

**MINUTES OF PERMANENT SECRETARY REFORM GROUP MEETING  
HELD ON FRIDAY 16 MAY, 2008  
IN THE GLASSHOUSE, STORMONT CASTLE  
AT 8.45 AM**

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

Sir Nigel Hamilton announced Bruce Robinson is to be appointed as the next Head of the Northern Ireland Civil Service and wished him well in the new post.

**2. Minutes of Meeting held on Friday 2 May 2008**

The minutes of the meeting held on 9 May were agreed.

**3. Matters Arising**

There were no matters arising.

**4. Executive & Assembly Update**

Rosalie Flanagan updated PSG on the Executive meeting held on Thursday 15 May 2008. She said the Minister for Finance & Personnel raised the issue of equal pay for the lower grades in the NICS under Any Other Business. It was

agreed that equal pay would be a substantive agenda item on the next HR PSG meeting. The next meeting of the Executive will take place on Thursday 22 May 2008.

**[Action: Secretary]**

#### **5. FOI Update**

PSG noted David Lammey's update.

#### **6. Future Shared Services Structure**

Bruce Robinson said David Orr has written to a number of people outlining the review of the Shared Services Structure. This is a follow up to work undertaken by Chris Thompson six months ago. A draft paper will be drawn up for consideration at the Oversight Board and then brought to PSG. A key issue for Departments over the next few months will be extensive testing of the system and seeking comments on the reform programme. Colm Shannon, Kim Martin and Grainne Creaney will be involved in helping with this exercise. It is proposed to have a draft paper on Shared Services Structure completed by the summer and would go out for consultation after the summer.

#### **7. Future Reform Communications Strategy**

Bruce Robinson said a baseline study on the communications strategy would be conducted over the summer and will come back to PSG on this.

#### **8. Civil Service Reform – Monthly Report 30 April 2008**

DFP circulated the Civil Service Reform Monthly Report as at 30 April 2008. Sir Nigel Hamilton said colleagues should discuss the Report at Departmental Boards.

**[Action: Permanent Secretaries]**

#### **9. Annual Reports and Accounts – Special Advisers**

Leo O'Reilly produced a memo on disclosure of Special Advisers salary in Annual Reports and Accounts for today's meeting. Following discussion it was agreed that Departments would include the cost of Special Advisers under the heading of "permanent staff" in individual Departmental Resource Accounts. Leo said he would issue a Dear Accounting Officer notification on this to all Departments.

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

#### **10. Tour de Table**

##### Invitations

##### Civil Service Benevolent Fund Dinner

It was agreed that Sir Nigel Hamilton and Derek Baker would attend the Civil Service Benevolent Fund Dinner on Wednesday 18 June 2008 in Parliament Buildings.

### PricewaterhouseCoopers & National Audit Office Gala Dinner

It was agreed there would be no attendees at the PWC and National Audit Office Building Public Trust Awards 2008 Gala Dinner in London on 29 September.

### PAC Committee

Bruce Robinson said he had a Public Accounts Committee hearing on Thursday 29 May 2008 on Managing Sickness Absence in the NICS.

### Balmoral Show

Malcolm McKibbin said the Balmoral Show took place from 14-16 May 2008.

### Built Heritage Conference

Stephen Peover said he would attend a Built Heritage Conference on Tuesday 20 May in the Stormont Hotel.

### PSG Away Day

Bruce Robinson suggested, for forward planning purposes, it would be useful to have a PSG Away Day at the end of August/beginning September. PSG agreed and Bruce said his office would be in touch to identify dates.

**[Action: Bruce Robinson]**

### New ROI Ministers

Sir Nigel Hamilton suggested that Ministers should write to their ROI counterparts who have been appointed following the resignation of the Taoiseach and the recent reshuffle in the Cabinet.

**PAULINE BOYLE**  
**20 May 2008**