

**SUMMARY OF PERMANENT SECRETARY GROUP MEETING – FRIDAY
14 NOVEMBER 2003 IN ROOD GD.10, STORMONT CASTLE**

Present: Nigel Hamilton (Chair)
Andrew Hamilton
Will Haire
John Hunter
Andrew McCormick
Aideen McGinley
Gerry McGinn
Stephen Peover
Stephen Quinn
Bruce Robinson
Alan Shannon

Apologies: Pat Toal

In Attendance: Chris Morris, DSD – Agenda Item 3
Rosalie Flanagan } Agenda
John McKervill } Item 4
Debbie Sweeney – Secretary

1. The minutes of PSG meeting held on 7 November were agreed and issued in final form.

2. **Matters Arising**

There were no matters arising.

3. **Edging Out Poverty**

Chris Morris presented the key findings and policy issues which emerged from research completed by Queen's. The research was initially disseminated through four seminars attended by members of both the governmental and non-governmental policy communities from NI and ROI.

4. **Elections and Purdah Period**

Mrs Flanagan and Mr McKervill advised PSG on the Election Business Committee and the purdah period.

5. **RPA and the Reform Agenda**

PSG considered the options for better communication and co-ordination of major current reform projects within NICS, particularly the RPA.

It was agreed that PSG would be updated regularly on the Reform Agenda, bi-laterals to be arranged, and SCS seminars used to update SCS colleagues in the future.

6. **Public Expenditure – September Monitoring and Prospects for Spending Review**

Dr McCormick updated PSG on September Monitoring, SR2004/Efficiency Review, N+2 and the Edinburgh Finance Ministers' Quadrilateral.

7. **Tour de Table**

NICS Pay Update

Dr McCormick updated PSG on the current state of play regarding Civil Service Pay.

Herdman Mill

Mr Peover reported that he had visited the Herdman Mill and would be raising the issue at PSG.

Electricity

Mr Robinson updated PSG on current electricity issues.

Orthophosphate Treatment

Mr Quinn updated PSG with regard to the introduction of orthophosphate treatment to reduce the level of lead in water.

Flu Epidemic

Mr Andrew Hamilton reported that GPs have reported an increase in consultation rates for flu-like illness. This marks an early start to the flu season.

Children in Need

PSG agreed that ballots for the signed Tyrone football shirt to raise money for Children in Need was totally at the buyer's discretion.