

**MINUTES OF PERMANENT SECRETARY GROUP EXTENDED MEETING  
HELD ON FRIDAY, 24 OCTOBER 2008  
IN THE GLASSHOUSE, STORMONT CASTLE  
AT 8.45 AM**

**Present:** Bruce Robinson – Chair  
Catherine Bell  
Will Haire  
Andrew McCormick  
Malcolm McKibbin  
Leo O'Reilly  
Stephen Peover  
Stephen Quinn  
Paul Priestly  
Paul Sweeney

**In attendance:** Oswyn Paulin  
Rosalie Flanagan  
Stephen Grimason  
John McMillen  
Derek Baker } Item 4  
David Gavaghan }  
Patrick McMeekin } Item 5  
Martin Spollen }  
Grainne Creaney } Item 9  
Kim Martin }  
Pauline Boyle – Secretary

1. **Apologies:** Aideen McGinley
2. **Minutes of Meeting held on Friday 17 October 2008**

The minutes of the meeting held on 17 October were agreed.

3. **Matters Arising**

Meeting with Civil Service Commissioners

The next meeting with the Civil Service Commissioners is only for the PSG Sub-Group and will be held on 31 October. The next full meeting with PSG will take place on Friday 30 January 2009.

North South Roundtable Group Plenary and Dinner

Stephen Quinn said he would not be attending the North South Roundtable Group Plenary and Dinner on 13 November due to another engagement.

#### 4. **HRConnect**

Derek Baker said the Programme Board met on Monday 20 October and decided not to move to the new payroll system in October as aligning the personal records on the HRConnect Payroll with the current HR and payroll data on the existing NICS system had some difficulties. Derek wanted PSG's endorsement to working towards running the new payroll in November without updating the records for non-salary related transactions such as, branch title changes etc. These would be input later. PSG agreed to this proposal. Derek would forward an appropriate note for Permanent Secretaries to issue to Departmental staff.

Bruce Robinson asked that PSG pass his note which he sent Permanent Secretaries on 24 October to departmental HR and payroll staff to thank them for their tremendous work and dedication over the last number of weeks and months.

**[Action: Perm Secs & Derek Baker]**

#### 5. **ISNI Presentation**

Bruce Robinson welcomed David Gavaghan, Martin Spollen and Patrick McMeekin. David said Martin and Patrick are working with CPD at present and will follow up next month with DFP on the work undertaken on the ISNI delivery tracking system. Martin Spollen is collecting information from Departments and Patrick outlined how the system works. SIB is pleased the tracking system is up and running: 400 projects are live on the system with over 60 staff trained. The system will go live in NICS soon. Following discussion David Gavaghan said he would write to PSG through Bruce Robinson.

#### 6. **Executive & Assembly Update**

Rosalie Flanagan said North South Ministerial Council meetings had been scheduled.

#### 7. **Reform Quarterly Report**

Leo O'Reilly provided the update on the Reform Quarterly Report which had been circulated.

#### 8. **PSG's Role**

Following discussion a few amendments to Bruce Robinson's draft paper on PSG's role were agreed.

## 9. **Millward Brown Presentation**

Kim Martin provided an updated overview into the research conducted by Millward Brown. Kim gave a read out of the results and the conclusions as follows:-

- Still need to demonstrate the benefits of reform more clearly
  - Departments, projects and NICS refine their comms strategies to take account of this research
  - Benefit of continued development of collaborative approach to communication to avoid overload
  - Departments consider further the current training/support for project roll out (eg better use of floor walkers, power-users and practical training)
  - Departments to stress importance of line managers leading by example
- Follow-up research (at least annually) to monitor rate of progress

Bruce Robinson said Kim had met with SROs. She would talk also with individual Permanent Secretaries. Action Plans are due to be completed and would be discussed again at PSG at the next stage.

## 10. **Tour de Table**

### Procurement

Leo O'Reilly reported on the legal position on procurement cases.

### Cost of Living Meeting

Bruce Robinson said the FM and dFM met with the Business Alliance on Tuesday 21 October on the cost of living.

### SCS Competition

Andrew McCormick said he is not proposing to proceed with two SCS competitions – one at G3 and one G5. He is pursuing competitions for a Chief Dental Officer and a Chief Medical Officer.

### PAC Hearing

Alan Shannon said he attended a PAC hearing on 23 October in relation to Warm Homes.

### Credit Crunch

Stephen Quinn reported on Invest NI rescue assessments in relation to the credit crunch.

### Climate Change

Stephen Peover said Alice Bowles appeared before the Environment Committee on 23 October on Climate Change.

### Leak Inquiry

Stephen Peover said his Department are conducting a leak inquiry.

### Hi-jacking Incident

Paul Priestly reported on a hi-jacking incident on a Roads Service van close to the Drumbeg roundabout. A Street Lighting Inspector suffered shoulder and arm injuries.

### Rathlin Island Ferry

Paul updated on the Rathlin Island Ferry.

### Agri-Fisheries Council & GAP

Malcolm McKibbin said he would attend the Agri-Fisheries Council in Luxemburg on 27-29 October on behalf of his Minister.

### Apprenticeships

Catherine Bell reported on the loss of apprenticeships as a result of the credit crunch.

**PAULINE BOYLE**  
**2 November 2008**