

**SUMMARY OF THE SENIOR MANAGEMENT MEETING  
ON 20 MARCH 2003**

<b>PRESENT:</b>	<b>Mr Haire</b>	<b>APOLOGIES:</b>	<b>Mr Hamilton</b>
	<b>Ms Bunting</b>		<b>Mr Gray</b>
	<b>Mr Jardine</b>		<b>Dr Smyth</b>
	<b>Mr Grimason</b>		<b>Mr McConnell</b>
	<b>Ms Flanagan</b>		<b>Mr McKervill</b>
	<b>Mr McCartney</b>		<b>Mr Jackson</b>
	<b>Mrs Angus</b>		<b>Dr Smith</b>
	<b>Mr Vincent</b>		<b>Mr Johnston</b>
	<b>Mrs Devlin</b>		<b>Mr May</b>
	<b>Mr Stewart</b>		<b>Dr Mulligan</b>
	<b>Mr Shannon</b>		
	<b>Mrs McAuley</b>		
	<b>Mrs Cummins</b>		
	<b>Mr Rooney</b>		

**IN ATTENDANCE:** **Mr Ferguson (secretary)**  
**Miss Dullaghan**  
**Mr Maguire – Thomson Netg**  
**Miss Morgan - CEPU**  
**Mr Grace - CEPU**

**1. E - Learning**

Mr Ross Maguire from Thomson Netg gave a short presentation to the meeting on e-learning, which is a method of accessing training facilities from each individual's personal computer.

E-learning is being launched in OFMDFM on Friday 21 March and will be available on desktop personal computers from Monday 24 March. The meeting discussed a number of issues arising from the introduction of e-learning and agreed that the application of e-learning to address development needs should be considered within the personal development plan (PDP) process.

## **2. Resilience and Emergency Management**

Julie Morgan and Richard Grace from the Central Emergency Planning Unit attended the meeting and gave a short presentation on resilience and emergency management.

Resilience is an organisation's ability to handle emergency situations or disruption to its normal business. It consists of two elements, preparing for external emergencies and ensuring that existing services are not vulnerable to disruption.

The meeting noted plans to develop an emergency management development strategy for OFMDFM. Initially this would entail staff from Central Emergency Planning Unit supported by colleagues from the Central Management Unit visiting each Division in the Department to establish where resilience was most appropriate.

## **3. Preparation for Restoration**

Ms Flanagan updated the meeting on a note issued by Nigel Hamilton to all Permanent Secretaries asking them to begin making preliminary preparations for a return to devolution. Ms Flanagan also updated the meeting on a number of potential restoration scenarios including prior to dissolution, during the election period or after the election has been completed.

## **4. Tour de Table**

- Mrs Cummins updated the meeting on implementation of the community capacity building programmes in North Belfast.

- Ms Bunting updated the meeting on recent developments in relation to a number of proposals designed to transform loyalist communities.
- Mr Stewart updated the meeting on the victim's core funding scheme and on the appointment of a Children's Commissioner for which legislation had just recently been passed and an advertisement placed in the main newspapers.
- Mrs McAuley updated the meeting on a number of issues including the panel of experts for the Single Equality Bill, consultation on regulations implementing EU equality obligations and age discrimination legislation and an application for a judicial review hearing into a decision by the Equality Commission to withdraw funding support for an individuals claim. Mrs McAuley also reported that several staff on loan to the Equality Commission were nearing the end of their loan period. Mrs McAuley expressed her thanks to these staff for all their hard work, a view echoed by the meeting as a whole.
- Mrs Angus updated the meeting on Investors in People. She reported that the Central Emergency Planning Unit (CEPU) had recently achieved accreditation in addition to the re-accreditation already achieved by the Public Sector Reform Unit. Mrs Angus also reported that CEPU were continuing to monitor to situation with regard to military action in Iraq and also reminded colleagues that the Department's Service Delivery Agreement for 2003/04 was currently with them for final comments prior to publication at the end of the month.

- Mr Rooney updated the meeting on the Fisheries Taskforce, which is planning to hold a number of public consultation meetings over the next week.
- Mr Haire updated the meeting on his recent visit to the US and commended the work of the Northern Ireland Bureau in Washington. Mr Haire also updated the meeting on the reform agenda, he reported that a discussion paper was being prepared for submission to the Permanent Secretaries Group (PSG) and reminded colleagues about the six PSG Sub Groups that were being set up to look into a range of reform issues.
- Mr Jardine continuing the reform theme reported that JMC had also commissioned work in five areas. Mr Jardine also reported that the closing date for applications for the post of Head of the Washington Bureau was 21 March 2003.
- Mr Vincent reported that the Northern Ireland portal was due to be launched on 31 March 2003.
- Mrs Devlin reported that the current legislative programme was now complete and that her Division had been engaged in a series of bilaterals with all eleven departments in relation to the development of a future legislative programme. A paper would be prepared and submitted to PSG.
- Mr Grimason updated the meeting on plans to make an announcement about the Strategic Investment Board during the next week.

- Mr McCartney reported that in an effort to improve communication with the Departmental Solicitors Office he would be meeting with them on a monthly basis to brief them on current issues.

**4. Any Other Business**

No other business was discussed.

**5. Date of next meeting**

The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday 9 April 2003.

**MICHAEL FERGUSON**

24 March 2003