

**SUMMARY OF THE SENIOR MANAGEMENT MEETING
ON 21 MAY 2003**

PRESENT:	Mr Haire	APOLOGIES:	Mr Gray
	Ms Flanagan		Dr Smyth
	Mr Jardine		Mr McConnell
	Ms Bunting		Mr Grimason
	Mr McCartney		Mr Jackson
	Mrs McAuley		Dr Smith
	Mrs Cummins		Mr Vincent
	Mr May		Mr Shannon
	Dr Mulligan		Mrs Angus
	Mr McKervill		Mr Rooney
	Dr Griffith		Mrs Devlin
	Ms McKibbin		Mr Johnston
	Mr Fee		

IN ATTENDANCE: **Mr Ferguson (secretary)**
Miss Dullaghan

1. Developments in Anti Discrimination Legislation

Mrs McAuley gave a short presentation to the meeting on future developments in anti discrimination legislation in Northern Ireland and outlined some of the implications that changes will have for the work of the Department.

2. Political Developments

Ms Flanagan summarised for those attending the meeting the current position in relation to the postponement of the election, the dissolution of the Assembly and the continuance of direct rule during the suspension of devolution. Ms Flanagan also updated the meeting on a number of access to government issues, consultation arrangements, North/South issues and the Civic Forum.

Ms Bunting updated the meeting on some of the issues discussed at the British-Irish Intergovernmental Conference meeting on 20 May.

Mr Haire updated the meeting on the issue of good governance and set out how it is planned to approach the considerable body of work that exists within departments. The meeting also discussed the potential re-deployment of staff currently working in the Northern Ireland Assembly. Mr Haire asked colleagues to note that since the Central Personnel Group were leading on this issue, bids for staff should be submitted on a co-ordinated basis through Mrs Angus in Corporate Services Division. However, bids for the services of Assembly Research staff should be submitted to Mr Johnston in Executive Secretariat. [Note for information: it has subsequently been agreed that bids for researchers will be dealt with on the same basis as bids for other staff, i.e. by CPG through Dorothy Angus].

3. Departmental Conference

Mr Haire updated the meeting on the decision by the Departmental Board to set up a small working group to look at agenda items for a proposed Departmental conference in September. So far three members of staff had been nominated for the group and Mr Haire asked for further nominations particularly from the Office of the Legislative Counsel and the North/South Ministerial Council Joint Secretariat.

4. Tour de Table

- Mr McCartney advised the meeting that the Chief Executive of the Special European Union Programmes Body had been

suspended from his post because of a police investigation into allegations of a criminal nature.

- Mr Haire updated the meeting on the recently concluded selection process for the position of Children's Commissioner.
- Mrs Cummins reported that the North Belfast Unit were in the process of making funding decisions for their youth programme.
- Mr McKervill updated the meeting on work being done within his Directorate to develop a co-ordinated programme of ministerial announcements. Mr McKervill also updated the meeting on the success of the Northern Ireland departmental exhibition at the recent Balmoral Show where OFMDFM was represented by the Children and Young People's Unit and the Central Information Technology Unit.
- Dr Mulligan reported that Claire Archbold had been appointed to head up the Statutory Duty Unit with effect from 19 May and updated the meeting on the interim evaluation of New TSN, the report on which had been received from consultants Deloitte and Touche.
- Mr Fee reported that following his presentation on IT security to last month's meeting, the Department of Finance and Personnel's Information Systems Unit had confirmed that improvements would be targeted at all new personal computers and those with Windows 2000 installed. Older computers scheduled for replacement would not be upgraded.

- Mrs McAuley reported that Regulations continue to be the main work of her Division at present.
- Mr Jardine updated the meeting on appointments to posts in the Economic Research Institute, the Washington Bureau and the Urban Regeneration Company for the Ebrington area.
- Mr May updated the meeting on two seminars planned for June, one on how to find out what your customers want and the other on interregional links within the European Union.
- Ms Flanagan confirmed that guidance on access to government issues would be issued in due course once the Secretary of State had made decisions on consultation with former Ministers and the status of former MLA's.

5. Any Other Business

No other business was discussed.

6. Date of next meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday 11 June 2003 at 11.00am in Room BD20 in Stormont Castle.

MICHAEL FERGUSON

21 May 2003