

**MINUTES OF PERMANENT SECRETARY GROUP MEETING ON 16 JANUARY 2004
IN ROOM GD14, STORMONT CASTLE, AT 08.45 am – 10.30 am**

Present:

**Nigel Hamilton
Clive Gowdy
Will Haire
Marion Matchett
Carol Moore
Stephen Peover
Bruce Robinson
Alan Shannon
David Sterling
Pat Toal
David Watkins**

Apologies:

**John Hunter
Andrew McCormick**

In Attendance:

**Linda Brown
Stephen Grimason
John Hinds (Agenda Item 3)
Dorothy Angus (Agenda Item 3)
Debbie Sweeney (Secretary)**

1. Minutes and Summary

The Minutes of the meeting held on 9 January were agreed.

2. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

3. CEPB Presentation

Dorothy Angus introduced John Hinds from Central Emergency Planning Branch. Mr Hinds outlined the role of CEPU co-ordination arrangements, the Capabilities Programme, CBRN Strategic Policy Group, CEPU's Development programme and the Continuity of Central Government.

There was a discussion on relevant issues. It was agreed that Mr Hinds would include those issues in Mr Hamilton's follow-up letter to Permanent Secretaries.

[Action: Mr Hinds]

4. **Industrial Action Update**

Mrs Brown updated PSG on strike action.

5. **Taking Forward Reform: Sharing Best Practice**

PSG endorsed the recommendations of PSG(E), including the recommendations that Permanent Secretaries would support the events involved in the Best Practice Scheme. **[PSG to note]**

Mr Hamilton highlighted 'Improving Public Services through Reform' conference which will be held on 4 March at the Europa Hotel. Sir Jon Shortridge, John Elvidge and Dermot McCarthy would be addressing the conference.

[PSG to note]

6. **ILEX**

The ILEX/DETI/INI MOU was discussed.

7. **Tour de Table**

(i) Good Governance

The Good Governance meeting will take place on 2 February.

(ii) Briefing MLAs

Mr Hamilton agreed that the Whips should be approached to assist with the setting up of the briefings. Mr Hamilton to discuss further with Mrs Flanagan.

[Action: HOCS]

(iii) Adam Higgitt

Mr Hamilton will meet Mr Higgitt on 2 February.

(iv) Victoria Square

Mr Shannon updated PSG on Victoria Square.

(v) Sperrin Lakeland Trust

Mr Gowdy informed PSG that the Trust would be advertising for a site for a new South West Hospital.

(vi) UK Presidency Year

Mr Toal advised that DARD would hold a conference for the UK Presidency Year.

(vii) NI Booklet

The NI Booklet would be launched by the Secretary of State in Washington in March.

(viii) Review of Festivals

Mrs Moore reported that the Review was near completion.

(ix) Invest

Mr Robinson informed PSG that the Invest Action Plan would be launched in Londonderry next week.

(x) Emissions Trading Scheme

Mr Robinson updated PSG on the DEFRA proposals for the completion of the Emissions Trading Scheme.

(xi) Construction Industry

Mr Haire updated PSG on the handling of Construction Industry Apprenticeships.

(xii) Prisons Dispute

Mr Watkins informed PSG that the dispute with the Prison Service regarding protection had been resolved.

(xiii) Review of the Good Friday Agreement

Mr Watkins advised PSG that an announcement on the start date of the Review of the Good Friday Agreement would be announced w/c 19 January.

(xiv) NILGA Conference

Mr Peover informed PSG that the NILGA conference would be on 21-22 January in Londonderry.

(xv) Irish Hare

Mr Peover updated PSG on the Judicial Review on the temporary ban on the killing, taking, sale or purchase of Irish Hares.

(xvi) Londonderry Chamber of Commerce

A number of PSG members had received a letter requesting a meeting with Janice Tracey, CE, Londonderry Chamber of Commerce. It was agreed that the invites should be handled individually.

DEBBIE SWEENEY