



Neil Sedgewick
Parliament Buildings
Stormont
BELFAST
BT4 3XX

Public Service Commission
2nd Floor
Longbridge House
20-24 Waring Street
BELFAST
BT1 2EB

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Environment Committee's consultation on the Local Government Bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to the above consultation. The Public Service Commission (PSC) would make the following comments.

Schedule 10

In order to carry reorganisation through successfully it is essential to enlist the support of the staff. Therefore the Commission welcomes the provisions on the transfer of staff in schedule 10, because, among other things, they ensure consistency of treatment across all staff affected by RPA as promised when RPA was launched.

The RPA Principles are based on best practice and on employment law. Consequently we are disappointed that the procedure set out in the Northern Ireland Executive's Fourth Guiding Principle, as recommended by the PSC (*filling new or substantially new posts in new organisations being created as a result of the review of public administration*) has not been followed in relation to the selection of Chief Executives of the new councils.

Please note that the RPA Principles have been followed in the reorganisations of the health and social care sector and the library sector; and that where the advice of the Commission (PSC) has been followed on the application of the Principles no grievance cases have arisen even though tens of thousands of staff were involved.

Code of Conduct for Councillors

The Commission would welcome the provision in the Bill for a code of conduct for councillors which should contain *provision on the relationship between councillors and their staff*.

I hope these comments are helpful.

Yours truly,

Pat Stringer

Patricia Stringer
Chief Executive PSC