

**SUMMARY OF THE SENIOR MANAGEMENT MEETING  
ON 21 APRIL 2004**

<b>PRESENT:</b>	<b>Mr Hamilton</b>	<b>APOLOGIES:</b>
	<b>Mrs Angus</b>	<b>Ms Bunting</b>
	<b>Mrs Cummins</b>	<b>Ms Flanagan</b>
	<b>Mr Finegan</b>	<b>Mr Gray</b>
	<b>Mr Gamble</b>	<b>Mr Grimason</b>
	<b>Mr Jackson</b>	<b>Mr McConnell</b>
	<b>Mr Jardine</b>	<b>Mr McKervill</b>
	<b>Mr Johnston</b>	<b>Mr Shannon</b>
	<b>Mrs McAuley</b>	<b>Dr Smith</b>
	<b>Mr McCartney</b>	<b>Dr Smyth</b>
	<b>Mr McCluggage</b>	<b>Mr Sweeney</b>
	<b>Mr McCormick</b>	
	<b>Dr Mulligan</b>	
	<b>Mr Stewart</b>	
	<b>Miss Wilson</b>	
<b>IN ATTENDANCE:</b>	<b>Mr Higgins (secretary) Mr Connolly</b>	

The meeting paid tribute to Mrs McAuley for her invaluable contribution to the work of the Department and conveyed their best wishes on her transfer to the Department Of Employment and Learning on 26 April.

**1. Summary of last meeting**

The summary of the Senior Management Group meeting held on 24 March was noted and amendments agreed.

**2. Matters Arising**

**Computer Application for Updating Divisional Risk Registers**

It was agreed that those Directors who had not provided Mr Fee, IT Unit with the name of an editor for the above application would provide that contact name as soon as possible.

**3. Assembly Issues**

Mr Johnston updated the Board on a range of Assembly matters including developments arising from the report of the Independent Monitoring Committee.

#### **4. Staff Contact Database**

Mr Connolly gave a presentation of the system to the meeting. Mrs Angus outlined the benefits of the database which deliberately mirrored other Departmental IT systems in its design. Members were encouraged to provide comments to Personnel Services on the database to assist in improving the system. It was agreed that members would advise their staff of the responsibility of individuals to update their contact details on the database. **Action: Senior Management Group members.**

#### **5. PSG Sub-Group A: Paper on Political Awareness, Culture, Values and Behaviour**

Mr Jackson provided the meeting with an overview of the above paper and explained that it was being considered by all departments who were asked to feed back comments to PSG Sub-Group A. The meeting discussed the development of a range of relevant subjects including a Code of Ethics, the Core Competence Framework and a Civil Service Act. The discussion also addressed the development of values in the context of wider political and legislative matters, the role of Ministers, NICS corporacy, Departmental autonomy, policy development and political awareness. It was agreed that Mr Jackson would feed back the points raised at the meeting to PSG Sub-Group A to inform their decision making process in taking the paper forward. **Action: Mr Jackson.**

#### **5. Tour de Table**

- a) Mrs Cummins reported on the increased political profile in relation to challenging the application of various programmes in North and West Belfast. HOCS asked Mrs Cummins to let him have a brief summary with examples.

- b) Mr Johnston provided an update on the redeployment of Assembly staff, special advisers, North/South Council and British/Irish Council matters and the Secretary of State's forthcoming programme of meetings with Departments.
- c) Mr Jackson informed the meeting about a new Security Advisory Unit in the Machinery of Government Division and a forthcoming debate on Northern Ireland in the House of Lords which would require briefing from Departments.
- d) Mr Jardine reported on a recent conference speech by the Secretary of State, a visit to Northern Ireland in April by Peter Gershon, who is conducting a major Review commissioned by the Cabinet Office and HM Treasury, and progress concerning interviews for the Strategic Investment Board, Chief Executive post.
- e) Miss Wilson reported on new Budget guidance, forthcoming work on the Priorities and Budget document and matters concerning the Economic Research Institute.
- f) Mrs Angus provided an update on ongoing work with Directors on Budget matters and the 2004-2005 Business Plan.
- g) Mr McCluggage gave an update on applications for bids to the E-Government Fund, the change of name of the Office of the E-Envoy to the Office of E-Government, e-Government Units sponsorship role in Information Risk Management and the forthcoming Digital Inclusion Steering Group's business leaders event which will be attended by the responsible Minister.
- h) Mr McCormick gave an update on developments with a range of reform work and progress on the 2004 project for the Electronic Data Records Management (EDRM) system.
- i) Mr Mulligan provided updates concerning the Review of New TSN consultation responses, a closure event for the 2003 European Year of the Disabled, the Older People Strategy, Gender Equality and Section 75 NI Act issues.
- j) Mr Finnegan provided an overview of the written submissions received for the Review of Public Administration consultation exercise which showed unanimous support for change. Quality of service would be the key priority for the emerging two-tier model

for government at regional and sub-regional level. The Minister would be meeting with political parties at the end of April and firm proposals published for consultation in the autumn.

- k) Mr Stewart reported on progress with the European Strategy and the work by the Maze site consultation panel to address key issues.
- l) Mr McCartney outlined issues on nationality and the Civil Service and the input of the Civil Service Commissioners in that area.
- m) Mrs McAuley reported on developments concerning the Single Equality Bill consultation, Green paper and publication of an Equality Commission booklet on Fair Employment and an autumn 2004 conference focusing on Fair Employment.
- n) Mr Gamble provided an update on the Race Equality Strategy including a recent Race Forum meeting attended by the Minister, an NI Affairs Committee enquiry on racism, progress on Victims issues concerning a process for dealing with the past, a successful week of community events in April organised by the Community Relations Council and progress on the Children and Young People strategy. The meeting offered congratulations to a member of Mr Gamble's staff, Ms Stevens, in achieving a 2004 Yale World Fellowship.

## **6. Date of next meeting**

The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday 19 May 2004 commencing at 9.30 a.m. in the Conference Room E4.18 Castle Buildings.

MARK HIGGINS

26 April 2004