

**MINUTES OF PERMANENT SECRETARY GROUP MEETING  
HELD ON FRIDAY, 20 JUNE 2008  
IN THE GLASSHOUSE, STORMONT CASTLE  
AT 8.30 AM**

- Present:** Sir Nigel Hamilton – Chair  
Will Haire  
Andrew McCormick  
Aideen McGinley  
Malcolm McKibbin  
Leo O'Reilly  
Stephen Peover  
Bruce Robinson  
Alan Shannon  
Paul Sweeney
- In Attendance:** Oswyn Paulin  
Geoff Allister  
Derek Baker  
Neill Jackson  
Pauline Boyle - Secretary
- 1. Apologies:** Paul Priestly  
Stephen Quinn  
Rosalie Flanagan  
Stephen Grimason

Sir Nigel Hamilton welcomed Geoff Allister in the absence of Paul Priestly to today's meeting and congratulated him on his substantive appointment as Chief Executive of the Roads Service in the Department for Regional Development.

**2. Minutes of Meeting held on Friday 13 June 2008**

The minutes of the HR meeting held on 13 June were agreed.

**3. Matters Arising**

There were no matters arising from the previous meeting.

**4. Executive and Assembly Update**

Neill Jackson gave an update of the Executive meeting held on Thursday 19 June. He said an additional Executive meeting may be held on Thursday 26 June before the Assembly recess and the next meeting would be held on 3 July. Neill said an exercise would be conducted over the summer to review processes of how papers are prepared for Executive meetings.

He reported the Assembly would recess for the summer on 4 July 2008.

## **5. Legislative Programme**

George Gray reported that during the first year of devolution the system for processing legislation coped very well and all 24 Bills were introduced apart from one.

George said OLC have local pressures in relation to personnel issues due to the retirement of a senior draftsman, maternity leave and secondments. He said the quality and timeliness of work coming to the Office of the Legislative Counsel showed a lack of appropriate policy and legislative skills. He said Draftsmen were spending more and more time on policy and this was causing unnecessary pressures and leading to delays. George wanted PSG agreement to ensure that legislation was accorded proper priority and resources in Departments and asked them to consider taking a personal interest in the process. Following discussion it was agreed each Department would nominate an appropriate person with the necessary policy and legislative skills to George Gray and Departmental Solicitors Office would also input to each Departmental Bill team. It was also agreed that the schedule for the Legislative Programme would be monitored at Departmental Boards and at PSG meetings, profiled across the year, beginning in September.

**[Action: PSG & DSO]**

## **6. RPA: Staff Transfers**

Minuted separately.

## **7. Employment Equality Regulations**

Minuted separately.

## **8. FOI Update**

Sir Nigel Hamilton said Richard Thomas the Information Commissioner has written to Departments about a new model publication scheme which the NI Departments must adopt with effect from 1 January 2009.

Sir Nigel Hamilton said David Lammey has prepared a draft FOI Annual Report 2007 for all Departments. Departments will have an opportunity to comment on the draft before it is submitted to the FM and dFM for approval.

He said he met the new assistant Information Commissioner Aubrey McCrory on 17 June and Aubrey met with Departmental Information Managers on 12 June.

## **9. Civil Service Reform – Monthly Report – 30 May 2008**

Bruce Robinson reported Wave 2 on Account NI would go live in DEL and DETI in July 2008. He said the roll out of NI Direct would take place after the summer. Bruce asked for feedback from colleagues on the HR Connect training which began mid-June.

## 10. **Workforce Monitoring**

Minuted separately.

## 11. **Tour de Table**

### Sea Fisheries Vessel Modernisation and Decommissioning Scheme

Malcolm McKibbin reported on his attendance at the PAC Committee on the Sea Fisheries Vessel Modernisation and Decommissioning Scheme on Thursday 19 June.

### Hospitality Association of Northern Ireland Report

Aideen McGinley said the PAC report on the Hospitality Association of Northern Ireland would be issued at the end of June.

### Lecturers' Dispute

Aideen McGinley reported on the Lecturers' Dispute.

### Information Assurance Conference

Bruce Robinson said DFP would write to Sir Gus O'Donnell and Sir David Pepper prior to a meeting planned for Wednesday 25 June to discuss review of data and information security. He said this would be on the PSG agenda over the next few months and recommended that colleagues put on their Departmental Board agenda also.

Pauline Boyle  
24 June 2008