

**MINUTES OF PERMANENT SECRETARY GROUP MEETING
HELD ON FRIDAY 5 OCTOBER 2007
IN THE GLASSHOUSE, STORMONT CASTLE
AT 8.45 AM**

Present: Nigel Hamilton
Will Haire
Don Hill
Aideen McGinley
Malcolm McKibbin
Stephen Peover
Stephen Quinn
Bruce Robinson
Alan Shannon
David Sterling
Paul Sweeney

In Attendance: Derek Baker
Rosalie Flanagan
Stephen Grimason
Oswyn Paulin
David Gavaghan
Paul Priestly } Agenda item 4
Martin Spollen
Debbie Sweeney - Secretary

1. **Apologies:** Andrew McCormick

2. **Minutes of Meeting held on 28 September 2007**

The minutes of the meeting held on 28 September were agreed.

3. **Matters Arising**

Foot and Mouth and Blue Tongue

Malcolm McKibbin updated PSG on the Foot and Mouth outbreak in Surrey.

Advertising Shared Service Centre

PSG agreed the Advertising and Shared Service Centre – Budget and Funding Model paper.

[Stephen Grimason to note]

Giant's Causeway

Stephen Quinn updated PSG on the Giant's Causeway. Stephen said the Chair of the Committee for Enterprise, Trade and Investment had written to the Minister requesting documents relating to the Giant's Causeway.

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Stephen Peover said the Environment Committee had also requested papers.

It was agreed that the issue would be addressed by the Centre, DETI and DOE.

**[Action: Rosalie Flanagan, Oswyn Paulin,
Stephen Quinn, Stephen Peover]**

Reform Costs

Bruce Robinson updated PSG on Reform issues.

Assembly and Executive Update

Rosalie reminded PSG that Ministers must notify FM/dFM and Junior Ministers of any forthcoming Statements in the Assembly.

Classroom Assistants

Will Haire said more Strikes were likely and NIPSA may ballot their members.

4. ISNI Update

David Gavaghan, Paul Priestly and Martin Spollen updated PSG on Investment Strategy Issues (2008-2018).

Following discussion PSG agreed that years 1-3 should:

- be aligned to the budget
- be specific
- have the capacity to deliver

In years 4+ SIB should:

- address concerns
- review and discuss
- maintain flexibility

5. Independent Water Review

David Sterling briefed PSG on the Independent Water Review Report.

6. Equal Pay

Derek Baker updated PSG on Equal Pay issues.

7. Employing People with Conflict Related Convictions

Derek said Minister Robinson had written to Jim Allister re guidance for employers in recruiting people with conflict related convictions. The letter states that the guidance would not be applied in the NICS.

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Derek said he would circulate the Minister's letter.

[Action: Derek Baker]

8. Grade 7 Testing Update

Derek said he had written to Permanent Secretaries requesting volunteers at Grade 7 to participate in the 2007 Grade 7 assessment tool design exercise/trials.

9. HR Connect Update

Derek updated PSG on HR Connect issues. Derek asked that Departments consider asking their HR Director on to their Departmental Board. He said they are in a position to keep Boards abreast of HR Connect issues and contribute to policy making.

[Permanent Secretaries to consider]

10. FOI Round Robin Request

Nigel Hamilton said advice regarding the request would issue from the Central FOI team and asked that no replies issue from Departments.

**[Action: Central FOI Team
Permanent Secretaries to note]**

11. PEDU

Bruce Robinson said Minister Robinson had announced the creation of an efficiency taskforce – the Performance and Efficiency Delivery Unit (PEDU) to re-examine the scope for generating cash-releasing efficiencies and improving delivery and performance within Departments and across the wider public sector.

FEI

Aideen McGinley said there was a vacancy on the February FEI Course and suggested Seamus McAleevy be approached.

PSG agreed to the proposal.

[Action: CPG]

UPRG

Alan Shannon said that 9 October was the proposed deadline for the UPRG.

DEBBIE SWEENEY
October 2007

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