CORA Cork Open Research Archive
Cartlann Taighde Oscailte Chorcaí

Title	Setting out a vision for the civil service in Ireland
Authors	Barrington, Anne;Carpenter, Breffini;MacFeely, Stephen
Publication date	2014
Original Citation	Barrington, A., Carpenter, B. and MacFeely, S. (2014) 'Setting out a vision for the civil service in Ireland', Administration, 62(3), pp. 65-92.
Type of publication	Article (peer-reviewed)
Link to publisher's version	https://www.ipa.ie/publications-categories/administration-journal.2884.html
Rights	© 2014 Institute of Public Administration
Download date	2026-09-05 08:42:21
Item downloaded from	https://hdl.handle.net/10468/9512

UCC
University College Cork, Ireland
Coláiste na hOllscoile Corcaigh

Administration, vol. 62, no. 3 (2014), pp. 65–92

Setting out a vision for the civil service in Ireland

Anne Barrington
Department of Foreign Affairs & Trade; Civil Service Renewal Task Force

Breffini Carpenter
Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine; Civil Service Renewal Task Force

Steve MacFeely
Central Statistics Office; Civil Service Renewal Task Force

> For all the charges made against it, the civil service has worked with reasonable efficiency. It has served different Governments loyally and with regard to the national interest. In its long established traditions, it operates impartially. It has tried as best it could within the framework of its organisation and resources to promote the development of a nation; it has given its advice to Ministers fairly and honestly and, when given the final decisions of the Government, it has implemented them without reservation. The civil service has contributed much to what is progressive in our national life. (Devlin, 1969, p. 137)

Introduction

In June 2013 the Irish Government established the Civil Service Renewal Task Force, comprising senior civil servants from all government departments and some offices, with a mandate to renew the vision and strategy for the civil service. The outcome of the deliberations of that task force, the *Civil Service Renewal Plan*, was published by the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform in October 2014. A key output of that report was to state and clarify the vision and mission of the civil service and to reaffirm public service values (2014d, p. 19) – see the next section.

The task force agreed from the outset that a shared, unifying vision was required to set out a future path for the civil service. That vision must not only speak to all civil servants but also make sense to the public and to the political system. The purpose of this paper is to assist that process by giving some background and context to the vision, mission, values and commitments espoused in the *Civil Service Renewal Plan*. We felt it would be useful to explain where the vision came from and to give some sense of the process, consultation and thinking behind what, on first reading, may seem to be a deceptively simple statement.

Setting out a vision and mission statement for the civil service is not easy or straightforward. It must encompass the legal constraints that formally define the mandate and role of the civil service. Furthermore, it must balance what, at first glance, seem like the contradictory demands of 'dedication to the national interest' (Cromien, 1991, p. 16), or what has been described as long-term 'anticipatory governance', with delivering the short-term goals of budgetary cycles and government manifestos to 'secure positive outcomes for society' (Callanan, 2006, p. 3).

The vision, mission, values and commitments statement outlined at the start of Chapter Two of the *Civil Service Renewal Plan* is short and easily understood. We see this vision and mission as an evolution of previous statements and a reaffirmation of existing core values or principles, rather than a radical new statement. We see the addition of the new commitments section as a useful addition to previous statements. However, without understanding the context, there is a risk that the quick or cynical reader may simply regard them as 'motherhood and apple pie', or worse – a more careful but suspicious reader may view them as an attempt by the civil service to grab power. They are neither. Having consulted widely and listened carefully, we have put forward a vision and mission statement that we hope is clear, honest, ambitious and yet practical. We hope this statement has set out a useful, high-level direction of travel for the civil service over the coming years. We subscribe to the OECD view that strategic reform requires a coherent and strategic vision: 'In the absence of any overarching strategic vision or guidance on how best to achieve improved performance, or on how to effectively encourage agencies, there is significant variability in the quality and effectiveness of control and reporting procedures across public service agencies' (2008, p. 173). We are also firmly of the view that while a clear statement of vision and mission will not in itself lead to reform, without it a unified

design will not be possible and any attempts at widespread reform will underachieve or fail.

This paper presents a broad overview of the context and challenges that faced the Civil Service Renewal Task Force in trying to set out or update the vision for the civil service. The paper is presented in seven sections. The first section presents the vision, mission, values and commitments for the Irish civil service. The second, in order to try and give some background or context, gives a short history of the evolution of vision and values in the Irish civil service. The third section discusses briefly why a vision and mission statement is desirable and necessary. The following three sections outline the challenges, consultation and conflicts that shaped the vision, mission, values and commitments statement presented in this paper and the *Civil Service Renewal Plan*. The paper is then concluded with a short discussion.

The vision, mission, values and commitments

The vision, mission, values and commitments outlined below and in the *Civil Service Renewal Plan* are short, straightforward and, we hope, meaningful to the whole civil service.[1] As noted elsewhere, we see this statement as a continuation or evolution of previous statements, although different in two fundamental respects. Specifically, we have made explicit the need for the civil service to both serve the government of the day and also keep a weather eye on the longer-term national interests of the country and its people. This is not an attempt by the civil service to grab power – far from it – but it is rather an attempt to acknowledge a reality (if too often unspoken) of public service. Secondly, we have supplemented the traditional vision, mission and value format with a set of commitments, which we felt were important:

Our vision

- To provide a world-class service to the State and to the people of Ireland.

Our mission

- To offer objective and evidence-informed advice to Government, respond to developments, and deliver Government

[1] The vision, mission, value and commitment statement contains 181 words in total. It has been pointed out that this makes it shorter than either the 'Ten Commandments' or the 'Gettysburg Address'.

objectives while striving to achieve optimal outcomes in the long-term national interest.
- To serve citizens and stakeholders efficiently, equally and with respect, in a system that is open, transparent and accountable.

Our values
- A deep-rooted public service ethos of independence, integrity, impartiality, equality, fairness and respect.
- A culture of accountability, efficiency and value for money.
- The highest standards of professionalism, leadership and rigour.

Our commitments
- We will encourage creative and innovative thinking, constructive problem-solving, openness to change and flexible working methods.
- We will ensure through appropriate merit based recruitment, training, and life-long learning and development, that the Civil Service has the necessary expertise to advise on and to implement public policy in a complex and changing world.
- We will maximise the contribution of all staff, by nurturing and rewarding talent and by encouraging civil servants to develop their potential in a workplace committed to equality, diversity, and mutual respect. (Department of Public Expenditure and Reform, 2014d)

Vision, mission and values of the civil service in Ireland – A brief history

The cultures, structures and systems of the civil service in Ireland today have evolved from those inherited in 1922 when the civil service of the new Saorstát came into being. This new civil service was formally legislated for in 1924 and 1926 with the Civil Service Regulatory Acts. Neither these Acts nor the new Irish Constitution defined the role or mission of the civil service, or stated the values to which civil and public servants should aspire. We can only assume that the short description of a desirable civil servant provided by Northcote & Trevelyan (1854, p. 2), the source document of the modern Westminster model, as 'possessing sufficient independence, character, ability, and experience to be able to advise, assist, and, to some extent, influence, those who are from time to time set over them' was tacitly accepted.

Following what Rose & Garvin (1983, p. 383) termed a period of 'regime consolidation', the *Commission of Inquiry into the Civil Service 1932–1935* (known as the Brennan commission, after the chairman, Joseph Brennan), published in 1936, was the first major review of the workings of the civil service in Ireland. Although the commission was mandated to 'inquire into and report on the organisation of the Civil Service with special reference to the arrangements for ensuring efficiency in working', the report did not outline or describe the role or mission of the civil service or the appropriate values for those employed by it. The commission 'approved of the manner in which the civil service was being run and resulted in no fundamental changes' (Hardiman & MacCarthaigh, 2010, p. 10).

It was thirty years before the civil service was reviewed again. The *Public Service Organisation Review Group* (or Devlin report, after the chairman, Liam St. J. Devlin), published in 1969, was commissioned by the government in 1966, as anxieties over the quality of the civil service became a matter of concern following policy failures of the 1950s. This report recommended sweeping and controversial changes regarding the separation of policymaking and execution, and provoked extensive debate. According to Lee (1989, p. 548), 'many civil servants and politicians devoutly wished to see Devlin buried'.

In the report Devlin defined the role of the public service as 'to serve the Government in a policy-advisory capacity, by sifting and recommending major policy alternatives, by collecting the public input, through appellate, consultative and research systems, and by assisting in the preparation of new legislation and in advice to Ministers'. The second role of the public service was executive. 'Its task is to assist the Government in the running of the country under the rules laid down by the Oireachtas and to implement its policies' (Devlin, 1969, p. 144).

Des Kelly, Assistant Secretary in the Department of Public Service, clearly did not agree with Devlin's proposals to separate policy formulation from executive function. He described the 'Devlin Solution' as 'ill advised' and argued that Devlin's 'prescriptions either were initially misconceived or have been made obsolete by advances in organisational thinking' (1979, p. 399). In contrast, Dermot McCarthy, Secretary General of the Department of the Taoiseach from 2001 to 2011, reflecting on his earlier career, described the Devlin report as the 'bible' for change (2001, p. 4). However, the key elements of Devlin were never implemented. Some sixteen years later the 1985 White Paper *Serving the Country Better* (Department of Public Service) represented a less radical approach to civil service reform.

Serving the Country Better stated that the 'general organisation and the statutory framework within which the public service, and particularly the civil service, operates is basically the same as it was in the 1920s' (p. 3), and that the Devlin report provided an overall blueprint for change. The White Paper defined two broad functions for the civil service: 'The delivery of a wide range of services to the public; and the formulation of policy, advice and planning on behalf of the government' (p. 5).[2] The White Paper also noted that a dominant concern of civil servants must be the 'legality, equity and the impartial application of the rules' (p. 5). The emphasis was predominantly on changing administrative process rather than more significant structural reform (Connaughton, 2005). In any event the timing of the White Paper was unfortunate, as deteriorating economic and fiscal circumstances absorbed the attention of the political system and 'public service reform had largely been abandoned by 1987 as a political priority' (Aylward et al., 2000). Nevertheless, in the view of the OECD, *Serving the Country Better* was the 'main impetus for contemporary attempts to develop a more customer-responsive Public Service' (2008, p. 77). Humphreys (1998, p. 28) made a similar point, saying that 'a number of government departments/offices traced their original impetus to adopt a more customer focused approach in part at least to this White Paper'. He also noted, however, that subsequent progress was far from dramatic. Similarly Boyle & MacCarthaigh (2011) noted that *Serving the Country Better* only 'achieved varying degrees of success' (p. 32) and that 'many of the proposed reforms were not fully acted on' (p. 44).

There was subsequently no formal review or reform agenda until the launch of the Strategic Management Initiative (or SMI) in 1994.[3] The SMI was unlike previous reviews in that it drew heavily on international practice and was influenced by aspects of New Public Management.[4] It was also different in that it recognised the necessity

[2] It is interesting to note that although, like Devlin, *Serving the Country Better* defined two roles for the public service, their order was reversed, suggesting greater emphasis or priority being placed on 'delivery'.

[3] There was no formal SMI publication, so we have taken the launch as the date of a speech made by the then Taoiseach Albert Reynolds TD on Tuesday, 22 February 1994, entitled 'Developing Strategic Management in the Irish Public Service'.

[4] The term New Public Management (NPM) was first introduced by Christopher Hood in his 1991 paper *A public management for all seasons?* Broadly speaking, NPM espouses the modernisation and improved efficiency of the public sector by reorienting it more towards the market. This, it is argued, will lead to greater efficiency. NPM has also been described as bringing markets, managers and measurement to the public service.

of training and development for senior civil servants to help them operate at a more strategic level. Furthermore, it was not imposed by government but rather it emerged from the concerns of senior civil servants about the current performance of the system over which they presided (see Byrne et al., 1995).[5] Murray (2001) therefore considered this new agenda one of renewal rather than reform. A Co-ordinating Group of Secretaries formed to consider and articulate the challenges they believed faced the civil service. The result of their deliberations was published as a memorandum to government in 1994 and in *Delivering Better Government* (Department of the Taoiseach, 1996).

Delivering Better Government outlined a vision of a more modern, responsive, efficient and effective civil service. As part of this vision, seven key areas for change were identified (p. 5). The increasing and explicit emphasis on management as opposed to administration is notable. *Delivering Better Government* envisaged a civil service:

- as a high-performance, open and flexible organisation operating to the highest standards of integrity, equity, impartiality and accountability;
- with a mission and culture of quality service to government and to the public at every level;
- making the maximum contribution to national social and economic development and to competitiveness, within a clear strategic framework, both at the level of individual department and across departments;
- making use of effective human resource management systems to ensure that each person who works in the civil service can develop to his/her maximum potential in contributing to the attainment of stated goals;
- providing, through a partnership across all levels in the civil service, equality of opportunity for all through its standard of recruitment, conditions of work, training and development of people and promotion practices;
- supported by modern systems of financial management, to ensure value for expenditure undertaken;
- operating necessary and simplified regulations efficiently and fairly.

[5] That is not to suggest that questions were not being asked of both the government and civil service regarding their economic management of the country during the 1980s. Parallels were naturally being drawn with the 1950s.

Later the Public Service Management Act, 1997, which was enacted to provide clarity on the respective roles of ministers and secretaries general, envisaged that 'the traditional role of senior civil servants as policy advisers would be complemented by an enhanced role as managers' (MacCarthaigh & Boyle, 2014, p. 13). Secretaries general were now delegated authority, responsibility and accountability for implementing government policy as determined by their three-year statement of strategy.

Section 9.1 of the Act states the functions of an officer [civil servant] are to:

a) provide policy advice in relation to the subject-matter of the assignment and related matters;
b) achieve the outputs specified in the assignment;
c) assume responsibility for the statutory schemes or programmes specified in the assignment;
d) assume responsibility for the delivery of quality services in respect of the area of the assignment;
e) ensure that the expenditure made in respect of the area of the assignment accords with the purpose for which the expenditure was chargeable to the appropriation account of the Department or Scheduled Office and that value for money is obtained; and
f) perform, on behalf of the Secretary General of the Department or Head of the Scheduled Office, functions in respect of appointments, performance and discipline of personnel in the area of the assignment, other than dismissals, that are the responsibility of the aforesaid Secretary General or Head pursuant to Section 4(1)(h).

In 2002 the *Report of the Working Group on the Accountability of Secretaries General and Accounting Officers* (Department of Finance), better known as the Mullarkey report (after the chairman, Paddy Mullarkey, Secretary General, Department of Finance, 1994–7), supported the Strategic Management Initiative and the Public Service Management Act by setting out clear rules for good corporate governance and financial probity. The report stressed the need to balance improvement and reform with robust governance and recommended the introduction of formal systematic risk management, expenditure review, a management information framework, and internal and external audit. The report also set out a recommended implementation timetable.

A *Civil Service Code of Standards and Behaviour* was published in 2004 (Standards in Public Office Commission) in accordance with Section 10 (3) of the Standards in Public Office Act, 2001. The code stated that the mission of the civil service 'is the achievement of an excellent service for Government and the other institutions of State as well as for the public as citizens and users of public services, based on principles of integrity, impartiality, effectiveness, equity and accountability' (p. 2). The code also noted the importance of 'traditional' values of honesty, impartiality and integrity to serving the common good, saying they must be the 'basis for the official actions of civil servants' (p. 5).

The *Introduction to the Irish Civil Service* (Government of Ireland, 2008) defines the role and function of the civil service as follows: 'The Civil Service is charged with two principal tasks: To assist members of the Government in making policy and to carry out policy decisions' (p. 14). The guide further states that 'the tradition and ethos of the Irish Civil Service is one of loyalty and impartial service. Civil servants provide a quality service to all stakeholders with discretion, openness and transparency' (p. 22). Regarding civil service values, the guide had this to say: 'The values most commonly associated with the civil service are: honesty and integrity, impartiality, respect for the law, respect for persons, diligence, responsiveness and accountability' (p. 23).

Transforming Public Services, published in 2008 (Department of the Taoiseach), never used the term 'vision' or 'mission' but outlined a high-level purpose for the Irish public service: 'to achieve valued outcomes for the citizen which, when taken together, make Ireland a more "successful society"' (p. 7).

Discussing values, MacCarthaigh (2008, p. 7) has noted that 'like many other concepts in public administration theory, there is no universally accepted definition of values (or for that matter what values are appropriate to the public services)'. While this is true to an extent, we do not fully agree. Both the *Civil Service Code of Standards and Behaviour* and the *Introduction to the Irish Civil Service* listed values associated with public service. Long before the publication of these documents, Cromien (1991, p. 16) described the 'traditional values of the civil service' as 'political neutrality, total loyalty to the democratically elected government, even-handedness and fairness to all, discretion and avoidance of the limelight and dedication to the national interest'. Dermot McCarthy, speaking in 2001, identified 'honesty, integrity and impartiality as the traditional values and strengths of the civil service' (p. 15). Boyle (2005, p. 34) described a

public service ethos 'of honesty, integrity, impartiality, objectivity and a desire to serve the public interest'. So, while the language may have differed over the years, from an Irish perspective, there has been a high degree of consensus in terms of principles.

In the ninety years since the creation of an independent Irish civil service, the role or vision of that service has only been explicitly set out on a handful of occasions. The first articulation of the role of the civil service in Ireland was in the Devlin report in 1969. The subsequent 1985 White Paper *Serving the Country Better* outlined a broadly similar role. *Delivering Better Government* in 1996 was the first formal government articulation of a civil service vision; it voiced a broader vision of a more modern civil service, putting greater emphasis on management, training, efficiency and effectiveness. In the past decade various government reports or legislation have in one way or another defined the role or mission of the civil or public service: Public Service Management Act (1997); *Civil Service Code of Standards and Behaviour* (2004); *Introduction to the Irish Civil Service* (2008); and *Transforming Public Services* (2008). These have ranged from quite narrow concepts of civil service mission to wider roles that recognise the broader contribution of the civil service to the welfare of the state and its people.

What are vision, mission and value statements? And why do we need them for the civil service?

A vision statement defines the optimal desired future state whereas a mission statement is a statement of purpose – a reason for existing. Humphreys (1998) stressed the prerequisite importance of having a vision and mission to drive fundamental organisational changes. To explain why, the famous quote attributed to the cat in *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* (Carroll, 1865) – 'If you don't know where you are going, any road will get you there' – is probably as succinct an explanation as you are likely to find.[6] In the same way that sailors need a compass course or a guiding star to navigate successfully, institutions must have clear goals and direction. Large, complex and heterogeneous collectives like the civil service require clear vision and mission statements if coherency between departments and agencies is

[6] This quote does not actually appear in *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* but is a summary of a longer dialogue between Alice and the cat. Although the quote is frequently attributed to Carroll, we were unable to verify the source.

expected. The OECD (2008) has stressed the importance of setting out a vision for the public service in order to improve responsiveness and accountability 'for global outcomes, and to measure progress on issues that are of importance to the general public' (p. 44).

The purpose of a vision statement is simple and straightforward (writing them less so): to communicate a high-level goal. A vision statement simply defines an organisation's purpose by focusing on aspirational goals. As such, it does not need to elucidate a measurable target. Ideally a vision statement should also be uplifting and inspiring. It should also be timeless, so even if an organisation changes strategy, the vision statement can often stay the same. A clear vision statement, in concert with a mission statement, is necessary to bring clarity of purpose for both employees and customers alike, so everyone understands the direction of travel. According to ChangeFactory (2014), a good vision statement should describe the best outcome achievable, use unequivocal language, evoke emotion, be short and create the same picture in everyone's mind. Spearman (2013) emphasises the importance of simplicity and brevity – between ten and fifteen words and with text that should not require effort on the part of the reader, whether an employee or customer. Jisc of Northumbria University (2014) proposes that a good vision statement should also be inspirational, ambitious, realistic, creative, descriptive, clear and consistent.

A mission statement should complement and build on the vision statement by defining an organisation's purpose and primary objectives in a more specific way than the vision statement. Mission statements should be set in the present tense, and explain why an organisation exists, both to members of the organisation and to people outside it. They should be short, clear and powerful.

Values should reinforce the mission by outlining the guiding principles or core ideals that underpin behaviour and actions in an organisation. They help to define the personality or corporate culture of an organisation. Kernaghan, quoted in MacCarthaigh (2008, p. 8), defines values as those 'enduring beliefs that influence the choices we make among available means or ends'. The OECD (1996, p. 12) defines values as 'the individual principles or standards that guide judgement about what is good and proper'. Broadly speaking, we subscribe to the definition put forward by MacCarthaigh (2008, p. 9), where he describes values as 'the individual principles or qualities that guide judgement and behaviour'. Sean Cromien, Secretary of the Department of Finance from 1987 to 1994, writing in *Seirbhís Phoiblí*

(1991), described civil service values as the 'code of our profession' (p. 16) and essential to 'practical patriotism' (p. 9).

The vision, mission and value statement will set the tone for the ambition and culture of the civil service. By publicly articulating a vision, a mission and a set of values, it will clarify for civil servants what is expected of them and set a direction against which actions can be targeted. It should also help the public to appreciate civil service motives and serve as a reminder to governments of what is considered appropriate behaviour. Ideally it will help to counter Francis Bacon's observation that 'all government is obscure and invisible'. Some good examples of international public service vision and mission statements are the *Charter of the United Nations* (United Nations, 1945) and the *OECD 50th Anniversary Vision Statement* (OECD, 2011). Some very clear and explicit value statements are also available: Scottish Government (2010) and the State Services Commission for New Zealand (2002).

While a number of vision and mission statements for Irish civil and public service have been articulated in recent years, as MacCarthaigh & Boyle (2014, p. 23) point out, 'it is important to periodically re-visit the vision for the civil service to ensure that it remains relevant and achievable'. There appears to be a growing consensus that such a review is now timely. As far back as 2002, PA Consulting Group argued that a new vision needed to be articulated. The OECD (2008) noted that, while *Delivering Better Government* had provided an initial vision, the next challenge was to 'renew the vision originally laid out in SMI, taking into account the coherence of reforms and how they interact with one another' (p. 24). Also in 2008, MacCarthaigh argued that in the aftermath of significant changes, such as decentralisation, and at a time when trust in public institutions has been undermined, 'a reassertion of civil service values is warranted' (p. 67). More recently, the *Public Service Reform Plan 2014–2016* highlighted 'the need for a strategic vision for the Civil Service – that can set a practical path for the future, building on the progress that has already been achieved' (Department of Public Expenditure and Reform, 2014a, p. 36). The consultation paper *Strengthening Civil Service Accountability and Performance* (Department of Public Expenditure and Reform, 2014b) also drew attention to the importance of reviewing the civil service vision, stating 'there appears to be an urgent and essential requirement to initiate a process to renew and refresh the civil service's vision with a view to ensuring that it has the integrity, capacity, professional capability, commitment and appetite to successfully meet the serious

challenges it currently faces' (p. 49). The *Report of the Independent Panel on Strengthening Civil Service Accountability and Performance* endorsed the recommendations made in the consultation paper regarding the need to set out a new vision. Furthermore, it recommended that the new head of the civil service would be the guardian of the ethos and values set out in that vision (Department of Public Expenditure and Reform, 2014c).

Thus, as part of the *Civil Service Renewal Plan*, it was appropriate and timely to review the vision, mission and values of the Irish civil service. The Civil Service Renewal Task Force was of the view that a clear statement of vision or strategic direction was required and that to proceed without one would only increase the risk of inconsistent actions and underachievement of goals. The challenge therefore was to set out a clear, short, digestible, powerful, inspirational vision and mission statement that was of its time and realistic, and that would speak to all, in a service that is a 'unified but not a uniform civil service' (PA Consulting Group, 2002, p. 22).

Considerations

One of the first, and not insignificant, tasks in drafting a vision, mission and values statement was to agree on what the civil service should do (and not do). Although determining what the civil service should not do is a very important question,[7] there was general agreement that this should not be explicitly included in any statement of vision, mission and values as it was felt such statements should be cast in the positive or affirmative. As a starting point, it was agreed that any vision and mission statement and any set of accompanying values must not infringe the *Code of Standards and Behaviour for the Irish Civil Service* set out in Section 10(3) of the Standards in Public Office Act, 2001, or the Public Service Management Act, 1997. This was more challenging than one might think, in particular when consideration is given to whether government and long-term national

[7] At a workshop in November 2013, this issue was discussed at some length. There was general agreement that the civil service should not: answer parliamentary questions where the information is already in the public domain and readily available on the Internet, where it involves an individual citizen or where the question is vexatious; tolerate underperformance; become politicised; accept anything less than full meritocratic recruitment and promotion; react to the whims of ministers; fill specialist posts with non-specialists; accept that administrative reform can be achieved without political reform. There was also discussion but less agreement as to what the future role of the civil service should be with regard to the provision of frontline services.

interests are always aligned. This point was often divisive and will be discussed in more detail in the 'Conflict' section of the paper. Those discussions involved complex trade-offs between accountability and responsiveness and between 'quick fixes' as against more strategic approaches. It was also agreed that the vision, mission and values statement should reflect the Human Rights Commission Act, 2000, and European Convention on Human Rights Act, 2003, both in letter and spirit.

A separate but related issue was to agree on the purpose of the civil service. In the rush to compare the civil service with the private sector, it is often forgotten that the civil service is designed to meet political, economic and social aims. The aims and objectives of the civil service are thus very different to those of the private sector. Although both strive for efficiency, in many respects the aims and objectives of the civil service are more complex than those of private enterprise. Thus, an important consideration was how to reflect or capture the full complexity and realities of the civil service in a single vision and mission statement while obeying the drafting maxims of brevity and simplicity.

Language and tone was another topic to which time, thought and consideration were given. How would we speak to the entire civil service with a single statement? The civil service is an amalgam of quite heterogeneous services, skills, grades and locations, all with their own goals, objectives and concerns. What was the right level of language and tone so that all civil servants, the political system and the general public could understand and buy in to the message? Some reaction to early drafts suggested the language was too grand or, as one comment described it, 'Jeffersonian'. But there was mixed feedback: others felt, given the seriousness of the issue, that any document setting out a vision for the civil service is deserving of formal language. Having completed a literature review of visions, missions and value statements, some of the very expressive language adopted by some private enterprises did not necessarily seem appropriate. Equally, it was not always easy to balance the desire for a snappy strapline without undermining the longevity or timeless quality that we hope our vision, mission and values possess.

Striking the right balance between proactive and reactive to properly reflect the trade-offs between planning or structured implementation and the sudden responsiveness that is the reality of civil service work was not straightforward. As Callanan (2006, p. 11) correctly stated, the civil service must always be ready 'to respond to

the latest "crisis"'. Of course, if the proactive and strategic aspects of the job have been properly addressed, crises should be kept to a minimum. Nevertheless, the civil service must combine strategic planning on a range of issues but may also be called to bat, at short notice, on anything from serious political issues ranging from the current Russian–Ukrainian crisis or developments in Northern Ireland to more local problems such as hosting Garth Brooks concerts in Croke Park. It is for this very reason that the mission statement includes the text 'respond to developments'. This exercised some, as they felt it made the civil service appear reactive rather than proactive. The counter argument we feel is a more honest and realistic one, where the civil service, irrespective of how proactive it may be, must from time to time react to unforeseen domestic or international events. As Harold Macmillan reputedly replied to a question about what he feared most, 'Events, dear boy, events'. Or as Tom Burke of *The Guardian* (2014) rather less eloquently put it, 'stuff happens and politicians have to deal with it' (and by inference, so do their civil servants).

Another area to which we gave some reflection, and now requires some explanation, is the 'Our Commitments' section that we added to the vision, mission and values. The need for this new commitments section arose from feedback received during the consultation process. A number of important issues were raised repeatedly, but did not seem to fit into the standard vision, mission, values structure. Nevertheless, we felt these points were important and deserved to be captured. Thus, a new layer or section was added to the typical vision, mission, values structure. In large measure, these were important messages to send both externally and internally about operational best practice. More importantly, we felt they should be seen as promises or commitments to the public, to government and to civil servants themselves.

The last, but perhaps the most important, consideration was the purpose of any vision, mission, value and commitments statement. Should it simply outline the strategic direction for the civil service and act explicitly as a general social contract with the public or should it play a stronger role, proving a more formal or explicit contract between the civil servant and political master, to be referred to in times of tension? To some extent, this returns to the challenging issue, raised above, as to whether government policy is always aligned with longer-term national interests and what a civil servant should do in the case where it is felt it is not. This remains an open question.

Consultation

While drafting the vision, mission and value statement, the task force consulted widely.[8] Those consulted included civil service officers at all grades and departments (including all secretaries general), politicians (both in government and in opposition), academics, a number of former, highly respected civil servants and the OECD. As one might expect, a wide range of views and opinions, often disparate and contradictory, emerged. Our challenge was to identify the common ground and then try and reconcile the many contrasting views. However, by the end of the process, the vision, mission and values were well and truly road-tested, and while some disagreements remained, there was broad consensus that the statement was a fair representation of the views expressed.

Following the first meeting of the Civil Service Renewal Task Force in June 2013, each task force member was asked to write down their own vision for civil service renewal. It became clear from this exercise that there was a need for the civil service to set out a vision and mission for itself. The process by which the final product was agreed, one year later in June 2014, was long and rigorous. No other part of the task force's work was subjected to such line-by-line and word-by-word scrutiny for over a full year.

To arrive at the final statement, the subgroup on vision collated the recurring themes set out by task force members in the renewal exercise and produced a first draft in July 2013. This draft was road-tested with the task force members and revised. This early version was then sent out by the vision subgroup to forty-eight people in their departments/office (Agriculture, Food and the Marine; Foreign Affairs and Trade; and the Central Statistics Office). The aim was to get initial feedback from across a range of civil servants at the full spectrum of grades – clerical officer to secretary general – and across general, specialist and technical staff. Members of three management advisory committees were included in the consultation. The form of the consultation was an email sent to each participant with subsequent phone calls, one-on-one conversations and some group discussions.

Following these inputs, another (second) version was drafted and road-tested again with the Civil Service Renewal Task Force at its meeting of 19 July. At that stage it was deemed ready to be released for comments from the two sponsoring secretary generals (Depart-

[8] See Appendix 1.

ments of the Taoiseach and of Public Expenditure and Reform) at a meeting on 30 July.

From early September the consultation process involved politicians (both government and opposition), academics, journalists, current and retired civil servants, and business people. Two workshops were held at assistant principal (11 November) and clerical officer (15 November) levels. A presentation was made to all secretaries general on 27 November 2013.

It is fair to say that by the end of 2013 the principles which informed the final vision document were fairly well agreed. The subgroup urged the other members of the task force to use the draft that was agreed in January 2014 (Draft 2.2) as the basis for their own work on other themes. The issue for the following six months was to get agreement on specific language and sequencing of concepts which would enable sufficient buy-in for sign-off from the task force itself. This proved a challenge as many members had strong views and wished to see concepts and language that they thought essential reflected in the text. The subgroup on vision/mission worked hard to accommodate all points of view, to reduce the number of words to a bare minimum and to produce a text which was readable and understandable by all. In the end a balance was achieved which fairly reflected the views of all stakeholders and which, it is hoped, will pass the test of time.

Conflict

Throughout the consultation process, there was a high degree of unanimity and agreement on many issues. However, there were naturally some areas of disagreement, beyond simple arguments over choice of text. A few of these disagreements were more fundamental in nature and are outlined below.

Without question, the most important and fundamental challenge was to establish the purpose of the civil service. From a distance, and given all the literature noted above, this would appear to be a relatively straightforward task. For example, *Transforming Public Services* (Department of the Taoiseach, 2008, p. 7) defined the purpose of the Irish public service as achieving 'valued outcomes for the citizen which, when taken together, make Ireland a more "successful society"'. Closer up, the task was more complex. The first area of potential conflict was whether the civil service serves only the government of the day exclusively or owes an allegiance to the longer-

term national interest. Clearly, in the view of almost everyone consulted, the civil service has a dual mandate, where the government of the day is advised and supported but where the civil service is also expected to keep a weather eye on the longer-term interests of the state and its people. This is a delicate issue – after all, who articulates the national interest if not the government of the day? Yet events in Ireland have shown that, at the very least, the time horizon of a government may not be sufficiently long-term to always protect long-term national interests.

This issue has been alluded to by many, not least Garret FitzGerald, former Taoiseach (2000); Noel Whelan, former Secretary General of the Department of Economic Planning and Development (1979); and Donal de Buitléir, former Assistant Secretary of the Revenue Commissioners (1991). The report by the OECD (2008, p. 142) also acknowledged this dilemma, where it noted, 'At the beginning of each new mandate, an agreed programme for government is released, setting a vision for action over the next five years. However, without longer-term economic and fiscal projections, these multi-year policy plans lack the proper context and discipline in which they can be assessed and debated' – a point also raised by Ruane (2012). But, as Murray delicately put it, 'the policy advisory role and the general political–administrative interface has been "tip-toed around"' (2001, p. 11). This is not a new dilemma – back in 1969 Devlin noted, 'The drawing of a distinction between policy and executive functions is, however, not nearly as easy in practice as in theory' (p. 122).

In writing a vision and mission statement it was very important that no one misunderstood the motives of the civil service in explicitly acknowledging or reflecting this dual role. The intention is not to form an alternate government or build what Walker (2013) terms a 'permanent state', but rather to remind administrations of the day that such conflicts or tensions may exist. An example of this tension can be found in a letter from John McGuinness (dated 20 July 2012), Chairman of the Public Accounts Committee, to Robert Watt, the Secretary General of the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform, where he suggested that the civil service, in addition to the role defined for it by the 2004 *Civil Service Code of Standards and Behaviour*, 'also has an overriding obligation to do what is best for the people of Ireland'. He did not make clear, in the absence of government policy, how those best interests would be identified or acted upon. This is not unusual. Throughout the consultation

process, it was typically politicians and government ministers who acknowledged the difference in respective time horizons and stressed more than any other cohort the dual role and mandate of civil servants. De Buitléir sums up this thinking, stating 'the time horizon of Ministers tends, inevitably, to be very short. However, this makes the responsibility of the civil servants to take a long view that much greater' (1991, p. 47). Several former secretaries general also acknowledged this tension. It was with the help of their advice, and in particular that of Dr T. K. Whitaker, that we settled on the wording 'while striving to achieve optimal outcomes in the long-term national interest'.

So, whether we like to admit it or not, there is at the very least a tension between the elected government and the permanent administration. Lodge et al. (2013, p. 4) describe this tension very well and are worth quoting at some length:

> At the heart of debates about the relationship between Ministers and civil servants is a question about how best to balance two fundamental values – values that often appear to be pulling in opposite directions. Simultaneously the Civil Service must be sufficiently 'responsive' to the Government of the day, while at the same time it must retain a degree of 'independence' from the political masters it serves if it is to ensure public services are administered and delivered fairly and legally to all citizens, irrespective of their political orientation. Tip too far towards 'independence' and there is a danger that the Civil Service will become self-serving and immune to political leadership; too far the other way and there is a danger that it will become captured, serving partisan rather than the national interest.

This, of course, is a very delicate matter. Trust in the political and administrative systems is fragile and can be eroded quickly. If the public believe that the civil service and the political system have separate agendas, then the very foundations of democracy are called into question. Thus, civil servants must be seen to properly advise and support the government of the day. Equally, civil servants must be seen to have the trust of their political masters. If they do not, or if it is perceived that they do not, they cannot function properly or fulfil their dual role. This trust, gives rise to what is known as the Carltona Doctrine in Westminster systems, whereby the powers vested in a

minister are exercised by civil servants as agents of the minister and are accepted as decisions of the minister.[9]

A number of other issues also took some time and debate to resolve. For example, the second sentence of the mission statement and its position vis-à-vis the first generated some debate. Some of those consulted saw the civil service's role as *first* serving citizens and stakeholders, and only then serving government. However, this would invert the historic role and purpose of the civil service, which was established to assist the sovereign to formulate and implement policy. Nevertheless, this issue again highlighted the tensions inherent in a democratic system subject to the rule of law and the obligations this imposes on civil servants. Readers will note there is no mention of the rule of law, the democratic system or the Constitution in the vision, mission, values and commitments statement. This was deliberate. Firstly it is the Constitution and the democratic system which provides the framework within which every civil servant in Ireland operates. Secondly, by taking this as implicit or assumed, and in order to keep the mission element to an acceptable length, we focused on the critical aspects to which civil servants must focus day to day.

The word 'equally' in the mission statement came under pressure during some discussions. The arguments were several: too many adjectives, equality was implicitly understood, equality was addressed in both the values and commitments statements and so did not need to be included in the mission statement as well. We disagreed for two reasons. Firstly we felt it was important to reflect the core value of equality in the mission statement – it is not enough to serve citizens and stakeholders efficiently. Secondly the sense or meaning of equality in the commitments section was inherently different. The civil servant's job is to give service equally to all and not give preference to any. The equality in the commitments section refers to the civil service's commitment to equality in the workplace – a very different concept. In the end this argument won and 'equally' remained.

Under the heading 'Our Vision', the distinction and choice between 'top class' and 'world class' became a point of real contention. Penultimate drafts continued to use the phrase 'top class' but this was changed in the end by the weight of opinion from task force members. Both phrases are inherently ambiguous and vague, but the task force

[9] The Carltona Doctrine, or Principle, permits civil servants to act as the minister of state. The principle was recognised by the UK courts in *Carltona v Commissioner of Works [1943] 2 All ER 560.* This doctrine has subsequently been upheld in the Irish courts.

took the view that using 'world class' had greater aspirational power, suggested greater ambition and would stretch the civil service to benchmark itself against the best in the world. The performance of the civil service – for example, during successive presidencies of the European Union – showed that it was capable of benchmarking itself against the best, so why not all the time?

Conclusion

The Civil Service Renewal Task Force has presented a new vision, mission, values and commitments statement for the Irish civil service. This vision is not completely new, but rather a recast or reaffirmation of previous visions and values, but with some important refinements. In particular, we are of the view that long-held civil service values, such as impartiality, independence, integrity and equality, remain valid and pertinent today. Nevertheless, this review and reaffirmation was timely, both to ensure the civil service has a vision that reflects the growing complexity and interdependencies of economy, society and environment and also to ensure it reflects the modernisation process currently underway within the civil and wider public services.

In this vision we have placed rather less emphasis on probity and audit, reflecting improvements in the civil service in this area since the publication of the Mullarkey report (Department of Finance, 2002). The real challenge, we believe, for the future civil service is one of adaptive leadership – specifically how to propagate and socialise the vision and values outlined in this paper and in the *Civil Service Renewal Plan.*

Since the turn of the century, there has been an increase in the number of civil and public service mission and vision statements.[10] While this highlights the importance of having a vision as an important step towards achieving goals, the volume or proliferation of vision and mission statements could also be taken as a metric of failure. We are of the firm opinion that a single, unified vision and mission is required. That is the purpose of the vision published in the *Civil Service Renewal Plan* – to provide a definitive civil service vision. We are of the view that all official civil service and government documents should adopt this vision. Having several visions, irrespective of how similar they are,

[10] The *Civil Service Code of Standards and Behaviour* (Standards in Public Office Commission, 2004), the *Introduction to the Irish Civil Service* (Government of Ireland, 2008) and *Transforming Public Services* (Department of the Taoiseach, 2008).

can be confusing and counterproductive. While it is tempting to keep refining and tweaking the vision, there comes a point when this is no longer useful or productive. We would suggest this point has been reached – the *Civil Service Renewal Plan* has published a shared vision for the civil service, based on extensive consultation and review. It is now time to promote and propagate that vision and ensure it is disseminated through all government training, reports, etc.

Trust between the political and administrative system is vital. If political masters do not support their civil servants, the negative impacts can be significant (Searle, 2013). This was also something Devlin stressed back in 1969. So while vision and mission statements are important milestones towards good governance and reform, success cannot be achieved without political buy-in. If political leaders do not support their civil servants, who are ultimately following their instructions, there will be no support for change. What Searle describes as 'toxic leadership' (2013) will undermine civil service performance and morale.

Writing the vision, mission and value statement for the civil service, although far from straightforward, was the easy bit. The next and more challenging stage is the leadership challenge, instilling these words into the very fabric of day-to-day transactions. As Whittington (1993) pointed out, for visions to inspire or motivate they must not feel like imposed targets but something the civil service can own. We hope the vision, mission, values and commitments presented by the Civil Service Renewal Task Force will be adopted as that.

Acknowledgements

We would like to sincerely thank all our colleagues on the Civil Service Reform Task Force and in the Departments of the Taoiseach and of Public Expenditure and Reform for their help and assistance; in particular Síle de Búrca for assisting us in arranging and attending the numerous consultation workshops and meetings. We would also like to acknowledge and thank all our fellow civil servants, former and current secretaries general, ministers, members of the Oireachtas and others who gave freely of their time to meet with us and vigorously discuss and debate these issues. Thanks also to Dr Richard Boyle (IPA), Prof. Frances Ruane (ESRI) and Dr Muiris MacCarthaigh (QUB) for additional comments and insights. The selective interpretation of their views is, of course, ours and cannot be attributed to any of those consulted unless otherwise stated.

Appendix 1: List of those consulted in the process of drafting the vision, mission, values and commitments statement for the civil service

Arnold, Tom
Bacik, Ivana
Banim, Jennifer
Barron, Diarmuid
Barry, Frank
Beamish, Cecil
Beausang, William
Behan, David
Blake, Martin
Boylan, Michael
Brannigan, Eddie
Breslin, Jim
Bridger, Lynda
Buckley, David
Bunyan, Michael
Burton, Joan
Byrne, David
Carrick, Mary
Carroll, Philip
Casey, James
Cooney, David
Cummins, Maurice
Dalton, Padraig
DeBúrca, Síle
Deering, Ger
Derwin, Ann
Desmond, Fergus
Deveitt, Samantha
Dixon, Helen
Donlon, Sean
Donnelly, Gerry
Dowling, Des
Dowling, Maurice
Duane, Aidan
Duffy, Antoinette
Dunne, P. J.
Dunniece, Margaret
Farrell, Joyce
Feehily, Josephine
Fitzgerald, Frances
Flanagan, Ruth
Ford, Don
Fraser, Martin
Gaynor, Rhona
Griffin, Mark
Hall, Aedan
Hamell, Philip
Hamill, Joe
Harrahill, Gerry
Hayden, Brendan
Hayes, Dympna
Hennessy, Lisa
Hession, Ronan
Howlin, Brendan
Hughes, Gerard
Hurley, Sean
Jordan, Trevor
Keating, Geoffrey
Kelly, Jean
Keown, Gerard
Laffan, Brigid
Lynch, Ciaran
Lynch, Fergal
Lynch, Patricia
MacDonald, Mary Lou
MacLochlainn, Pádraig
Mansfield, Eamon
McBreen, Orla
McCuire, Eoin
McEntee, Lourie
McGauran, Dermot
McGowan, Patricia
McGrath, Sarah
McGuinness, John
McGuire, Sile
McLoughlin, Ambrose
McManus, Brigid
McNerney, Sarah
McSweeney, Keith
Miliano, Ed
Montgomery, Rory
Moran, John
Moran, Tom
Moynes, Keith
Mulligan, Grainne
Murphy, Dermot
Murphy, John
Murphy, Michelle
Mythen, Fergal
Ni Bhriain, Lesley
Noonan, Michael
O'Brien, Alan P.
O'Brien, Dan
O'Brien, Gavin
O'Connell, Eilis
O'Daly, Liam
O'Donoghue, Niamh
O'Driscoll, Aidan
O'Dwyer, Marian
O Floinn, Colm
O Foghlu, Sean
O'Halloran, Jackie
O'Hanrahan, Orla
O'Keeffe, Deirdre
O'Leary, Eoin
O'Leary, Gavan
O'Mahony, Tom
O'Neill, Vincent
O'Sullivan, Dan
O'Sullivan, John
O'Sullivan, Maureen
Peake, Paul
Plummer, Alan
Purcell, Brian
Quinn, Maurice
Quinn, Orlaigh
Reid, Paul

Appendix 1: List of those consulted in the process of drafting the vision, mission, values and commitments statement for the civil service (contd.)

Reilly, James	Spratt, Kenneth	Ward, Damien
Robinson, Angela	Tallon, Geraldine	Watt, Robert
Robinson, Barrie	Tierney, Fiona	Whitaker, T. K.
Sammin, Donal	Treacy, Joe	White, Peter
Shaw, John	Tutty, Michael	Wrafter, Colin
Smyth, Kevin	Walsh, Kieran	

References

Aylward, S., Feely, S., Flanagan, J., Hennessy, M., Kearney, G., Molloy, R., & O'Flynn, A. (2000). *Implementing & sustaining the change process in the Irish public sector.* Dublin: School of Business Studies, Trinity College.

Boyle, R. (2005). *Governance and accountability in the Irish civil service* [Committee for Public Management Research, discussion paper 6]. Dublin: Institute of Public Administration.

Boyle, R., & MacCarthaigh, M. (2011). *Fit for purpose? Challenges for the Irish public administration and priorities for public service reform* [State of the Public Service Series, research paper 4]. Dublin: Institute of Public Administration.

Brennan, J. (1936). *Commission of inquiry into the civil service 1932–1935: Volume 1, final report with appendices.* Dublin: The Stationery Office.

Burke, T. (2014). *'Events, dear boy, events' have put climate change back on the agenda.* Retrieved from www.theguardian.com/environment/blog/2014/mar/26/events-climate-change-extreme-weather [11 November 2014].

Byrne, D., Dully, J., Garvey, D., Kirwan, W., Mulherin, T., O'Hanlon, G., … & Tutty, M. (1995). Strategic management in the Irish civil service: A review drawing on experience in New Zealand & Australia. *Administration*, 43 (3).

Callanan, M. (2006). *Evolution and transformation? Critical junctures and drivers of change in public services – A retrospective* [Public Service 2022 Project, working paper no. 1]. Retrieved from www.publicservice2022.ie/2022WorkingPaper1.pdf [11 November 2014].

Carroll, L. (1865). *Alice's adventures in wonderland*. New York: MacMillan.

ChangeFactory. (2014). *The components of a good vision statement.* Retrieved from www.changefactory.com.au/our-thinking/articles/the-components-of-a-good-vision-statement/ [11 November 2014].

Connaughton, B. (2005). *The impact of reform on politico-administrative relations in Ireland: Enlightening or confusing roles of political and managerial accountability?* Retrieved from www.unpan.org/Portals/0/UNPAN/Conferences/conf_13nispaceemeeting04.asp [11 November 2014].

Cromien, S. (1991). The public service as a profession. *Seirbhís Phoiblí, 12* (2).

De Buitléir, D. (1991). Reflections on management in the public service. *Seirbhís Phoiblí, 12* (2).

Department of Finance. (2002). *Report of the Working Group on the Accountability of Secretaries General and Accounting Officers.* Dublin: The Stationery Office.

Department of Public Expenditure and Reform. (2014a). *Public service reform plan 2014–2016.* Retrieved from reformplan.per.gov.ie [11 November 2014].

Department of Public Expenditure and Reform. (2014b). *Strengthening civil service accountability and performance – Consultation paper on programme*

for government commitments. Retrieved from www.per.gov.ie/civil-service-accountability-consultation-process/ [11 November 2014].

Department of Public Expenditure and Reform. (2014c). *Report of the Independent Panel on Strengthening Civil Service Accountability and Performance.* Retrieved from www.per.gov.ie/civil-service-accountability-consultation-process/ [11 November 2014].

Department of Public Expenditure and Reform. (2014d). *The civil service renewal plan – A vision and three year action plan for the civil service.* Dublin: The Stationery Office.

Department of Public Service. (1985). *Serving the country better – A White Paper on the public service.* Dublin: The Stationery Office.

Department of the Taoiseach. (1996). *Delivering better government: Second report to government of the Co-ordinating Group of Secretaries – A programme of change for the Irish civil service.* Retrieved from per.gov.ie/wp-content/uploads/Delivering_Better_Government.pdf [11 November 2014].

Department of the Taoiseach. (2008). *Transforming public services: Citizen centred – performance focused. Report of the Task Force on the Public Service.* Dublin: The Stationery Office.

Devlin, L. (1969). *Report of Public Services Organisation Review Group 1966–1969.* Retrieved from www.lenus.ie [11 November 2014].

Donnelly, M. (2014). *Positive neutrality and trust – The policy role of a permanent civil service* [Speech presented to Institute for Government]. Retrieved from www.instituteforgovernment.org.uk/news/latest/speech-bis-permanent-secretary-martin-donnelly [11 November 2014].

European Convention on Human Rights Act, Government of Ireland, (2003).

FitzGerald, G. (2000) Diluting lobbies and unleashing growth. In R. O'Donnell (Ed.), *Europe: The Irish experience.* Dublin: Institute of European Affairs.

Government of Ireland. (2008). *An introduction to the Irish civil service.* Retrieved from hr.per.gov.ie/files/2011/04/A-Guide-to-the-Civil-Service1.pdf [11 November 2014].

Hardiman, N., & MacCarthaigh, M. (2010, November 11). *Institutional evolution of the Irish state administration.* Paper to accompany launch of the Irish State Administrative Database (ISAD), Newman House, Dublin.

Hood, C. (1991). A public management for all seasons? *Public Administration, 69* (1), 3–19.

Human Rights Commission Act, Government of Ireland, (2000).

Humphreys, P. C. (1998). *Improving public service delivery* [Committee for Public Management Research, discussion paper 7]. Dublin: Institute of Public Administration.

Jisc. (2014). *What makes a good vision statement?* Retrieved from www.jiscinfonet.ac.uk/infokits/mission-vision-values/vision-statement/good-vision/ [11 November 2014].

Kelly, D. (1979). The public service reform programme. *Administration, 27* (4), 399–407.

Lee, J. J. (1989). *Ireland 1912–1985: Politics and society.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Lodge, G., Kalitowski, S., Pearce, N., & Muir, R. (2013). *Accountability and responsiveness in the senior civil service: Lessons from overseas.* London: Institute for Public Policy Research.

MacCarthaigh, M. (2008). *Public service values* [Committee for Public Management Research, discussion paper 39]. Dublin: Institute of Public Administration.

MacCarthaigh, M., & Boyle, R. (2014). *Civil service accountability: Challenge and change* [State of the Public Service Series, research paper 12]. Dublin: Institute of Public Administration.

McCarthy, D. (2001, November 16). *The future of the public service – A vision.* Address to the Civil Service Conference 'Making Change Work', Royal Hospital Kilmainham, Dublin.

McGuinness, J. (2012, July 20). *Letter to Robert Watt, Secretary General of the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform* [Ref: JMcG/AB0712/485]. Retrieved from www.oireachtas.ie/parliament/media/committees/pac/Letter-to-Robert-Watt-from-Mr-John-McGuinness-TD-20.07.2012.pdf [11 November 2014].

Murray, J. A. (2001). *Reflections on the SMI* [Working Paper 01]. Retrieved from www.tcd.ie/policy-institute/assets/pdf/PIWP01_John%20Murray.pdf [11 November 2014].

Northcote, S. H., & Trevelyan, C. E. (1854). *Report on the organisation of the permanent civil service together with a letter from the Rev. B. Jowett presented to both Houses of the Parliament by command of Her Majesty, London.* London: HMSO.

OECD. (1996). *Ethics in the public service: Current issues and practice* [Public Management Occasional Papers, no. 14]. Retrieved from 78.41.128.130/dataoecd/59/24/1898992.pdf [11 November 2014].

OECD. (2008). *Ireland – Towards an integrated public service.* Paris: OECD.

OECD. (2011). *OECD 50th anniversary vision statement.* Retrieved from www.oecd.org/mcm/48064973.pdf [11 November 2014].

PA Consulting Group. (2002). *Evaluation of the Strategic Management Initiative: Report commissioned by the Department of the Taoiseach.* Dublin: PA Consulting Group.

Public Service Management Act, Government of Ireland, (1997).

Rose, R., & Garvin, T. (1983). The public policy effects of independence: Ireland as a test case. *European Journal of Political Research, 11*, 377–97.

Ruane, F. (2012). Research evidence and policymaking in Ireland. *Administration, 60* (2), 119–38.

Scottish Government. (2010). *Civil service code*. Retrieved from www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/923/0110016.pdf [11 November 2014].

Searle, R. (2013, September 25). Political public sector bashing: the unforeseen consequences. *The Guardian.*

Spearman, S. (2013). *Your company vision: If it's complicated, it shouldn't be.* Retrieved from www.forbes.com/sites/johnkotter/2013/10/14/the-reason-most-company-vision-statements-arent-effective/ [11 November 2014].

Standards in Public Office Commission. (2004). *Civil service code of standards and behaviour.* Retrieved from hr.per.gov.ie/files/2011/06/Civil-Service-Code-of-Standards-and-Behaviour.pdf [11 November 2014].

State Services Commission for New Zealand. (2002). *Walking the talk: Making values real: Core public service values.* Retrieved from www.ssc.govt.nz/node/7001 [11 November 2014].

United Nations. (1945). *Charter of the United Nations.* Retrieved from www.un.org/en/documents/charter/[11 November 2014].

Walker, D. (2013, December 16). Let's define the roles of ministers and civil servants once and for all. *The Guardian.*

Whelan, N. (1979). Public service adaptation – Its nature and requirements. *Administration, 27* (1), 85–96.

Whittington, R. (1993). *What is strategy and does it matter?* London: Routledge.