

**MINUTES OF PERMANENT SECRETARY GROUP MEETING  
HELD ON FRIDAY 19 OCTOBER 2007  
IN THE GLASSHOUSE, STORMONT CASTLE  
AT 8.45 AM**

**Present:** Nigel Hamilton  
Will Haire  
Andrew McCormick  
Aideen McGinley  
Malcolm McKibbin  
Leo O'Reilly  
Stephen Peover  
Stephen Quinn  
Bruce Robinson  
Alan Shannon  
Paul Sweeney

**In Attendance:** Stephen Grimason  
Oswyn Paulin  
Stewart Johnston  
David Orr – Agenda Item 6  
Debbie Sweeney - Secretary

**1. Apologies:** David Sterling  
Rosalie Flanagan  
John McMillen

**2. Minutes of Meeting held on 5 October 2007**

The minutes of the meeting held on 5 October were agreed.

**3. Matters Arising**

Foot and Mouth and Bluetongue

Malcolm McKibbin said Bluetongue continued to spread and further cases had been confirmed in England. The Department had issued an information leaflet to sheep and cattle owners.

Giant's Causeway

Stephen Peover and Stephen Quinn updated PSG on the Giant's Causeway.

Classroom Assistants

Will Haire updated PSG on the latest situation regarding Classroom Assistants.

Irish Language

Paul Sweeney said the Minister had announced that there was not a compelling case for bringing forward Irish Language legislation at this time. He would however be bringing the issue to the Executive in due course.

## FOI

Nigel Hamilton said he had approved a response to the Jim Allister FOI request on Special Advisers. The Central FOI team would circulate the OFMDFM response.

## **4. Executive and Assembly Update**

Stewart Johnston updated PSG on the Executive Meeting held on Thursday 18 October.

Leo O'Reilly said he would be circulating a draft Executive Paper in respect of the Draft Budget 2008-11 to be considered by the Executive on 23 October.

## **5. Reform Costs**

Bruce said Monday 22 October could see the launch of HR Connect: Deployment of Recruitment Services.

## **6. Procurement Issues**

### VfM Gains

David Orr said VfM gains recorded from 01/04/05 – 30/09/07 are £203M. The good progress had been partly due to significant gains by DHSSPS on pharmaceuticals.

David said continued effort indicated that the target could be achieved.

### Centre of Excellence

David said although 341 staff have been trained as Gateway Reviewers only 37 are currently actively involved in the GRP. It was anticipated that the number of reviews required by both NICS and the wider Public Sector would continue to increase and David said more Gateway Reviewers would be necessary.

### Future Structure of the Procurement Board

David said the Board's Planning Strategy sub-group considered three options for the future structure of the Procurement Board. The sub-group favoured the retention of the Board as currently constituted.

PSG agreed that the Board should remain as it is and the issue be re-visited in May.

## **7. Tour de Table**

### PWC Invite

Nigel said FM/dFM had received an invite from PWC to a private dinner on 21 November. The invite indicates the dinner would be attended by Nigel and other senior NICS officials which was not correct.

Nigel said attendance at the event would be discussed at PSG on 26 October.

**[Perm Secs to note]**

### Titanic Quarter

Stephen Quinn said the Titanic Signature Project missed out on making the final shortlist of the Big Lottery Fund.

### Next Week's PSG

Reform Update – Bruce Robinson

FOI – David Lammey

Workplace 2010 Update – Chris Thompson/Olive Maybin

**DEBBIE SWEENEY**  
**October 2007**