

Review of Audit/Complaint Recommendations 2006/07 – 2008/09

In late November 2009 I wrote to the individual departments regarding the following:

OFMDFM - Audit 2006/2007 – Commissioner for Children and Young People

OFMDFM - Audit 2006/2007 – Commissioners for Victims and Survivors

DARD - Audit 2006/2007 – Research and Education Advisory Panel – Economist Competition

DCAL - Audit 2007/2008 – Appointment of the Chair, Vice Chair and Members to the Board of Sport Northern Ireland

DRD - Audit 2007/2008 – Appointment of 2 Non-Executive Directors to the Board of Northern Ireland Water (NIW) Ltd

DETI - Audit 2007/2008 – Appointment of 8 members to the Board of Invest Northern Ireland

DETI - Complaint 2008/2009 – Health and Safety Executive Northern Ireland

DEL - Complaint 2008/2009 – Construction Industry Training Board

(These reports are on our website and can be accessed via the link entitled 'Departmental Audits' on the left of the 'Reports' Page)

To ascertain what steps had been taken to address issues identified in audit/complaint recommendations made during 2007, 2008 and 2009. These audits and complaints investigations identified several areas for improvement and Departments were given the opportunity to address them.

One of the common issues noted was the lack of an adequate audit trail to justify key decisions. Having reviewed the responses I am pleased to report that Departments have improved their procedures to demonstrate the rationale for decisions taken. This should lead to an open and transparent appointment process which is consistent with the recognised principles of an open government.

Some Departments have undertaken reviews of their procedures which guide the public appointment process and initiated new pilot schemes to ensure that process is as robust as possible. This is an encouraging step forward which I will be following up with the relevant Departments.

I will publish further information on this review in due course.

Felicity Huston
14th January 2010