

**MINUTES OF PERMANENT SECRETARY GROUP MEETING
FRIDAY 31 OCTOBER 2008
GLASSHOUSE, STORMONT CASTLE
AT 8.45AM**

Present: Bruce Robinson – Chair
Aideen McGinley
Andrew McCormick
Leo O'Reilly
Malcolm McKibbin
Paul Sweeney
Stephen Quinn
John McGrath
Paul Simpson
Barney McGahan

In attendance: Iain Greenway
Oswyn Paulin
Neill Jackson
Stephen Grimason
John McMillen
Maria McQuoid – minute taker

1. **Apologies:** Paul Priestly
Alan Shannon
Stephen Peover
Will Haire
Rosalie Flanagan

2. Minutes of meeting held on 24 October

These minutes will be agreed at the next meeting on 7 November

3. Matters Arising

These will be taken at the next meeting on 7 November

4. NI Geographical Information Strategy

Iain Greenway spoke to his paper on GI, taking members through the stages of the GI process to date, its capabilities and how it could be used by both the public and private sectors and indeed the citizen.

In concluding Iain asked members to consider further deployment of GI within their departments.

Some general issues were raised, e.g. where does liability sit where the maps have been used by users. Options to raise greater awareness of how the tool could be used were discussed including placing a GI icon on desktops. Other issues discussed included career structures for GI specialists and the locating of GI specialists within the service.

Bruce Robinson requested that consideration be given to deploying this more fully across departments as it represented modern technology with the potential to drive efficiencies within the NICS. Leo O'Reilly agreed to look at developing a deployment plan to incorporate GI as fully as possible in Shared Service delivery.

[Action: Leo O'Reilly]

Iain agreed to e mail copies of this paper to PSG members.

[Action: Iain Greenway]

5. Executive/Assembly Update

Neill Jackson informed members that the Assembly is currently in recess and no business report available.

To date a number of urgent procedure requests had been received and these are being considered. Bruce Robinson agreed to keep PSG updated on any developments regarding Executive Meetings.

6. Autumn Sunningdale Meeting

Bruce Robinson reported on the Autumn Sunningdale meeting. Key issues arising were:

- The current financial circumstances are likely to impact on the economy and will have implications for the Civil Service. PSG would need to set aside time over the next few weeks to discuss further.
- Opportunities may be coming available to get better VfM deals on contracts.
- The Civil Service was attracting more applicants for jobs with a 40% increase on fast tracked posts.
- FDI is drying up. Important work was being conducted by BERR on sectoral analysis. These assessments are being carried out by the Economic Advisory Group.
- BR stated that no action was required by PSG on the above issues but wanted members to be aware of the issues.

Tour de Table

IT Health Conference, Boston

Andrew McCormick reported on his visit to Boston last week for an IT Health event which went well.

Procurement

Ossie Paulin updated members on the current situation on procurement cases.

Invitations to events in Londonderry

Paul Sweeney highlighted two invitations from the Civil Regeneration Forum in Derry/Londonderry, a seminar on the Promotion of Equality and Good Relations on 20 November, and a Future Search Conference on 5-7 February 2009. Civil Service representation at the event on 20 November needed to be agreed at the next meeting of the PSG.

[Action: **Bruce Robinson**]

Horizon Scanning

Stephen Quinn queried progress on the Horizon Scanning work which had gone to the Executive. Bruce Robinson stated that this would be dealt with this as part of PSG Sub Group D.

[Action: **Bruce Robinson**]

DARD issues

Malcolm Mc Kibbin reported on his recent visit to Lisbon re fishery matters.

WP2010 procurement

Leo O Reilly updated PSG on Workplace 2010 procurement. A press release would issue on this. A paper on this subject was being prepared for the DFP Committee. Leo also confirmed that briefing would be provided to journalists on PE implications in the context of the First Minister's Statement on September Monitoring the following Monday.

Account NI

Aideen Mc Ginley raised some points regarding Account NI. It was agreed that DFP would provide PSG with an update on Account NI for next week's meeting.

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

SCS Pay

Aideen also asked for an update on SCS pay. Bruce Robinson confirmed that a note would issue w/c 3 November from Derek Baker indicating SCS pay is being processed for December.

[Action: **Derek Baker**]

Movilla High School

John McGrath advised that the strike action at Movilla High School was suspended and the Union has agreed to an independent assessment.

Titanic Signature Project

Stephen Quinn reported that the Titanic Signature Project needed to be handled under urgent procedure in order to meet the centenary date of April 2012.

Public Hearings

Paul Simpson reported upon Public Hearings which are planned over the next few weeks on the Recommendations of the Local Government Boundary Commissioner.

Maria McQuoid
3 November 2008