

GOVERNMENT PROJECTS

Purpose

- 1) The purpose of this paper is to advise Staff Council of members' concerns regarding the several government projects which are currently in operation; aimed at maximising efficiency, cutting costs, and centralising some functions. In particular, the project labelled "Next Generation HR", which appears to advocate very dramatic reductions in the number of HR staff across Civil Service Departments.

Background

- 2) It is our understanding that the Next Generation HR Project has been initiated by the HR Leaders Council. The Department is involved in a number of other initiatives including a performance management framework and employee engagement and its objective is to improve the HR function across the Civil Service by improving the professionalism of those who work in HR.
- 3) We have been advised that the HR Leaders Council believe as part of the efficiency savings programme there will be real pressure to "improve" the proportion of HR staff to total staff in line with other best practice changes elsewhere. It also holds a belief that that the Civil Service will have to face significant efficiency savings. This will have a major impact on staffing numbers, including those in HR.
- 4) We have also been advised that the remit of the Next Generation HR Project to anticipate changes rather than react to them and at the same time deliver a better service with less people. Work is at a very early stage and as yet there are no definite outcomes other than an expectation that there will be serious job cuts throughout the Civil Service, including HR functions.

The Proposal

- 5) To explore with the Staff Council what this might mean for staff in the Forestry Commission, and we would welcome some broader discussion on what we can do jointly to manage projects of this nature and their outcomes.
- 6) To examine with the Staff Council how best the Forestry Commission can protect itself from attacks on jobs and what can be done to mitigate such attacks.

Action

- 7) The Council is asked to **discuss** the content of this paper.

Allan MacKenzie
FCTU Secretary
21st October 2009