

**SUMMARY OF THE SENIOR MANAGEMENT MEETING
ON 17 NOVEMBER 2004**

PRESENT:	Mr Hamilton (chair) Mrs Angus Ms Bunting Mrs Cummins Ms Flanagan Mr Gamble Dr Griffith Mr Grimason Mr Johnston Mr Maitland Ms McAlpine Mr McCartney Mr McCluggage Dr Mulligan Mr Shannon Mr Stewart Miss Wilson	APOLOGIES: Mr Finegan Mr Gray Mr Jackson Mr McConnell Dr Smyth Mr Sweeney
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IN ATTENDANCE: Mr Higgins (secretary)

The meeting welcomed two new members to the Senior Management Group, i.e. Mr Maitland, Regeneration & External Affairs Division who replaced Mr Stewart on his move to Public Service Reform Unit and Ms McAlpine, Anti-Discrimination Division on a two year secondment from the NI Court Service.

1. Summary of last meeting

The summary of the Senior Management Group meeting held on 26 October was noted and amendments agreed.

2. Assembly Issues

Mrs Flanagan reported on political developments and related matters.

3. Fit for Purpose

Mr Hamilton provided an introduction to the Civil Service Reform document, Fit for Purpose and set it in context with the Draft Priorities and Budget 2005-08 and Draft Economic Vision documents which were all published at the same time for public consultation. Also related to those documents will be the proposed Northern Ireland Investment Strategy, being drawn up by the Strategic Investment Board, which will set out the Governments plans for a long-term programme of investment in Northern Ireland.

Details of the Fit for Purpose were included in the service wide letter issued by Mr Hamilton on 12 October which emphasised the major contribution of the Northern Ireland Civil Service (NICS) to, and substantial progress in, improving service provision in difficult circumstances and outlined the aim of Fit for Purpose to further modernise, improve efficiency and concentrate expenditure on priority front line services.

Further information on Fit for Purpose would be disseminated by each Directorate to their staff. In the context of Fit for Purpose, the Board noted the ongoing monitoring role of the Department of Finance and Personnel and Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency in terms of each Department's workforce planning to meet their future needs.

4. Tour de Table

- a) Mr McCluggage reported on progress on the roll out of Broad Band in Northern Ireland by January 2005 which is ahead of other UK regions and the development of a Common Services Centre.

- b) Mr Stewart emphasised the importance of attending Freedom of Information awareness training for senior civil servants.
- c) Mrs Cummins reported on progress in respect of the Crumlin Road Gaol site and funding partnerships.
- d) Mr Maitland reported on progress by the Maze Consultation Panel in respect of the development of the Maze Regeneration site.
- e) Miss Wilson updated the meeting on the comprehensive analysis of the partnerships operating in Northern Ireland being undertaken by the Economic Policy Unit including plans to extend the initial mapping exercise which would provide the basis for a detailed examination of the accountability, funding and composition of partnerships.
- f) Ms McAlpine provided an update on the consultation responses to the single Equality Bill.
- g) Ms Griffith advised that Prorogation, which marks the end of the current Parliamentary session and the ending of business in the current Parliamentary year, would be on 18 November. Ms Griffith also provided an update on the Holocaust Memorial event in the Waterside, Londonderry on 23 January 2005.
- h) Mr McCartney updated the meeting on developments on specific casework which was nearing completion.
- i) Mr Shannon reported on progress on the review of Government advertising led by Executive Information Service.
- j) Mr Gamble reported on progress with the draft strategy for Children and Young People, which had been agreed by the Minister for issue for public consultation, and "A Shared Future", the policy and strategic framework for good relations in Northern Ireland which will be discussed at the next meeting of the Permanent Secretary Group.
- k) Mr Mulligan reported that around 100 submissions had been received in respect of New TSN future anti poverty strategy

consultation which ended on 15 October and all responses were being assessed prior to a second, more focused consultation period which would commence in the near future. Work is also progressing on the Review of Section 75 Equality Duty.

- l) Mrs Angus reported that Freedom of Information awareness training was nearing completion and training was also progressing for specific staff who would be involved in the decision making process.

5. Date of next meeting

The next meeting of the senior management group is scheduled for Wednesday 19 January 2005, commencing at 9.30 a.m. in the Conference Room E4.18 Castle Buildings.

MARK HIGGINS

22 November 2004