

**SUMMARY OF PERMANENT SECRETARY GROUP MEETING – FRIDAY
17 OCTOBER 2003 IN STORMONT CASTLE**

Present: Nigel Hamilton (Chair)
Clive Gowdy
Will Haire
John Hunter
Andrew McCormick
Aideen McGinley
Gerry McGinn
Stephen Peover
Stephen Quinn
Alan Shannon
Pat Toal
David Watkins

Apologies: Bruce Robinson

In Attendance: Debbie Sweeney (Secretary)

1. Following a couple of minor amendments, the minutes were agreed and re-issued in final form.

2. **Matters Arising**

Mr Hamilton confirmed that he has written to Permanent Secretaries regarding the new Career Development Profiles.

* Two HR issues minuted separately

3. **PEACE II and N+2 Update**

Mr McCormick updated PSG on the current progress to meet PEACE II N+2 targets. PSG noted that Mr Pearson plans to write to other Ministers about the issue.

4. **Civil Service Pay Update**

Mr McCormick updated PSG on the current state of play regarding Civil Service pay.

5. **NEDs**

Mr Haire explained the role of Non-Executive Directors and how the role of NEDs has now become accepted practice in Whitehall.

It was noted that Departments were at different stages in their consideration. Mr Haire would reconsider the use of WIG and whether a central list should be kept. Mr Hamilton asked that members consider their use of NEDs and respond to Mr Haire by the end of October.

[Action: PSG members. Mr Haire to lead]

6. **Tour de Table**

PSG meeting with Secretary of State

Mr Hamilton confirmed that the meeting would be on 22 October at 9.30 am in Stormont Castle.

Mr Carvill's Retirement Dinner

Dinner arranged for Monday 20 October.

Disability Conference

Mr Hunter confirmed that nominations had been forwarded for the Disability Conference; it was noted that delegates from RoI will also attend.

Poverty Research

Mr Hunter informed PSG that research on Poverty had been completed and a presentation to PSG would be beneficial.

[Action: Mr Hunter, Secretary to note]

Food Strategy Group

Mr Toal reported that Mr Pearson would be announcing arrangements to develop a comprehensive food strategy for Northern Ireland. The group will be made up of senior expert figures from different parts of the food chain.

Bus Strike

Mr Quinn reported on the Translink one day strike. Further one-day strikes are planned on forthcoming Fridays and the action may be extended.

Mr McGinn said that DE were monitoring the situation in relation to school transport and any future action which could affect 11 plus pupils

North East Institute

Mr Shannon confirmed that the principle had retired. Mr Williams was currently on loan from the Causeway Institute to run the N.E. Institute on a temporary basis.

Employability Taskforce

The report of the Implementation Group was complete and was ready for publication.

Springvale

Mr Shannon informed PSG that the consultants' report on Springvale was complete and a meeting of the village committee would be held next week when the report would be revealed.

Memorial Committee

Dr McGinley updated PSG on the details surrounding the memorial committee.

City Centre Arts Project

The business plan for the project was underway and it should be complete in six weeks.

Healthy Cities Conference

PSG noted the conference on Healthy Cities would begin on Sunday 19 October, in Belfast and a worldwide delegation would be present.

Human Tissue Bill

Mr Gowdy reported that work on drafting the legislation for the Human Organs and Tissues was advanced. It would be next year before the proposals would become law.

Assembly Staff

Mr McCormick reported that if elections were called, the Assembly would require 19 key staff back to their posts immediately.

September Monitoring

Mr McCormick reminded PSG that proposals for the September Monitoring exercise would be forwarded to the Secretary of State within the next fortnight for approval.

DEBBIE SWEENEY