

Andrew Dawson
Director of Workforce Policy (Acting)



Department of
Health

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Via Email:

Maura McKenna
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Dear Colleagues

Thank you for your letter of 4 July.

The Department and HSC employers welcome urgent and ongoing engagement with HSC Trade Unions and Staff Side organisations on Agenda for Change refresh for Northern Ireland.

You will appreciate that in the absence of Ministers, there is as yet no Executive Pay Policy in place for 2018/19. You will also be aware of the recent Court of Appeal decision in the *Buick* case, which the Department is analysing in the context of the ability to take decisions that would ordinarily be taken by a Minister.

These issues will certainly not prevent ongoing and detailed engagement, but it should be recognised that at present, decision-making ability is uncertain.

The Department's Top Management Group, chaired by the Permanent Secretary, has agreed that there should be detailed and meaningful engagement with Trade Unions and Staff Side organisations. The Permanent Secretary will be happy to meet with colleagues in the near future, but I suggest that we commence engagement and discussions formally at the Joint Negotiation and Consultation Forum Business Committee meeting on 23 July. This will allow us to clarify the information needs raised in your letter, and allow for analysis of any shared information before a meeting with the Permanent Secretary is arranged.

In the meantime, I attach the details that formed the Department's most recent PRB submission.

I look forward to our discussion on 23 July.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Andrew Dawson", is displayed on a light grey rectangular background.

ANDREW DAWSON