

**MINUTES OF PERMANENT SECRETARY GROUP MEETING  
HELD ON 11 FEBRUARY 2005 IN ROOM GD14, STORMONT CASTLE  
AT 8.45 am**

**Present:** Nigel Hamilton  
Derek Baker  
Clive Gowdy  
Will Haire  
John Hunter  
Andrew McCormick  
Aideen McGinley  
Gerry McGinn  
Stephen Peover  
Nick Perry  
Stephen Quinn  
Bruce Robinson  
Pat Toal

**In Attendance:** Richie Furlong }  
John Whittaker } Agenda Item 3  
Linda Brown }  
Rosalie Flanagan  
Colm Shannon  
Pauline Boyle (Secretary)

**Apologies:** Alan Shannon

**1. Minutes and Summary**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 4 February have been circulated.

**2. Matters Arising**

There were no matters arising.

**3. Presentation**

Mr Hamilton welcomed Mr Furlong and Mr Whittaker from the Employment and Reward Directorate in the Cabinet Office. They addressed key issues facing the HCS, pay issues affecting both the SCS and the non-SCS, pay and workforce planning, pension reform, employment conditions, nationality, and absenteeism.

#### 4. **Monitoring the Implementation of Fit for Purpose**

Mr Hunter's paper of 24 January to PSG set out arrangements he proposed to adopt in monitoring Fit for Purpose. He recommended that CPG will co-ordinate progress from Departments, provide quarterly updates to PSG and feels monitoring will become clearer as the process progresses. PSG were content in principle with the caveat on monitoring which will evolve over time.

#### 5. **Learning and Development**

Mr Hamilton referred to his paper of 21 January and particularly his nine conclusions. It was agreed that most of the issues will fall into PSG Sub-Group C, chaired by Dr McGinley, apart from the question of an Efficiency Unit, on which Mr Hamilton will meet soon with Mr Hunter and Dr McCormick to discuss.

**[Action: Secretary]**

Dr McGinley asked if a number of small Departments could share Non-Executive Directors and Mr McGinn agreed to discuss with Dr McGinley. PSG were happy with the broad thrust of arrangements.

**[Action: Mr McGinn/Dr McGinley]**

#### 6. **Taking Forward Lyons**

Dr McCormick gave an update on progress on the Lyons Review. Mr Robinson reported that INI have well established links with SIB and Chief Executive of UK Partnerships.

#### 7. **OSNI and Geographic Information**

Dr McGinley gave an update from the presentation which Mick Cory gave to PSG in June 2004. She reported good feedback from Departments following a series of presentations to Departmental Boards on the potential of the Geographic Information (GI) strategy to aid Departmental business. She asked colleagues to note developments on behalf of Mosaic and circulated the first edition of the Mosaic Newsletter.

PSG signed up to the three recommendations in Dr McGinley's paper which were:

- (i) to note developments;
- (ii) to endorse the GI Policy and Strategy (Mosaic), and OSNI's role in facilitating and co-ordinating GI on behalf of the e-Government Board and the NICS; and
- (iii) to encourage relevant Departmental participation in Mosaic.

#### 8. **Tour de Table**

- (a) Mr Perry reported on the first meeting of the **Organised Crime Task Force** which took place on Tuesday 8 February. The meeting was

chaired by the Secretary of State and the entire Ministerial team attended.

- (b) Mr Hamilton advised PSG colleagues to continue to monitor **FOI** requests. Mrs Flanagan asked if any sensitive or precedent-setting requests were received, Departments should consult the centre. She informed PSG that Mr Stewart was grateful for Practitioners Group support.
- (c) Mr Gowdy reported on the **Paediatric Cardiac Service**.  
He also reported on the **Rape Crisis & Sexual Abuse Centre**.
- (d) Mrs Flanagan informed PSG the next **Good Governance** meeting is scheduled for 23 February.
- (e) Mr Colm Shannon will prepare an interim report for PSG on **advertising review** within the next couple of weeks.
- (f) Mr McGinn reported on the **ELB Budget Report**.
- (g) Mr Quinn reported on the **Water Service strike** on Wednesday 9 February.  
He asked PSG to note the introduction of the new **Metro Bus Service** in Belfast on Monday 7 February.
- (h) Mr Hunter informed colleagues that none of the dates in April/May suited the organisers of the **Harvard Seminar**. After discussion, PSG agreed that early September would be the best date.
- (i) Mr Haire reported on the **FE system strike** action.
- (j) Dr McGinley informed PSG that the **Gaeltacht Quarter** report would be discussed with officials in the first instance.
- (k) Mr Toal reported on **Hunting with Dogs**.
- (l) Mrs Flanagan reported on **political developments**.

#### 9. **Date of Next Meeting**

The next PSG meeting will take place on Friday 18 February 2005.

**PAULINE BOYLE**  
**14 February 2005**