

MINUTES OF PERMANENT SECRETARY GROUP MEETING

HELD ON FRIDAY 30 JULY 2004 IN ROOM GD14, STORMONT CASTLE,

AT 8.45 am

Present: Nigel Hamilton
Clive Gowdy
Will Haire
Aideen McGinley
Gerry McGinn
Stephen Peover
Paul Priestly
Stephen Quinn
Bruce Robinson
Alan Shannon
Pat Toal

In Attendance: Stephen Grimason
Helen Anderson } Agenda Item 3
Dave Foster }
Pauline Boyle – Secretary

Apologies: John Hunter

1. Minutes and Summary

PSG were asked to forward any amendments to the Minutes of 23 July by early next week.

2. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

3. Implementation of Water Framework Directive

Helen Anderson and Dave Foster joined PSG and gave a presentation on implementation of Water Framework Directive. The presentation contained an overview of the Directive including information on key features, cross-border element, programmes of measures and the cross-cutting nature of the Directive. It concluded with a look at the proposed administrative structure for implementation of the Water Framework Directive and focused on the need for an Inter-Departmental Implementation Board.

PSG:

- (a) gave strong endorsement and were supportive of presentation and approach;
- (b) agreed the structures, especially building on existing foundations;
- (c) suggested approaching OSNI and taking their advice;
- (d) noted the questions of technical and financial resources;
- (e) believed there was an opportunity in Northern Ireland to develop skills, consultancy and professionalism.

Stephen Peover should speak to Rosalie Flanagan, OFMDFM, re North/South dimension.

[Action: Stephen Peover]

PSG would like an electronic copy of slides and Dave Foster will arrange.

PSG members will consider presentations to be given to relevant Departmental Boards.

4. **Industrial Action Update**

PSG reviewed the latest position on industrial action.

5. **SR2004 Priorities and Budget**

Andrew McCormick reported on this topic. He informed PSG that intensive discussions on running costs, capital profile and efficiency review would need to be held with PFOs in all Departments and he will be making contact soon.

[Action: Andrew McCormick]

6. **Tour de Table**

- (a) Mr Gowdy informed that the European Working Time Directive is to be implemented by 1 August 2004 in respect of junior doctors.
- (b) Stephen Peover has received an invitation from the North and West Belfast Health and Social Services Trust, to attend a seminar on Re-thinking the Delivery of Public Services in North and West Belfast. All Permanent Secretaries have also been invited. It was agreed that Departments would be represented at an appropriate level.
- (c) Gerry McGinn reported on overspending in the SELB and BELB. He also gave an update on the position of teachers' pay.
- (d) Andrew McCormick informed PSG of progress on the Accounting Services Programme. It was agreed that Mr Hamilton, Andrew McCormick and David Thomson would meet early next week.

[Action: Secretary]

- (e) Aideen McGinley reported on the Urban Cultural Grant and the Ulster Scots Academy.

- (f) Stephen Quinn reported on progress on policy for non-domestic water charges and referred to Departments' interest in this.
- (g) Alan Shannon reported on the Neighbourhood Renewal Scheme.
- (h) Pat Toal reported on the Tuberculosis Eradication Programme.
- (i) Bruce Robinson reported on Tourism figures.

PAULINE BOYLE

30 July 2004