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18 March 2025

Dear Chief Executives,

Recruitment Information Request

Thank you to all of you who took part in our Public Service Reform Summit in February. At that event I indicated the need we all face as public sector leaders to work together to change and deliver our reform priorities of efficiency, empowerment, prevention and integration at pace, all of which should be underpinned by good data. We now take our first practical steps to improve data relating to workforce, one of the 8 efficiency programmes to deliver reform with a new Recruitment Information Request (RIR). I welcome the collaborative and constructive approach the Chairs of the Service Delivery Body Group and the Non-Departmental Public Body Forum have taken to the co-production of the Recruitment Information Request and look forward to their continued support.

I understand the importance of individual accountability in the governance of public bodies and leave intact the accountability and responsibility for recruitment with Accountable Officers. This allows you to make the organisational-level decisions to protect public service delivery; maintains your existing governance arrangements, while introducing a standardised way to gather and collate information on the collective impact of your organisational decisions on the important area of headcount and resource use.

Your participation will help us to understand the workforce challenges and opportunities that exist across the public body landscape. This will also help us to be clear on the rationale behind recruitment activity. To do this you are being asked to complete a monthly RIR on the number of posts advertised externally each month alongside a supporting narrative for each post.

A guidance note has been co-developed that sets out the background as to why this information is required, the process to be followed and how to complete the template. As outlined in the guidance note, it is expected that public bodies will complete the template within 5 working days of the end of each calendar month.

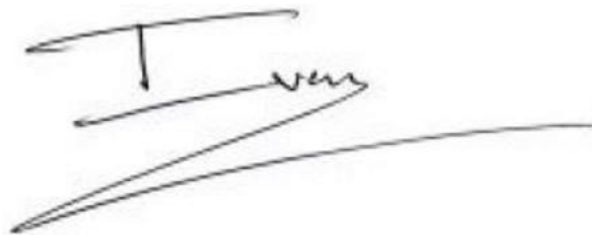
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The first request will be for March and is due to be returned by 7 April to your sponsor team/workforce lead or directly to the workforcepolicy@gov.scot email address. Where appropriate, sponsor teams will collate the returns for their portfolio by 14 April.

A report will then be created by my officials that summarises the external recruitment activity each month across all portfolios. This will be provided to me and other relevant Scottish Government Senior Officials. I recognise there are sensitivities in sharing this data. Further work will be needed to establish an acceptable set of rules to permit that, and all Non Departmental Public Body Forum members should be part of designing those. I will also look at ways to streamline the process and consider other important data for example wellbeing over the coming months.

Your support in this work is appreciated and I look forward to continuing to work with public body leaders on this and the broader public service reform agenda to deliver strong, sustainable public services for Scotland.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ivan McKee', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

IVAN MCKEE

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