

SUMMARY OF THE SENIOR MANAGEMENT MEETING

ON 14 JANUARY 2004

PRESENT:	Mr Hamilton	APOLOGIES:	Mr Gamble
	Mrs Angus		Mr Gray
	Mr Beattie		Mr McKervill
	Ms Bunting		Dr Mulligan
	Mrs Clarke		Mr Shannon
	Mrs Cummins		Mr Stewart
	Mr Finnegan		Dr Smith
	Ms Flanagan		Dr Smyth
	Mr Grimason		
	Ms Jardine		
	Mr Jardine		
	Mr Johnston		
	Mrs McAuley		
	Mr McCartney		
	Mr McCluggage		
	Mr McConnell		
	Mr McCormick		
	Mr Sweeney		
	Ms Wilson		
IN ATTENDANCE:	Mr Higgins (secretary), Ms Sweeney,		

1. Summary of last meeting

The summary of the Senior Management Group meeting held on was noted and agreed.

2. Assembly Issues

Ms Flanagan updated the Board on a range of post election Assembly matters including the forthcoming Review of the Agreement.

3. Leadership In A Changing World

Mrs McAuley presented a report on the outcome of a leadership programme, which she and a number of colleagues participated in and which involved a visit to the USA in November 2003. The report summarised the programme itinerary, its benefits and suggestions for improving similar future programmes. Staff involved in the visit programme conducted a question and answer session at the meeting which addressed the key messages of the programme, including the

benefits and lessons to learn in negotiation, risk management, performance measurement, customer focus and participative, collaborative and partnership approaches to working. It was agreed to consider sharing the knowledge acquired during the leadership programme with a wider audience from the Department by holding a lunchtime event.

Action: Corporate Services Division and Programme participants.

4. Leaders For Tomorrow

Ms Jardine presented a report on the outcome of an USA visit programme she attended. The programme was structured around a leadership placement and Ms Jardine outlined the benefits and read-across potential of the programme for the Northern Ireland public sector. It was agreed that the formal involvement of the Northern Ireland Bureau in Washington in future visit programmes to the USA would be beneficial and the Bureau would be contacted accordingly. **Action: Corporate Services Division.**

5. Key issues for 2004

Mr Hamilton provided an outline of the key issues for the Department for 2004 including the forthcoming Review of the Belfast Agreement, the Spending Review for 2005/06 and beyond and Efficiency Reviews. Other key issues include the pressures associated with reductions in administrative costs across all Departments, rationalisation of business plans and associated targets and the reform and modernisation agenda for the public sector. Mr Hamilton informed the meeting about the appointment of Mr Higgitt in February 2004 as a special adviser to the Secretary of State.

6. Tour de Table

- Ms Cummins provided an update on the latest developments for the community capacity building programme.
- Mrs Angus reported that further guidance to staff on Industrial Action was being prepared for issue shortly.

- Mr Jardine reported on developments in the review of Public Private Partnerships policy and Efficiency Reviews.
- Mr McConnell reported on the extension of the consultation exercise on the Review of Public Administration.
- Mrs McAuley reported on the latest developments in respect of the Single Equality Bill, Equality Commission landscape review, draft Disability Bill and a Judicial Review case.
- Mr McCluggage reported that the MSc course on Innovations Management was oversubscribed with a second tranche in October 2004 and noted that he was the Northern Ireland Representative on the Citizen Information Project being conducted by the Office of National Statistics.
- Mr McCormick reported on the launch of a Northern Ireland Best Practice Scheme in February, a major reform conference planned for early March and progress in developing new customer service standards, "Quick Wins" and the Electronic Data Record Management System (EDRMS) project.
- Mr Beattie provided information on the appointment of a Chairperson and formation of a sub-committee of the Northern Ireland Affairs Committee.
- Ms Wilson reported that the Northern Ireland Economic Research Institute of Northern Ireland was now operational although there were still a number of issues arising from the merger to be resolved over the next 13 weeks. She also reported on the operation of the Strategic Investment Board.
- Mr Sweeney outlined the effects of Budget constraints that would result in financial pressures on administrative costs across the public sector for the forthcoming three financial years. Reprioritisation would also be addressed in the forthcoming Spending Review.
- Mr Johnston reported on matters in respect of the North South Implementation Bodies and Parliamentary Questions.
- Mrs Bunting updated the meeting on progress in the Community Relations Strategy Review, evaluation of New Targeting Social Need and issues concerning racism, including raising awareness and establishing anti-racism networks.

6. Any Other Business

It was agreed that forthcoming senior management meetings would be rescheduled to take place on the third Wednesday of each month and that members of the senior management group would continue to forward agenda items for future meetings, to the Secretary, as far in advance as possible. **Action: Corporate Services Division/Senior Management Group members.**

7. Date of next meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday 18 February 2004 at 9.30 a.m. in room BD20 Stormont Castle. The date and venue for forthcoming meetings in 2004 are given below but are subject to change in light of forthcoming relocation plans. All meetings commence at 9.30 am.

Date	Venue
18 February	BD20
24 March (rescheduled from 17 March)	BD20
21 April	E4.18
19 May	E4.18
16 June	E4.18
21 July	E4.18
18 August	E4.18
15 September	E4.18
20 October	E4.18
17 November	E4.18

MARK HIGGINS

6 February 2004