

**MINUTES OF PERMANENT SECRETARY GROUP MEETING  
HELD ON FRIDAY, 10 OCTOBER 2008  
IN THE GLASSHOUSE, STORMONT CASTLE  
AT 8.45 AM**

**Present:** Bruce Robinson – Chair  
Catherine Bell  
Linda Brown  
Will Haire  
Noel Lavery  
Barney McGahan  
Malcolm McKibbin  
Leo O'Reilly  
Lian Patterson  
Stephen Peover  
Eddie Rooney  
Paul Sweeney

**In attendance:** David Reddaway  
Sir George Bain }  
Olive Maybin } Item 5  
Oswyn Paulin }  
Neill Jackson  
Pauline Boyle – Secretary

1. **Apologies:** Andrew McCormick  
Aideen McGinley  
Paul Priestly  
Stephen Quinn  
Alan Shannon  
Rosalie Flanagan  
Stephen Grimason  
John McMillen

2. **Minutes of Meeting held on Friday 26 September 2008**

The minutes of the meeting held on 26 September were agreed with some amendments.

3. **Matters Arising**

Review of PSG's role

Bruce Robinson said he had received responses from all Departments on his paper of 25 September and thanked colleagues for their comments.

He will incorporate these and issue to colleagues early next week.

**[Action: Bruce Robinson]**

Bruce Robinson asked PSG to let him know of their availability for the meeting with the Civil Service Commissioners on 31 October.

**[Action: Permanent Secretaries]**

#### Sub-Group on Citizen-Facing Reform

Bruce Robinson reminded colleagues to let Stephen Peover and Malcolm McKibbin know the names for possible internal members on this sub-group. Malcolm McKibbin said the Terms of Reference for this sub-group had been amended to reflect PSG members' comments.

**[Action: Permanent Secretaries]**

#### Sub-Group on Civil Service Reform

Bruce Robinson asked for nominations from Departments as to who might be involved in this sub-group. At the last PSG meeting he particularly asked for representation from DSD and DARD.

**[Action: Permanent Secretaries]**

#### Sub-Group on Improved Organisational Performance

Bruce Robinson asked if the membership for this sub-group had been decided. Leo O'Reilly had met with Andrew McCormick, Paul Sweeney and Stephen Quinn on Tuesday 30 September. Andrew McCormick the Chairman of this group is dealing with the issues arising from the meeting and will come back to PSG.

**[Action: Andrew McCormick]**

#### Extended PSG Meetings

Bruce Robinson said the dates of the extended PSG meetings had been confirmed to PSG and he asked colleagues to note that the Reform update would be included on the agenda for these meetings.

### **4. Executive & Assembly Update**

Neill Jackson said the next Executive meeting is scheduled to take place on Thursday 16 October. He said requests had been received from Departments to have papers taken under Urgent Procedure and these have been processed.

#### Clerk to the NI Assembly

Bruce Robinson said he and Rosalie Flanagan met with Trevor Reaney the Clerk to the NI Assembly on Thursday 9 October.

### **5. Bain Report**

Professor Sir George Bain said he wished to update PSG on the work undertaken since he met with PSG on 29 February 2008 on the progress on the Review of Policy on Location of Public Sector Jobs in Northern Ireland. His independent report was published on 30 September. The Review team's

goal was to improve the economic and social development of Northern Ireland. The work over the past 9 months was very complex. The team carried out research and took evidence from a broad range of interested parties. They also engaged with Scotland, Wales and the Republic of Ireland to learn from their experience.

The Review team recommended that public sector jobs be relocated to six locations - Ballymena, Coleraine, Craigavon, Londonderry, Newry and Omagh. These locations had adequate transport links. Furthermore, such clustering afforded the opportunity to create a coherent career structure for public servants in these areas.

If a further wave of relocation was necessary the Review team felt consideration should be given to Cookstown, Downpatrick and Enniskillen.

The report recommended a number of suitable organisations as possible candidates to be considered in the first wave. The team recommended that pilot projects totalling some 3,000-4,000 posts should be selected from the list of organisations set out in the report. Implementing the recommendations will be challenging and require strong leadership.

Leo O'Reilly said Minister Dodds will write soon to Ministerial colleagues seeking views on the review. There was some discussion on managing any relocation projects that Ministers may decide to proceed with. It was agreed that PSG should give this some further consideration at its meeting at the end of November.

**[Action: Permanent Secretaries & Secretary]**

## 6. **David Reddaway**

Bruce Robinson welcomed David Reddaway to the meeting. He updated the meeting on the current economic situation in ROI. He noted that the first all-Ireland Skills Conference would take place on Wednesday and Thursday 15-16 October and the Taniste would be in attendance.

David offered the Embassy's help with any visits planned for Dublin. Bruce Robinson thanked David for attending and providing an update.

## 7. **Tour de Table**

### DARD Minister

Malcolm McKibbin said Minister Gildernew has gone on maternity leave and indicated that Gerry Kelly, Conor Murphy or Catriona Ruane would represent the Minister over the next few weeks, but that Minister Gildernew remained in post and retained both her authority and responsibilities.

### Judicial Review on Framework

Will Haire reported on the Judicial Review on frameworks. It was agreed that Leo O'Reilly would table a paper for discussion at PSG on a suitable date.

**[Action: Leo O'Reilly & Secretary]**

## Invitations

### Chamber of Commerce and Industry

It was agreed that Aideen McGinley, Alan Shannon, Stephen Quinn and Bruce Robinson would attend the Chamber of Commerce and Industry Annual Banquet on Wednesday 26 November in the Culloden Hotel.

### High Commissioner of India

It was agreed that Leo O'Reilly, Malcolm McKibbin, Bruce Robinson and Stephen Quinn, if diary permitted, would attend the dinner in honour of His Excellency, Shiv Shankar Mukherjee, High Commissioner of India on Thursday 30 October in the Ramada Hotel.

### The Institute of Chartered Accountants in Ireland

It was agreed that Leo O'Reilly and Bruce Robinson would attend the Institute of Chartered Accountants in Ireland Annual Dinner on Thursday 27 November in the Culloden Hotel.

### Criminal Justice Stakeholder Conference

Paul Sweeney had received an invitation from the NIO to a Criminal Justice Stakeholder Conference on 10 November in the Hilton Hotel, Templepatrick. Other Permanent Secretaries may have received an invitation.

### MSc in Innovation Management in the Public Service

Late invitations had been received by some to the Graduation Ceremony of the MSc in Innovation Management in the Public Service on Tuesday 14 October in Farmleigh, Dublin. It was agreed that Leo O'Reilly would check if a DFP representative could attend.

**[Action: Leo O'Reilly]**

### Local Government Golf Tournament

An invitation from Deloitte to a Local Government Golf Tournament on 24 October had been received by some Permanent Secretaries. It was agreed that no one would attend.

### Climate Change

Stephen Peover said his Minister would attend a debate on Climate Change in the Assembly next week.

### Events Company

Paul Sweeney updated on the Northern Ireland Events Company.

### Health Service Funding

Linda Brown said Minister McGimpsey met the Health Committee on Thursday 9 October on Health Service funding.

### Celtic Forum

Bruce Robinson said the general feedback from the Celtic Forum was positive. He will follow up with Sir John Elvidge and Dame Gill Morgan next week at the Autumn Sunningdale and at the Top 200 event in mid-November.

### Next meeting

The next PSG meeting will be held on Friday 17 October and Alan Shannon will Chair in the absence of Bruce Robinson.

**PAULINE BOYLE**  
**13 October 2008**