESPONSE TO EXTERNAL REVIEW

Hi Louise,

Can you please assist.

Kind regards,

Natasha

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 25 January 2023 16:04

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Cc: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]; McNabb, Chris <Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; Stewart, Chris (TEO) <chris.stewart@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>; McCavigan, Tracey <Tracey.McCavigan@finance-ni.gov.uk>

[REDACTED]; McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>; [REDACTED] McLaughlin, Mark (DOF) <Mark.McLaughlin@finance-ni.gov.uk>; Sayee, Natasha <Natasha.Sayee@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>

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All to see media query from the Irish News in relation to the PwC report. Having discussed with officials, the suggested response to the query is 'yes'.

Grateful for your views.

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 25 January 2023 14:46

To: TEO EIS NewsService <EIS.NewsService@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>

Subject: Re: TEO News Release - CIVIL SERVICE PUBLISHES ACTION PLAN IN RESPONSE TO EXTERNAL REVIEW

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Hello,

I have one query regarding the PwC report:

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I'll need a response no later than 5pm today.

Thanks in advance,

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THE EXECUTIVE OFFICE

25 January 2023

Civil Service publishes action plan in response to external review

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Commissioned by DAERA on behalf of the Department's Permanent Secretary Katrina Godfrey, the Department of Finance Permanent Secretary Neil Gibson and the Head of the Civil Service Jayne Brady, the reports and action plan have been shared with staff, trade unions, MLAs and the NI Audit Office.

Jayne Brady said: "I welcome the findings in the reports. As a Service, we are committed to learning from this review and addressing the issues identified.

"We remain on a journey of continuous improvement and the action plan sets out our response to the review recommendations.

"We will implement each of the 33 actions so that there is greater confidence that we are delivering the best possible service for the public and our workforce."

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Cc: [REDACTED] McNabb, Chris; Stewart, Chris (TEO); [REDACTED]
McFlynn, Sharon; [REDACTED] McLaughlin, Mark (DOF)
Subject: RE: TEO News Release - CIVIL SERVICE PUBLISHES ACTION PLAN IN RESPONSE TO EXTERNAL REVIEW

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[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 25 January 2023 16:30
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: PwC report

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Thanks, [REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday 25 January 2023 16:29
To: [REDACTED] G_DAERA PressOffice.Group, DAERA <PressOffice.Group@daera-ni.gov.uk>
Subject: RE: PwC report

[REDACTED] thanks for your query.

Please see line below for your use.

Thanks
[REDACTED]

A DAERA spokesman said: "It is not appropriate to comment on individual employee matters. Neither PwC's Lessons learned and recommendations report, nor the action plan, addresses the actions of individual civil servants. The NI Civil Service, as a responsible employer, does not comment on internal employment related matters, which may or may not arise. The requirements of employment law, the contractual obligations applying to every civil servant, and the obligation of fairness to all staff mean that any such matters must remain confidential in order to be lawful and fair and no individual civil servant or department may comment on these."

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 25 January 2023 14:01
To: G_DAERA PressOffice.Group, DAERA <PressOffice.Group@daera-ni.gov.uk>
Subject: PwC report

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Good afternoon,

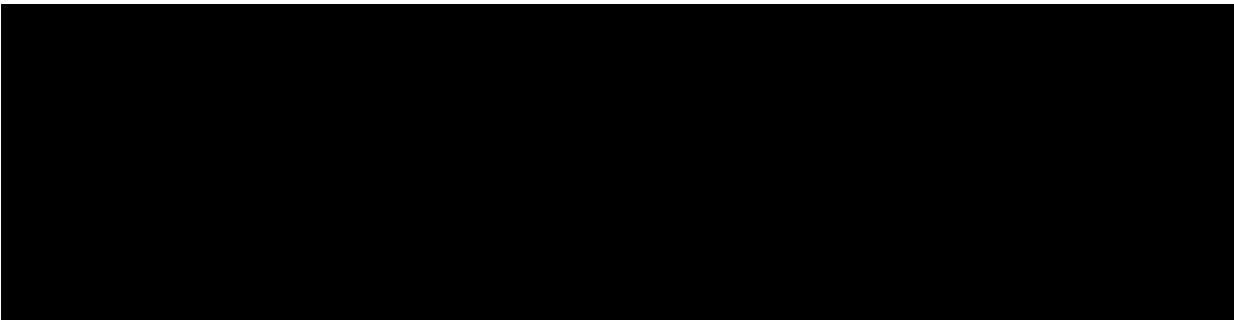
In relation to the PwC report into the treatment of [REDACTED] I have several questions:

- 1) Do [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] remain in post working for the department?
- 2) Does either [REDACTED] as members of the senior civil service, face disciplinary action?

- 3) Was the decision not to suspend them taken by Katrina Godfrey?
4) Neither [REDACTED] has even been named in the report, despite the department's acceptance of the fact they acted appallingly. Why is that so?

My deadline for this is 5pm.

Thanks,



Belfast Telegraph



Tell it like it is.



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Mediahuis UK limited,
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Belfast, BT1 3BG
United Kingdom
Switchboard +44 (0)28 90264000
Registered in the United Kingdom No: 01908967

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[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 25 January 2023 16:31
To: Crilly, Louise; McCavigan, Tracey; Brady, Jayne; Sayee, Natasha
Cc: [REDACTED] McNabb, Chris; Stewart, Chris (TEO); [REDACTED]
McFlynn, Sharon; [REDACTED] McLaughlin, Mark (DOF)
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Thanks all for your help I will respond to the journalist.

Kind regards

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A 33-point action plan to improve governance across the NI Civil Service has been published today.

The plan is in response to findings from an external independent review undertaken by PwC to examine the handling of concerns and other matters raised in a case taken by a former DAERA employee.

Commissioned by DAERA on behalf of the Department's Permanent Secretary Katrina Godfrey, the Department of Finance Permanent Secretary Neil Gibson and the Head of the Civil Service Jayne Brady, the reports and action plan have been shared with staff, trade unions, MLAs and the NI Audit Office.

Jayne Brady said: "I welcome the findings in the reports. As a Service, we are committed to learning from this review and addressing the issues identified."

"We remain on a journey of continuous improvement and the action plan sets out our response to the review recommendations.

"We will implement each of the 33 actions so that there is greater confidence that we are delivering the best possible service for the public and our workforce."

The external review highlights issues in the recording and escalating of concerns, the application of some policies and the way in which employment related legal cases are managed by the NICS.

A new NICS Raising a Concern Policy Framework has also been published. These guidelines for Departments set out, for the first time, a single, overarching approach to dealing with concerns raised.

A refreshed Civil Service Code of Ethics, which includes the obligation on all civil servants to keep proper records, will be embedded into performance management processes.

Neither PwC's Lessons learned and recommendations report, nor the Action Plan, addresses the actions of individual civil servants. The NI Civil Service, as a responsible employer, does not comment on internal employment related matters, which may or may not arise.

The Permanent Secretaries of DAERA and DoF will monitor the status of actions and have already asked their respective Departmental Audit Committees to scrutinise progress. Quarterly progress reports will be published on their respective websites.

The review also identifies areas for improvement in the culture of the service.

Jayne Brady said: "Concerns must always be raised, listened to and acted upon in the proper manner. It is critical that every civil servant maintains proper records and that all policies are up-to-date. These are the foundations of good governance.

"Some of the issues identified in this review, particularly in relation to record-keeping, were previously highlighted by the Inquiry into the Renewable Heat Incentive Scheme (RHI) report. This is not good enough and as leaders of the NI Civil Service, we will rigorously pursue progress against the recommendations.

"Improving the application of policies and procedures is a starting point, but real success requires behavioural and cultural change. Work is already underway to empower and support civil servants in effectively delivering the work of government and to develop an inclusive workplace culture."

Notes to Editors:

1. The PwC reports were commissioned by DAERA, on behalf of the Department's Permanent Secretary, the Department of Finance Permanent Secretary and the Head of the Civil Service. The reports and action plan are available here: <https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/publications/external-independent-review-pwc-reports-and-nics-action-plan>
2. The Terms of Reference committed to the publication of the outcomes of the review. The decision was taken in the interest of transparency for both papers of the External Independent Review in full. This has taken longer than initially anticipated.
3. Neither PwC's Lessons learned and recommendations report, nor the action plan, addresses the actions of individual civil servants. The NI Civil Service, as a responsible employer, does not comment on internal employment related matters, which may or may not arise. The requirements of employment law, the contractual obligations applying to every civil servant, and the obligation of fairness to all staff mean that any such matters must remain confidential in order to be lawful and fair and no individual civil servant or department may comment on these.
4. Link to NICS Code of Ethics: [NICS Code of Ethics | Department of Finance \(finance-ni.gov.uk\)](https://www.finance-ni.gov.uk)
5. Link to the new NICS Raising a Concern Policy Framework: <https://www.finance-ni.gov.uk/publications/raising-concern-policy-framework>
6. The full costs of the review are currently being finalised and will be published in due course on the DAERA website.
7. Media queries should be directed to the TEO press office via email at press.office@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk

8. **The Executive Information Service operates an out of hours service for media enquiries only between 1800hrs and 0800hrs Monday to Friday and at weekends and public holidays. The duty press officer can be contacted on 028 9037 8110.**

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[REDACTED]

From: McFlynn, Sharon
Sent: 25 January 2023 16:37
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: OFFICIAL - SENSITIVE: DRAFT questions
Attachments: DRAFT potential questions 180123.docx; 20 questions for HOCS NS EDIT.docx

[REDACTED]

This is a more up to date version of the potential questions doc.

Sharon

Sent with BlackBerry Work
(www.blackberry.com)

External Review Report publication

Report production

In May DAERA stated the review was expected to be completed by end of July 2022.

- When was the review completed?
 - The final reports were received on January 9 2023
 - When was this report first received by the NICS?
 - When was the final report provided?
 - The final reports were received on 09 January 2023.
 - What were the steps in between?
 - [Jayne and Tracey to provide as we agreed that Neil and I would not comment on the interim reports]
 - Why has it taken until now to publish the findings?
 - The intention was to complete the investigation and the lessons learned reports as swiftly as possible but also as thoroughly as possible. In the process of the investigation, some new information came to light that needed to be followed up
 - How much was the report expected to cost?
 - It was anticipated that the two reports would cost up to £107,500!
 - How much did it cost?
 - Final costs are currently being finalised and will be published in due course.
 - If it was above projected cost – why?
 - Final costs are currently being finalised and will be published in due course.
 - HOCS said this was a personal priority – could this not have been handled much quicker?
 - We received the final reports on January 9 2023 and are publishing them today.
- I accept that it took longer than originally anticipated to get to the point of having final reports but there are steps we all had to work through to get to this stage.
- My focus is delivering on the Action Plan so that the gaps identified in the report can be addressed.
- Do the NICS think this report meets the objectives and will make a difference?

Commented [MS1]: Has this figure been disclosed before?

Commented [DR2R1]: I recall emails around publishing the cost and there was an agreement to do so in due course. However, I'm not aware that this amount has been disclosed.

Commented [MS3]: These are the draft lines prepared by Chris McNabb for the list of top 20 questions for HOCS

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Commented [CC4]: TEO / DAERA to provide responses

Access to information to compile report

The report states:

"We were not responsible for identifying the relevant documentation, nor determining the completeness of the document population provided to us. In addition, we have not sought

clarification from relevant officials on the actions taken by persons involved in the case. In the absence of doing so, it has not been possible to determine conclusively, the extent of compliance with relevant policies, procedures and processes."

"Subsequent to the issue of our draft report, however, the Review Oversight Group asked key parties 2 to provide a written response to it. We have considered the comments made, updating our report to correct any potential factual inaccuracies identified or to add additional clarity. We have also considered additional documentation located by the Departmental Solicitor's Office ("DSO") when asked to respond to our draft report."

- **Were the report authors given access to all the information they needed? DAERA /TEO to insert response**

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DAERA provided PWC with full access to all its files and its auditors ensured that PWC was signposted to all relevant documentation

- **Why was additional documentation only located by DSO at review stage? What assurance can you give that other documentation hasn't gone unlocated?**
The additional documentation referred to consisted of a small number of hand written consultation notes that had not been attached to the main hard copy file due to oversight arising from the unprecedented working practices required during the pandemic.

The report states:

"As agreed, no stakeholder interviews were held as part of fieldwork.... We are therefore unable to draw conclusions for all areas in scope?"

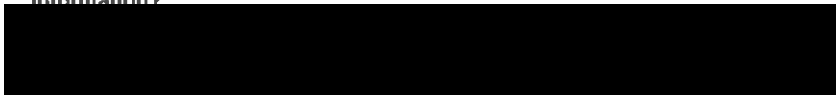
- **Who made the decision to not hold stakeholder interviewers and why? DAERA /TEO to insert response**
- The Oversight Group took the decision at the outset to follow the normal audit processes where all documentation is available for review and where officials are available to clarify any follow-up questions. [An additional factor was that, if interviews are to be held as part of any process, they must be held in a consistent and fair manner and in line with NICS processes and must include all stakeholders. We considered at the time that such approach risked delaying very significantly the completion of the review.]

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The report states:

"Following discussions with DoF, we have been instructed to omit from this report reference to any privileged information that we may have reviewed."

- **Why were the report authors asked to omit references to privileged information?**



The report states:

"We have not been asked to provide an opinion on the adequacy of action taken?"

- **Why were the report authors not asked to provide an opinion on the action taken in this case?**
The actions taken in this case have already been the subject of an Industrial Tribunal. This report is about identifying lessons learnt.

Report findings & associated actions

- **Has / will any disciplinary action be taken against anyone as a result of this report?** DAERA to insert response
- 1. **In common with other employers, our HR processes are confidential and must remain so and we do not** [REDACTED]

I'm not going to provide a running commentary on internal employment related issues which may or may not arise.

To ensure due process is preserved, any such process would always remain confidential

What action will be taken to address the report findings?
An Action plan is published with the report, addressing both the specific recommendations of the PwC Lessons Learnt report and the wider systemic issues identified in the review.

Who will oversee this?

In their capacity as Principal Accounting Officers for their Departments, the Permanent Secretaries of DAERA and DoF will monitor the status of actions and have already asked their respective Audit Committees to scrutinise progress. They will also provide the Head of the Civil Service, as Chair of the NI Civil Service Board, with regular updates. Where an action applies across the organisation, the NICS Board will collectively report on progress to the Chair.

TEO to insert response

- **Who ultimately owns the policies that should have been updated?**
Managing Public Money, the NICS Handbook and the Code of Ethics are the responsibility of the Department of Finance.

The DAERA Enforcement Policy and DAERA Whistleblowing Policy are the responsibility of that Department.
- **Has the report been shared with [REDACTED] ?** DAERA /TEO to insert response
[DN: will it be shared at point of publication through legal teams?]
- **If not are there any plans to do so?** DAERA /TEO to insert response

Record keeping

The report states:

Commented [M55]: Draft line prepared by Chris McNabb for the list of top 20 questions for HOCS.

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Commented [M57]: Katrina, this is the line suggested by DSO (Louise). It's very similar to yours. Are you content for yours to be removed and replaced with this one?

"In addition, more broadly, from the documentation reviewed, there appears to be a gap in notes of key meetings/consultations, or written follow-up notes by way of an alternative record of the meetings/consultations, which we would expect as a means of keeping an audit trail of key discussions and decisions."

- **The report indicates a lack of record keeping which was also raised as part of the RHI Inquiry. What action has been taken to address this following RHI?**

The requirement to keep accurate official records has been reinforced through a revision to the NICS Code of Ethics. The revised Code of Ethics includes an explicit requirement that staff must "keep accurate official records, including minutes of ministerial meetings, and handle information as openly and transparently as possible within the legal framework". A breach of the Code of Ethics may be treated as a disciplinary matter.

A data protection and information management hub has been launched on the NICS intranet with links to NICS Record Management Policy, Record Management Governance Framework, Email Management policy and guidance.

A records management training strategy for the NICS has been developed and a new e-learning package and guidance is being developed.

The report states:

"We also note that there is no evidence of a communication to witnesses in relation to the preservation of emails, notes or any documents that could be considered relevant to the claim."

- **Were witnesses advised to preserve emails, notes, documents?**
On receipt of the Tribunal claim form a letter was issued by DSO which included a requirement to preserve and provide all relevant documentation.

Commented [GK(-PS8)]: This contradicts the point made in the report and quoted in the question above. Was this information not made available to PWC?

Commented [MS9R8]: Will include your comment on the way back to DoF- this line was provided by them.

Policies and procedures

The report states:

"There is no evidence to demonstrate that three of the five policies had been reviewed within the last 9 years."

- **When were the Managing Public Money NI, NICS Code of Ethics, NICS HR Handbook, DAERA Whistleblowing Policies and Procedures and DAERA Enforcement Policy last reviewed?**
Managing Public Money – currently under review – this will be complete in April 2023
Code of Ethics – reviewed December 2021, published February 2022
NICS HR Handbook – under continuous Review. Discipline, Grievance, Dignity at Work, Recruitment and Special Leave policies have all been reviewed in the past year and a review of Sickness Absence is near completion.
DAERA to provide response on their policies

The DAERA Whistleblowing guidance was last reviewed in 2019. [The 2014 version of the Whistleblowing guidance was supplied to PwC as this was the version that was in place when the concerns were raised between February

2017 and February 2018). It will be reviewed and updated in the coming weeks to ensure it reflects the new Raising Concerns framework also published today.

The DAERA Enforcement Policy was last reviewed in 2014. As part of the Action Plan, this policy will be reviewed and updated, published on the DAERA website and communicated to DAERA staff and stakeholders by May 2023.

The report states:

"There is no guidance in place for line managers to help them assess where line of business concerns may require internal escalation to ensure they are being dealt with appropriately. Furthermore, escalated matters are not recorded in a central document."

- **What guidance is in place to help line managers?**
Guidance is available to managers on handling concerns that are raised with them.

[DN: DoF hasn't asked us to provide input to this answer but we may want to include the following as a supplementary bullet point:

The current DAERA Whistleblowing guidance advises makes clear that staff with concerns can approach their line manager, their next immediate line manager or alternatively their Head of Division. Guidance on escalation includes approaching the Finance Director, Corporate Services Director or Internal Audit. If a further escalation is required staff are advised that they can approach the Permanent Secretary or Deputy Secretary.]

Publication of the overarching NICS Raising a Concern Policy Framework and associated training will provide additional guidance for staff.

- **What procedures are in place to record escalated matters centrally?**
All departments currently keep a record of concerns raised with the department.

This practice is confirmed by the new Policy Framework, whether the concern is raised internally or externally, and whether it is raised explicitly as a concern or comes to be treated as a concern in due course.

Arrangements will be put in place for information about the number and type of concerns raised with departments to be reported to the NICS Board, allowing system-wide learning to be identified.

[DN: DoF hasn't asked us to provide input to this answer but we may want to include the following as a supplementary bullet point:

Within DAERA a Whistleblowing exercise is commissioned monthly across the Department to capture all new concerns raised, regardless of whether they are raised internally by staff or externally by customers and stakeholders. These concerns and the action taken in each case are presented to the ARAC for scrutiny and reported to the Permanent Secretary.]

Commented [MS10]: This is the version on the DAERA website. It doesn't have an owner assigned to it so I have not been able to identify a policy lead to confirm this statement.

Commented [GK(-PS11R10): We need to nail this down and appoint a policy lead!

Commented [MS12R10]: We do- that's in the action plan.

Commented [GK(-PS13): Can we say something like "...all new concerns raised, regardless of whether they are raised internally by staff or externally by customers and stakeholders. These concerns and the action taken in each case are presented to the ARAC for scrutiny and reported to the Permanent Secretary". Check with Brian/Fiona and Roger to make sure accurate wording used though

Commented [MS14R13]: Roger content.

Commented [GK(-PS15): Can we say something like "...all new concerns raised, regardless of whether they are raised internally by staff or externally by customers and stakeholders. These concerns and the action taken in each case are presented to the ARAC for scrutiny and reported to the Permanent Secretary". Check with Brian/Fiona and Roger to make sure accurate wording used though

Commented [DR16R15]: I agree and I have updated the line to take accordingly

- **Are there plans to introduce training?**

Training on the Raising a Concern Policy Framework will be provided as part of the roll-out of the, between now and the Summer 2023.

DAERA will also provide bespoke training for all DAERA staff at Grade 7 and above on handling concerns by September 2023.

- **Who will do it and by when?**

DoF will provide training to designated officers and their teams. Training of others will be managed at a departmental level, reflecting the overarching arrangements for the NICS and the specific arrangements within the individual Department.

Whistleblowing procedures

The report states:

"...we note that none of the concerns were recorded in the relevant Departmental Whistleblowing Registers, including by the claimant?"

Why were the concerns raised not recorded in the Departmental Whistleblowing Registers? DAERA to insert response It is not clear why this was the case. However, as noted in paragraph 4.49 in the PwC report, it appears that the concerns raised by the Claimant were not treated as protected disclosures at the time, at least initially, by the Claimant or the Department.

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Commented [GK(-PS17)]: Fiona and Roger -- could you add, drawing on what the report actually says?

Commented [MS18R17]: Roger provided updated line.

- **Is the current NICS whistleblowing policy sufficient and are appropriate procedures in place?**

Each Department has a whistleblowing policy. These were reviewed recently by the Internal Audit service. In addition, an overarching policy framework has been introduced to support Departments, to secure consistency, and to provide assurance to those who wish to raise a concern.

- **Are the policy and procedures easily accessible to all NICS staff?**

Whistleblowing policies are accessible on departments' intranet sites.

- **Are you confident that line managers know what to do?**

Many managers will be familiar with handling concerns that are raised with them, and for those who are less familiar with their department's policies, these are easily available, and there will be colleagues able to advise.

The publication of the Raising a Concern policy framework will be an opportunity to refresh colleagues' understanding of the policy, and for staff to be trained.

DoF will provide training to designated officers and their teams. Training of others will be managed at a departmental level, reflecting the overarching arrangements for the NICS and the specific arrangements within the Individual Department.

Training

The report states:

"We have not had visibility of all training that is provided or the completion rates but we are aware of the following training modules are available: A Framework for Ethical Decision Making, NICS Online Induction Programme on Equal Opportunities and Conduct, Public Interest Disclosure – Whistleblowing and Unconscious Bias."

- **What are the completion rates for these courses? Are these training courses mandatory?**
 - Framework for Ethical Decision Making – this is an online Resource which is available to all staff. Completion rates are recorded for face to face/virtual training courses and for e-learning training packages, as this is an online resource access data is not recorded.
 - Online Induction Programme on Equal Opportunities and Conduct – mandatory for new staff. Completion in 2021/22 year was 405 and in the 2022/23 year to date is 215. This is an e-Learning Induction Programme which includes training on Equal Opportunities and Conduct.
 - Public Interest Disclosure – Whistleblowing – not a mandatory course, completion in 2021/22 year was 366 and in the 2022/23 year to date is 287.
 - Unconscious Bias – was rolled out as a one off mandatory course to all staff. Members of the SCS received classroom based training in late 2016/early 2017. Staff at EO2 grade and above were to complete the e-Learning package which was rolled out in January 2022. Currently 79.7% of NICS staff are certified, i.e. have completed the package. DfC are the only Department who have made this mandatory for all new staff and was rolled out via the LInKS learning management system in January 2022.

DSO

Merits of the claim

The report states:

"From the documentation we have reviewed, we have not seen any evidence of advice from the legal team on the merits of claim."

"We note that Counsel's fee note dated 2 July 2020 does not include reference to time spend advising or drafting a merits of claim note."

- **Did DSO set out the merits of the claim?**

Oral advice was provided on the merits of the claim by Counsel at meetings with DAERA held on 7 October 2019, 24 January 2020 and 4 February 2020.
- **Would DSO normally set out the merits of the claim?**

In employment litigation cases DSO would where practicable and appropriate provide advice on the merits of a claim to NICS/HR/the client Department.

Appealing the case

The report states:

"The notice of appeal was lodged by DSO on 2 November 2021. Based on the initial documentation we reviewed, in addition to that subsequently provided, it remains unclear who made the decision to do so."

"In regard to the initial decision to appeal, there is a paucity of documentation currently available to support this decision and therefore to determine whether it was a transparent process, such as would be required by Managing Public Money Northern Ireland."

- **Who made the decision to appeal the case?**

As the report notes, it appears that the decision was reached during a meeting with DSO and Counsel held on 28th September 2021 but it is unclear who made the decision to appeal, and the lack of documentation makes it difficult to establish the facts. A key lesson from this review is that there needs to be much greater clarity on decision-making [and record keeping] in employment-related legal cases and we are taking that on board, was made by DAERA officials during a meeting with DSO and Counsel held on 28th September 2024.

- **Did they have the necessary authority?**

While the process of decision-making was unclear in this case, decision-making is the responsibility of the employing department and there is a need to ensure that this is understood by all those involved in considering the next steps in all cases. Individual departments have different delegated approval limits. It is the responsibility of the Department seeking legal representation to have the necessary approvals in place.

- **Was the decision maker conflicted?**

DAERA to insert response

As stated in the report, it remains unclear who made the decision to appeal but, for the future, we need to do more to ensure that our processes, including clarity on roles and responsibilities, are such that staff who were involved in decisions or processes that may have given rise to employment-related legal action are not involved in decision-making on that legal action, the decision-maker is not the person directly involved in taking the steps being challenged in any employment-related legal cases

The report states:

"It appears that the former Permanent Secretary of DAERA was not aware of the decision to appeal (but may retrospectively have agreed with the decision to do so). Therefore an established approval process does not appear to have been followed."

- **Was an established approval process followed? If not, why not?**

DAERA to insert response

As stated in the report, an established approval process does not appear to have been followed.

Record keeping

The report states:

"We note, however, that in its written response to our draft report, DSO stated that 'oral advice on the merits was given [by Counsel in a meeting with the Chief Veterinary Officer on 7 October 2019] ...although this advice is not recorded in the notes of the meeting'"

- **Why was oral advice on the merits of the case not recorded in notes of the meeting?**

Commented [MS19]: The report refers to a 'paucity of information'. I would recommend that we stick to use of that term.

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Commented [MS20]: The report states it remains unclear who made the decision. This line is contrary to that finding.

Commented [GK(-PS21R20): Agreed and we need to reflect the report

Commented [GK(-PS22): That is true but I recall a case last year where DoF took a set of decisions on a different employment matter without any recourse at all to the line manager, budget holder or Accounting Officer. I have already drawn both Louise's and Tracey's attention to that case which, at the time, I also reported to the TOA.

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Commented [MS23]: Wording revised in line with action 32 in the action plan. Is there something implicit here that may create a risk?

Commented [MS24]: DOF Action 29 -in case you want to draw it in as part of a wider response.

A protocol will be developed and introduced in relation to the management of employment-related legal cases. This will set out the respective roles, responsibilities and decision-making authorities of all stakeholders, in particular the employing department, the Departmental Solicitor's Office and any external legal support (e.g., counsel), and the central Human Resources/ Organisational Development functions, the purpose being to ensure these are clear, understood and known.

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Commented [MS25]: Katrina - could this deviation from the wording in the report have unintended consequences/ in the bigger picture? I would recommend sticking to the exact wording of the report.

During consultations both solicitor and counsel will engage with the client, with a primary focus on understanding the issues and providing advice. It is not always possible for the solicitor to take a verbatim record of all discussions which take place during these meetings.

- **Is record keeping being reviewed and or monitored NICs wide?**
The NICS Code of Ethics requires staff to keep accurate records. A breach of the Code of Ethics may be treated as a disciplinary matter.
- **What action will be taken NICS wide in relation to record keeping?**
Extensive work was done in light of the RHI Inquiry Report – revising and promoting record keeping policies including the creation of an online Data Protection and Information Management Hub. Further work is planned to support changed behaviours.

The NICS Code of Ethics has been updated and is available to all staff and shall be promoted on a bi-annual basis to all staff.

Legal advice (Any responses stating legal privilege should be checked with DAERA prior to issue)

The report states:

“...the inclusion of whistleblowing claims meant that the financial cap on unfair dismissal (approximately £90,000) was removed as there is no limit on the compensation that can be awarded for unfair dismissal linked to whistleblowing. Although this fact appears to have been recognised, given the significant impact on the potential award for this case, we would have expected the legal team i.e. DSO and Counsel to provide advice in relation to the potential impact this would have had in relation to proceeding to hearing both from a legal and commercial perspective.

- **Did DSO and Counsel provide advice to DEARA on the financial impact (i.e., cap removal) of the inclusion of whistleblowing claims in the case?**
We cannot comment on the content of legal advice, as it is privileged.
Or [subject to discussing legal privilege with DAERA]: Advice was provided on this topic to DAERA officials at a meeting held on 4 February 2020.
- **Would the legal advice have been updated at this juncture?**
We cannot comment on the content of legal advice, as it is privileged. **Or [subject to discussing legal privilege with DAERA]:** The advice was not updated at the time but was provided before the hearing.
- **What were the legal costs involved with this case?**
The claimant's legal costs have yet to be finalised. DAERA's legal costs to date are £121,146.54.

Commented [GK(-PS26)]: Content to allow this to be included

Commented [GK(-PS27)]: Content to allow this to be included

Commented [WH28]: One fee note from counsel remains outstanding

Preparing witnesses

The report states:

“Based on the comments in the judgement, it is apparent that a number of the Officials providing oral testimony were not as prepared as we would routinely expect them to be. In

our view, it would be reasonable to expect the legal team to be cognisant of the level of preparedness of the witnesses, albeit it is ultimately the witnesses' responsibility."

"Based on the documentation we have reviewed; we have not seen evidence of any written advice and guidance provided to the officials who gave evidence via oral testimony at the Tribunal."

"Based on the documentation we have reviewed; we have not seen any contemporaneous documentation in relation to the assessment of the preparedness of the officials providing oral testimony."

"Based on the documentation we have reviewed; there is limited evidence of DSO undertaking an assessment of the level of preparedness of the officials providing oral testimony prior to the hearing."

We note a memo dated 12 April 2022 from the Permanent Secretary, (DAERA) (until April 2022) which includes references to 'unpreparedness' of the DAERA witnesses: "due to performance of our witnesses in the original Tribunal hearing and what I understand to be our general unpreparedness in terms of the level of depth of questioning that they faced it is clear that real deficiencies in our processes has left us facing a liability of significant proportions at a time when our resource budget is so severely constrained."

- **How did DSO prepare officials for the case?**
DAERA witnesses were provided with guidance on preparing their witness statements. Witnesses were also offered and attended meetings with DSO and Counsel to discuss their statements to enable witnesses to complete further work on their statements before they were served.
- **Did DSO assist with written statements?**
Witnesses must draft their own written statements. Legal advisers are not permitted to draft a written statement. Legal advisers can give advice and ensure there are no obvious gaps in the evidence provided / allegations addressed in the statement. Witnesses were also offered and attended meetings with DSO and Counsel to discuss their statements to enable witnesses to complete further work on their statements before they were served.
- **Were DSO staff at the right grade with the right experience allocated to this case?**
DSO legal staff work as part of an experienced team with supervision and support from more senior lawyers.
- **Is there a performance issue in relation to the service provided by DSO on this occasion?**
We can always improve levels of service, lessons have been learned and improvement actions put in place within DSO.
- **Will any DSO policies or procedures be reviewed as a result of this?**
DSO opens at least 1,100 litigation cases every year for our clients. As with the rest of the NICS, DSO is engaged in continuous improvement and has over recent years rolled out many internal or client-facing service enhancements, for example improved procedures, guidance materials, template documents for use in case work and training of legal staff.

NICS HR

Conciliation/arbitration

The report states:

"On 5 September 2018 an email and letter was received from the Labour Relations Agency Conciliation Service asking "if the Respondent [was] interested in conciliation or arbitration"... In response to an email from the Deputy Principal DAERA asking what this would entail, the Executive Officer (NICS HR) stated, "Generally speaking in cases we do not go down that route, however the option is available. Personally speaking, with the claimant leaving the service, mediation may not be beneficial to the department."

On 15 November 2018 the Chief Veterinary Officer confirmed to the Deputy Principal DARA that he thought "we should show willing". Having received, however, the Executive Officer's NICS HR email (above) of explanation, it appears that the Chief Veterinary Officer no longer "wish[ed] to avail of the conciliation/arbitration facility.

- **Did NICS HR give a view on entering conciliation or arbitration?**

The conciliation process is voluntary and requires both parties' agreement to proceed. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] It would not be common practice, as indicated by the EO, to engage in conciliation at a very early stage in a case and before the issues in the case are fully understood. The option of conciliation or arbitration was left open to relevant managers in DAERA.

Commented [GK(-PS29): This is not complete and needs tied down to be consistent with the report

Background note: Note this relates to the procedures as they were in 2018 shortly after the claim was lodged – the procedures have changed since 2020 with the inception of the early conciliation process BEFORE the claim can be lodged although there is still an option for conciliation even after proceedings are lodged.

- **Should the conciliation/arbitration facility have been pursued?**

[DSO to advise]

The report states:

"...While this is a hugely disappointing outcome for us all, from our perspective it would seem clear that Judge Murray was favourably disposed towards [the Claimant], making it extremely difficult for the Department to secure the decision we wanted/needed from the tribunal...

- **Should NICS HR have made comments on the Judge's disposition?**

The reasons for the outcome of a case are considered when the judgment is received, however, the procedures for undertaking such an evaluation are under review and relevant staff have since been given advice about the extent of their role and reminded of their responsibilities.

The report states:

"...Although this decision is a bitter pill [sic] to swallow, rest assured you were both individually and collectively a credit to your profession through the hearing."

- **Should NICS HR staff have praised the individuals involved in the case?**

- Were NICS HR staff at the right grade with the right experience allocated to this case?
- Is there a performance issue in relation to the service provided by NICS HR?
- Has / will any disciplinary action be taken against NICS HR staff involved in this case?

Since the case concluded, relevant staff have been given advice and reminded of their responsibilities.

In addition, in April 2021, a new standard approach for the management of Industrial Tribunal cases in the NICS was introduced. The new procedures comprise a suite of template letters and process maps and includes guidance on support for and liaison with Respondents/witnesses which has helped to standardise the approach taken by case managers.

The relevant function (ER Industrial Tribunals team) has been moved from NICS HR team to the People & Organisational Development Strategic Litigation Unit to form one single team dealing with the HR case management of employment-related litigation against NI Departments. Following the move, job roles are being further developed to ensure specific duties are allocated at the appropriate grade. It is important to note that the role of HR is in the coordination of the NICS response to an employment-related legal case and to support legal advisers and decision takers in the relevant business areas; HR does not take decisions on the conduct of such cases.

Commented [GK(-PS30): See my comment above - that's not always my experience

A further review of the roles, responsibilities, processes and procedures of all relevant stakeholders (legal advisers, business areas and HR) is planned now that the April 2021 procedures have been in place for almost two years. This will provide the opportunity to make any further improvements as a result of any lessons learnt from this case.

DAERA- Animal welfare and deleted cattle moves

The report states

Both sides agreed in the submissions hearing that the information conveyed in the protected disclosures is encapsulated in the following description:

- Issues of concern about welfare of animals in livestock markets particularly in Ballymena Livestock Market; and
- Issues about the deletion of cattle moves in the recording carried out by livestock markets and the effect of that on traceability of cattle and the risk of Tuberculosis ("TB") in particular
- **What actions has DAERA taken to address these concerns and improve the robustness of controls for animal traceability in livestock markets and abattoirs.**
- Following the outcome of the case in October 2021, the Department established an Internal Audit Review of the Department's Cattle Traceability System. This review was focused on the robustness of current controls for animal traceability in livestock markets and abattoirs and also considered all of the issues raised by [REDACTED]

- The review made a number of recommendations almost all of which have been accepted and implemented by the Department. The implementation of these recommendations has further enhanced and strengthened the control measures in place to enable accurate, real-time recording of bovine animal movements between farms, markets and abattoirs.
- One recommendation in relation to recording/deleting movements of cattle remains outstanding. Implementation will require an amendment to domestic legislation due to application of the EU Animal Health Law in Northern Ireland. In the absence of a Minister, this matter is currently being considered under the Executive Formation etc Act 2022 and accompanying guidance. Any decisions will be subject to the recording and reporting requirements set out in that guidance..”

Commented [MS31]: Neal included full details of the recommendation but I have taken them out. Posted below FYI

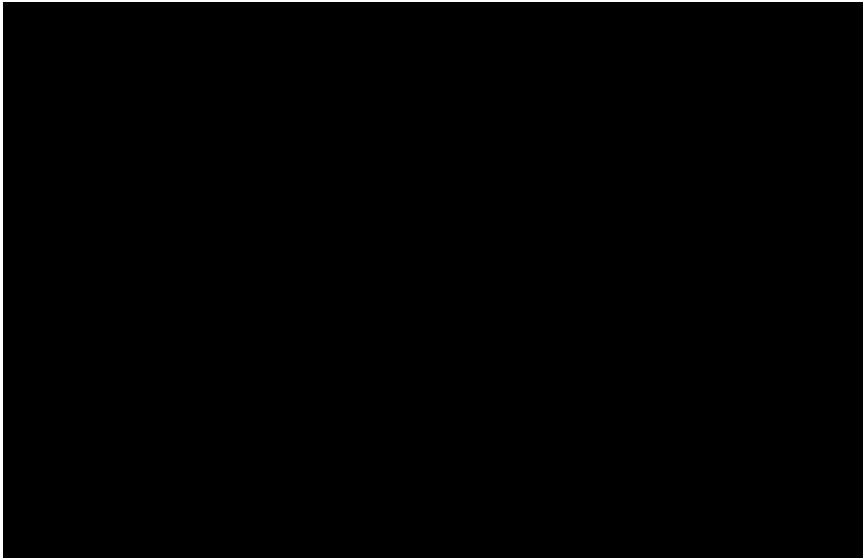
“Rec 4.1 Recording / Deleting Movements of Cattle

“Management should develop:

- a) **A policy to deal with the issue of deletions and amendments of cattle movement records; seeking appropriate legal advice to ensure it is fully compliant with all relevant legislation;**
- b) **Instructions/guidance for markets around deletion/amendment of moves to help achieve compliance with this policy; and**
- c) **Appropriate checks over markets to ensure they are complying with policy/legislative requirements.**

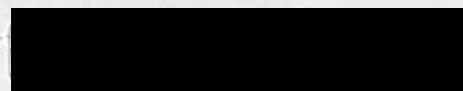
“Implementation of the recommendation will require an amendment to domestic legislation due to application of the EU Animal Health Law in Northern Ireland. In the absence of a Minister, this matter is currently being considered under the Executive Formation etc Act 2022 and accompanying guidance. Once that process is complete, officials will seek legal advice to ensure the policy is in full compliance with the legislation.”

Possible media questions for HOCS



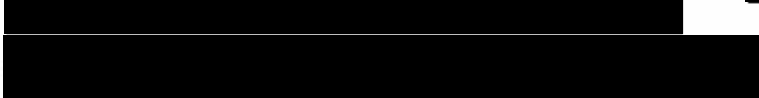
2. Has the process started?

It would not be appropriate to comment on individual employee matters. [Redacted]



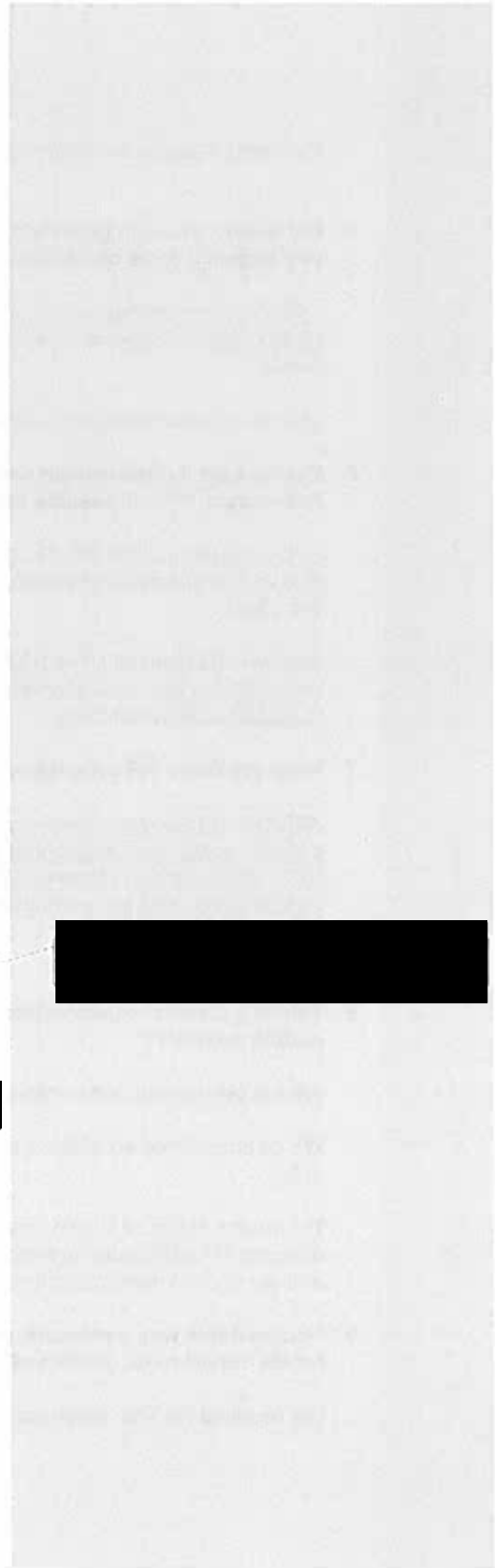
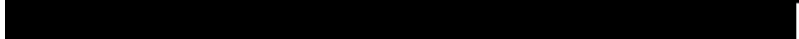
3. But after such a damning IT judgment, the first thing any serious leader would do is order the HR processes to swing into action.

It would not be appropriate to comment on individual employee matters. [Redacted]



4. Ok, so the process has to remain confidential, when did it start and how long will it take?

It would not be appropriate to comment on individual cases concerning employees. [Redacted]



[REDACTED]

5. But surely, you can provide a timescale as to when it started and when you expect it to be completed. Will it take a year?

It would not be appropriate to comment on individual cases concerning employees [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

6. [REDACTED]

7. What are those HR processes? Can you explain them?

XXXXXXXXEmployee cases are managed in accordance with agreed HR policies and processes which are publicly available at [DN: insert link to NICS HR Handbok]. These policies and processes are consistent with best practice and are consulted on with the recognised Civil service Central Trade Unions.

8. This is a classic response from the Civil Service to thwart the public getting answers?

We are being open and transparent as we can be at this stage.

We commissioned an external review and have today published both reports in full.

We are not hiding or shying away from public criticism, we have a clear plan of action to take forward to improve both how, and the way, we do business and we are am-determined to deliver on it.

9. You said this was a personal priority for you, but it took over 6 months for the report to be published? Why the delay?

We received the final reports on January 9 and are publishing them today.



I accept that it took longer than originally anticipated to get to the point of having final reports but there are steps we all had to work through to get to this stage.

~~My~~Our ~~focus~~ The focus for me is delivering on the Action Plan so that the gaps identified in the report can be addressed.

10. When you say 'work through' – what do you mean? Did NICS influence the report? Or doctor it?

[DN: reference Oversight Group and also the fact that Neil and I did not get involved in the to-ing and fro-ing on the report and only at the end completed our factual accuracy checks.]

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~~How much has this report, which tells us very little, cost the public purse and do you think that is justifiable?~~

11. How much did the report cost? [See answer in other list of questions]

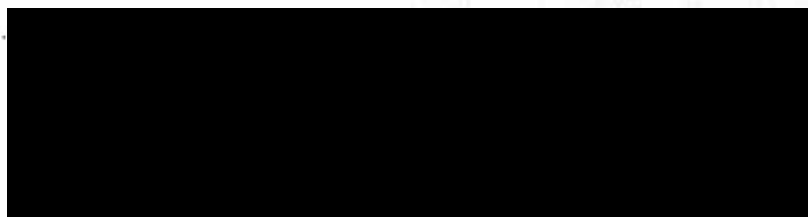
12. Surely getting to grips with the HR issue employee matters should have been your personal priority, rather than a report which tells us very little other than the same mistakes and the same behavioural and cultural issues identified by RHI remain – your approach to this has been wrong. What do you say to that? *DN: remember here that employee matters are the responsibility of the relevant department and also remember that, for senior staff, HoCS would be appeal officer should one be needed at any stage connected to this case so must not say anything that would go against the requirements of the Code of Ethics or put at risk the integrity of any HR processes*

13. Did you read the IT judgment and what did you think as the HOCS.

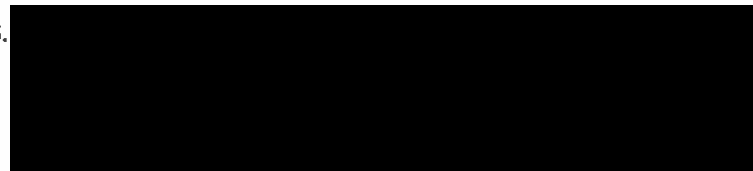
XXXX

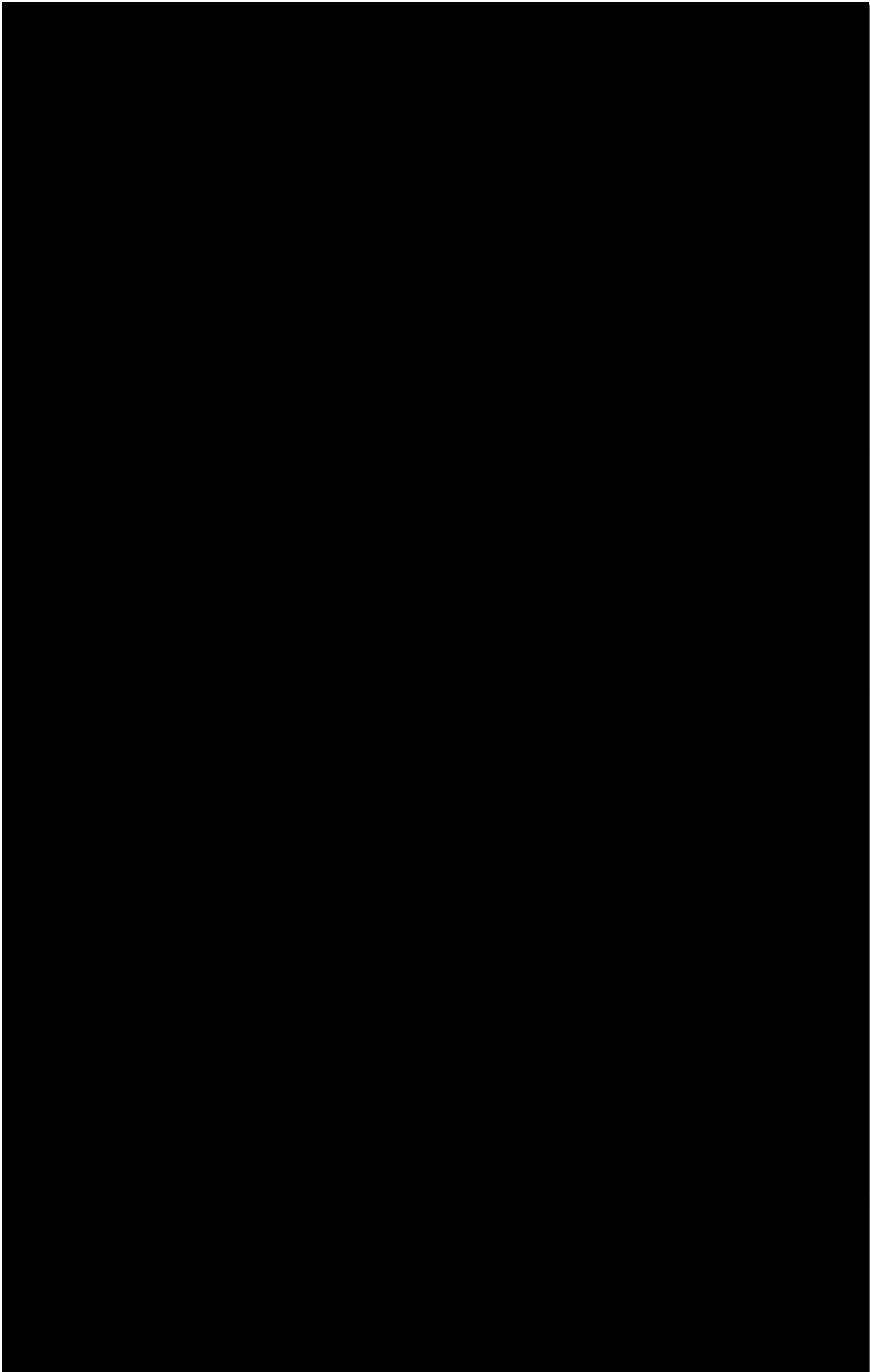
Commented [QA(2): Query whether we need to include LTT?

14.



15.





[Faint, illegible text, possibly bleed-through from the reverse side of the page. The text is too light to transcribe accurately.]



[REDACTED]

22. So if this report isn't about holding those responsible to account, what is it about?

The Report identifies where improvements need to be made in our systems and I have set out a clear an-action plan to address those issues.

23. But systems are designed and operated by people. So who failed to do their job in relation to those systems, and what are you doing about it?

The action plan is about fixing the systems, not apportioning individual blame.

[REDACTED]

21. After RHI there was a 'systems action plan' but virtually no-one held to account – one civil servant got a slap on the wrist; others got honours or promotions. Here we have a 'systems action plan' and no-one being held to account. Where is the accountability in JB's civil service?

Accountability must be the result of due process.

As with any employer, the NICS is obliged to carry out those processes properly and fairly.

Keeping the process fair requires confidentiality [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

26. Today, the NICS, headed by you, is making life and death decisions on the delivery of public services. In light of [REDACTED] experience, do you think the public can have confidence in the NICS, or will you just bury your mistakes?

I can assure you and the people of NI of three things:

First, we will do our very best, as we have always done, to provide the best public services in these difficult circumstances – and our record shows that we can do that.

Second, [REDACTED] and accept responsibility.

Third, we will put right [REDACTED] and change behaviour to prevent recurrence.

27. Can you give any guarantees that there won't be another case in a year's time.

Our shared My-focus is on delivering the Action Plan to address the gaps identified in the report; to learn from [REDACTED] accept responsibility and to ensure processes are put in place to prevent future recurrence.

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27-28. Is the NICS fit for purpose?

I don't accept that we are not fit for purpose.

First, we will do our very best, as we have always done, to provide the best public services in these difficult circumstances – and our record shows that we can do that.

Second, when we [REDACTED] and accept responsibility.

Third, we will put right [REDACTED] and change behaviour to prevent recurrence.

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 25 January 2023 16:43
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: FW: OFFICIAL - SENSITIVE: DRAFT questions
Attachments: DRAFT potential questions 180123.docx; 20 questions for HOCS NS EDIT.docx

Up to date ltt

J

From: McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>
Date: Wednesday, 25 Jan 2023, 4:37 pm
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: OFFICIAL - SENSITIVE: DRAFT questions

[REDACTED]

This is a more up to date version of the potential questions doc.

Sharon

Sent with BlackBerry Work
(www.blackberry.com)

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 25 January 2023 17:49
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: FW: TEO News Release - CIVIL SERVICE PUBLISHES ACTION PLAN IN RESPONSE TO EXTERNAL REVIEW

Hi [REDACTED] to see response which issued

[REDACTED]

Sent with BlackBerry Work
(www.blackberry.com)

From: [REDACTED]
Date: Wednesday, 25 Jan 2023 at 4:44 pm
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: TEO Press Office <press.office@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>, McNabb, Chris <Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>, [REDACTED]
Subject: FW: TEO News Release - CIVIL SERVICE PUBLISHES ACTION PLAN IN RESPONSE TO EXTERNAL REVIEW

Hi [REDACTED] our response to your query is 'yes' which you can attribute to an Executive Office spokesperson.

Your email was sent to an automated address – I think you replied to the email which included the press release – if you could send any future queries to: press.office@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk

Many thanks

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 25 January 2023 14:46
To: TEO EIS NewsService <EIS.NewsService@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>
Subject: Re: TEO News Release - CIVIL SERVICE PUBLISHES ACTION PLAN IN RESPONSE TO EXTERNAL REVIEW

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FOR INTERNAL NICS STAFF ONLY - If you have any concerns regarding the email please forward to spam@finance-ni.gov.uk.

Hello,

I have one query regarding the PwC report:

Is TEO satisfied that Daera provided all relevant records and documentation to report authors PwC?

I'll need a response no later than 5pm today.

Thanks in advance,

On 25 Jan 2023, at 12:20, Executive News Service <EIS.Newsservice@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk> wrote:

THE EXECUTIVE OFFICE

25 January 2023

Civil Service publishes action plan in response to external review

A 33-point action plan to improve governance across the NI Civil Service has been published today. The plan is in response to findings from an external independent review undertaken by PwC to examine the handling of concerns and other matters raised in a case taken by a former DAERA employee.

Commissioned by DAERA on behalf of the Department's Permanent Secretary Katrina Godfrey, the Department of Finance Permanent Secretary Neil Gibson and the Head of the Civil Service Jayne Brady, the reports and action plan have been shared with staff, trade unions, MLAs and the NI Audit Office.

Jayne Brady said: "I welcome the findings in the reports. As a Service, we are committed to learning from this review and addressing the issues identified.

"We remain on a journey of continuous improvement and the action plan sets out our response to the review recommendations.

"We will implement each of the 33 actions so that there is greater confidence that we are delivering the best possible service for the public and our workforce."

The external review highlights issues in the recording and escalating of concerns, the application of some policies and the way in which employment related legal cases are managed by the NICS.

A new NICS Raising a Concern Policy Framework has also been published. These guidelines for Departments set out, for the first time, a single, overarching approach to dealing with concerns raised.

A refreshed Civil Service Code of Ethics, which includes the obligation on all civil servants to keep proper records, will be embedded into performance management processes.

Neither PwC's Lessons learned and recommendations report, nor the Action Plan, addresses the actions of individual civil servants. The NI Civil Service, as a responsible employer, does not comment on internal employment related matters, which may or may not arise.

The Permanent Secretaries of DAERA and DoF will monitor the status of actions and have already asked their respective Departmental Audit Committees to scrutinise progress. Quarterly progress reports will be published on their respective websites.

The review also identifies areas for improvement in the culture of the service.

Jayne Brady said: "Concerns must always be raised, listened to and acted upon in the proper manner. It is critical that every civil servant maintains proper records and that all policies are up-to-date. These are the foundations of good governance.

"Some of the issues identified in this review, particularly in relation to record-keeping, were previously highlighted by the Inquiry into the Renewable Heat Incentive Scheme (RHI) report. This is not good enough and as leaders of the NI Civil Service, we will rigorously pursue progress against the recommendations.

"Improving the application of policies and procedures is a starting point, but real success requires behavioural and cultural change. Work is already underway to empower and support civil servants in effectively delivering the work of government and to develop an inclusive workplace culture."

Notes to Editors:

1. The PwC reports were commissioned by DAERA, on behalf of the Department's Permanent Secretary, the Department of Finance Permanent Secretary and the Head of the Civil Service. The reports and action plan are available here: <https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/publications/external-independent-review-pwc-reports-and-nics-action-plan>
2. The Terms of Reference committed to the publication of the outcomes of the review. The decision was taken in the interest of transparency for both papers of the External Independent Review in full. This has taken longer than initially anticipated.
3. Neither PwC's Lessons learned and recommendations report, nor the action plan, addresses the actions of individual civil servants. The NI Civil Service, as a responsible employer, does not comment on internal employment related matters, which may or may not arise. The requirements of employment law, the contractual obligations applying to every civil servant,

and the obligation of fairness to all staff mean that any such matters must remain confidential in order to be lawful and fair and no individual civil servant or department may comment on these.

4. Link to NICS Code of Ethics: [NICS Code of Ethics | Department of Finance \(finance-ni.gov.uk\)](#)
5. Link to the new NICS Raising a Concern Policy Framework: <https://www.finance-ni.gov.uk/publications/raising-concern-policy-framework>
6. The full costs of the review are currently being finalised and will be published in due course on the DAERA website.
7. Media queries should be directed to the TEO press office via email at press.office@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk
8. The Executive Information Service operates an out of hours service **for media enquiries only** between 1800hrs and 0800hrs Monday to Friday and at weekends and public holidays. The duty press officer can be contacted on 028 9037 8110.

This is an automated distribution service - please do not reply to this email address.

If you wish to unsubscribe from this service please email EIS.info@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk

[REDACTED]

From: Godfrey, Katrina (DAERA – Perm Sec)
Sent: 25 January 2023 18:18
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: G_DAERA PressOffice.Group, DAERA; DAERA PermSec; McFlynn, Sharon
Subject: RE: PwC report

[REDACTED]

Just a thought - is it possible for us all (Neil, Jayne and me) to see all queries and the responses provided across all three departments?

Katrina

Sent with BlackBerry Work
(www.blackberry.com)

From: [REDACTED]
Date: Wednesday, 25 Jan 2023 at 3:27 pm
To: Godfrey, Katrina (DAERA – Perm Sec) <Katrina.Godfrey@daera-ni.gov.uk>
Cc: G_DAERA PressOffice.Group, DAERA <PressOffice.Group@daera-ni.gov.uk>, DAERA PermSec <perm.sec@daera-ni.gov.uk>, McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>
Subject: RE: PwC report

Please note, Katrina and I have discussed and she has approved this line for issue.

Many thanks

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 25 January 2023 14:28
To: Godfrey, Katrina (DAERA – Perm Sec) <Katrina.Godfrey@daera-ni.gov.uk>
Cc: G_DAERA PressOffice.Group, DAERA <PressOffice.Group@daera-ni.gov.uk>; DAERA PermSec <perm.sec@daera-ni.gov.uk>; McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>
Subject: FW: PwC report

Hi Katrina, please see Bel Tel query below and the proposed line.

Grateful for your consideration.

[REDACTED]

QUERY

In relation to the PwC report into the treatment of [REDACTED] I have several questions:

- 1) Do [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] remain in post working for the department?
- 2) Does either man, as members of the senior civil service, face disciplinary action?
- 3) Was the decision not to suspend them taken by Katrina Godfrey?
- 4) Neither man has even been named in the report, despite the department's acceptance of the fact they acted appallingly. Why is that so?

DRAFT RESPONSE

“It is not appropriate to comment on individual employee matters. Neither PwC’s Lessons learned and recommendations report, nor the action plan, addresses the actions of individual civil servants. The NI Civil Service, as a responsible employer, does not comment on internal employment related matters, which may or may not arise. The requirements of employment law, the contractual obligations applying to every civil servant, and the obligation of fairness to all staff mean that any such matters must remain confidential in order to be lawful and fair and no individual civil servant or department may comment on these.”

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 25 January 2023 18:50
To: Godfrey, Katrina (DAERA – Perm Sec)
Cc: G_DAERA PressOffice.Group, DAERA; DAERA PermSec; McFlynn, Sharon
Subject: RE: PwC report

No reason why not.

Press team can you please liaise with dof and teo tomorrow to set up a simple shareable spreadsheet

thanks

[REDACTED]

From: Godfrey, Katrina (DAERA – Perm Sec) <Katrina.Godfrey@daera-ni.gov.uk>
Date: Wednesday, 25 Jan 2023, 6:17 pm
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: G_DAERA PressOffice.Group, DAERA <PressOffice.Group@daera-ni.gov.uk>, DAERA PermSec <perm.sec@daera-ni.gov.uk>, McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>
Subject: RE: PwC report

[REDACTED]

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(www.blackberry.com)

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Date: Wednesday, 25 Jan 2023 at 3:27 pm
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Cc: G_DAERA PressOffice.Group, DAERA <PressOffice.Group@daera-ni.gov.uk>, DAERA PermSec <perm.sec@daera-ni.gov.uk>, McFlynn, Sharon <Sharon.McFlynn@daera-ni.gov.uk>
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[Redacted]

From: [Redacted]
Sent: 25 January 2023 20:20
To: [Redacted]
Cc: G_DAERA PressOffice.Group, DAERA
Subject: PWC report

Hi folks our Perm Sec has asked can we all share a list of lines we've issued on this and which media etc – would you mind sending them across to us and we ll keep a spreadsheet on this one - If you are agreeable?

Many Thanks. [Redacted]

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 25 January 2023 20:57
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED] G_DAERA PressOffice.Group, DAERA
Subject: FW: TEO News Release - CIVIL SERVICE PUBLISHES ACTION PLAN IN RESPONSE TO EXTERNAL REVIEW

Hi [REDACTED]

Please see below as requested.

Thanks
[REDACTED]

Sent with BlackBerry Work
(www.blackberry.com)

From: [REDACTED]
Date: Wednesday, 25 Jan 2023 at 5:49 pm
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: FW: TEO News Release - CIVIL SERVICE PUBLISHES ACTION PLAN IN RESPONSE TO EXTERNAL REVIEW

Hi [REDACTED] to see response which issued
[REDACTED]

Sent with BlackBerry Work
(www.blackberry.com)

From: [REDACTED]
Date: Wednesday, 25 Jan 2023 at 4:44 pm
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: TEO Press Office <press.office@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>, McNabb, Chris <Chris.McNabb@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>, [REDACTED]
Subject: FW: TEO News Release - CIVIL SERVICE PUBLISHES ACTION PLAN IN RESPONSE TO EXTERNAL REVIEW

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To: TEO EIS NewsService <EIS.NewsService@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk>
Subject: Re: TEO News Release - CIVIL SERVICE PUBLISHES ACTION PLAN IN RESPONSE TO EXTERNAL REVIEW

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"We remain on a journey of continuous improvement and the action plan sets out our response to the review recommendations.

"We will implement each of the 33 actions so that there is greater confidence that we are delivering the best possible service for the public and our workforce."

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“Some of the issues identified in this review, particularly in relation to record-keeping, were previously highlighted by the Inquiry into the Renewable Heat Incentive Scheme (RHI) report. This is not good enough and as leaders of the NI Civil Service, we will rigorously pursue progress against the recommendations.

“Improving the application of policies and procedures is a starting point, but real success requires behavioural and cultural change. Work is already underway to empower and support civil servants in effectively delivering the work of government and to develop an inclusive workplace culture.”

Notes to Editors:

1. The PwC reports were commissioned by DAERA, on behalf of the Department's Permanent Secretary, the Department of Finance Permanent Secretary and the Head of the Civil Service. The reports and action plan are available here: <https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/publications/external-independent-review-pwc-reports-and-nics-action-plan>
2. The Terms of Reference committed to the publication of the outcomes of the review. The decision was taken in the interest of transparency for both papers of the External Independent Review in full. This has taken longer than initially anticipated.
3. Neither PwC's Lessons learned and recommendations report, nor the action plan, addresses the actions of individual civil servants. The NI Civil Service, as a responsible employer, does not comment on internal employment related matters, which may or may not arise. The requirements of employment law, the contractual obligations applying to every civil servant, and the obligation of fairness to all staff mean that any such matters must remain confidential in order to be lawful and fair and no individual civil servant or department may comment on these.
4. Link to NICS Code of Ethics: [NICS Code of Ethics | Department of Finance \(finance-ni.gov.uk\)](https://www.finance-ni.gov.uk)
5. Link to the new NICS Raising a Concern Policy Framework: <https://www.finance-ni.gov.uk/publications/raising-concern-policy-framework>
6. The full costs of the review are currently being finalised and will be published in due course on the DAERA website.
7. Media queries should be directed to the TEO press office via email at press.office@executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk
8. The Executive Information Service operates an out of hours service for media enquiries only between 1800hrs and 0800hrs Monday to Friday and at weekends and public holidays. The duty press officer can be contacted on 028 9037 8110.

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