

**MINUTES OF PERMANENT SECRETARY GROUP MEETING
HELD ON FRIDAY, 16 JANUARY 2009 IN THE GLASSHOUSE, STORMONT
CASTLE
AT 8.45 AM**

Present: Bruce Robinson – Chair
Will Haire
Edgar Jardine
Andrew McCormick
Aideen McGinley
Malcolm McKibbin
Leo O'Reilly
Stephen Peover
Paul Priestly
Stephen Quinn
Alan Shannon

In attendance: Oswyn Paulin
Rosalie Flanagan
John McMillen
David Ferguson } Item 5
Frank Duffy }
Pauline Boyle – Secretary

1. **Apologies:** Paul Sweeney
Stephen Grimason

2. **Minutes of Meeting held on 9 January 2008**

The minutes of the meeting held on 9 January were agreed with minor amendments.

3. **Matters Arising**

Legislative Programme

The Office of the Legislative Counsel is busy on the Financial Assistance Bill and the legislative programme will be tabled at a future PSG meeting.

Benefits Realisation

Leo O'Reilly issued a paper to PSG on Thursday 15 January on NICS Reform Benefits Realisation and this will be on the agenda for next week's meeting.

4. **Executive & Assembly Update**

Rosalie Flanagan updated on the Executive meeting which took place on Thursday 15 January 2009. The next Executive meeting is schedule to take place on 29 January 2009.

5. **North/West Issues**

David Ferguson gave a brief background to and update on Sir Roy McNulty's June 2008 report with recommendations to FM/dFM and the DSD Minister on the regeneration effort in Derry. This included a summary of Sir Roy's analysis about the need for a unified vision, the organisational framework, resources and capacity to deliver by building effective relationships and external linkages. David then highlighted the key recommendations and programme of action proposed particularly in relation to producing a revised regeneration plan for Derry and he suggested the next stage would be a paper to be considered by the Executive.

Before a paper could be finalised, however, the three sponsoring Ministers would need to consider a number of matters, in particular Sir Roy's proposals that DSD should be the sole sponsor Department for Ilex and that there should be an Executive Committee sub-group to monitor progress on implementing the revised regeneration plan.

Frank Duffy outlined the background to the North West Gateway Initiative (NWGI) which was launched in May 2006. The Executive had in February 2008 to endorse the way forward. He also said that he had attended the City Region Conference on Thursday 15 January and that there appeared to be broad support for a North West Strategy Board, as proposed by Sir Roy in his report, and for the Civic Regeneration Forum to be involved. David confirmed that support for Sir Roy's work was growing, although there remained some mixed messages about his proposed re-planning exercise.

Permanent Secretaries then updated on the activities and programmes which their Departments are involved with in the North West. It was noted that a number of Permanent Secretaries and senior staff would be attending the Future Search Conference in February, which was expected to be the key event in the programme to develop the revised regeneration plan for Derry recommended in Sir Roy McNulty's report. It was also noted that OFMDFM and DSD would move matters forward on the preparation of an Executive Committee paper on the report. John McMillen to follow up with DSD.

[Action: John McMillen]

6. **Tour de Table**

Military Sites

David Ferguson said Minister Ritchie will write to FM/dFM soon in relation to Military Sites.

RAE Results

Aideen McGinley said the University RAE results are very good for Northern Ireland with both Universities recognised for international and world-class work.

EU Audit Authority

Aideen highlighted the new requirement for the EU Audit Authority and the potential implications for external bodies. It was agreed that Leo would look into the matter.

Giants Causeway

Stephen Peover reported on three issues in relation to the Giants Causeway.

Road Openings by Utilities

Paul Priestly said DRD have a PAC hearing week commencing 19 January on Road Openings by Utilities.

A&E

Andrew McCormick reported on A&E issues.

Food Contamination Issue

Andrew said a review on the food contamination issue would be undertaken. Malcolm McKibbin provided an update on the food contamination incident.

Senior Finance Director

Andrew said Sean Donaghy would take up post as Senior Finance Director in DHSSPS on 2 February 2009.

Internal Audit Report

Malcolm McKibbin updated on an FOI request for the release of an Internal Audit Report.

Bernard McCloskey

Oswyn Paulin reported the Bernard McCloskey replaced Paul Maguire on Monday 12 January 2009.

Institute of Directors Annual Dinner

Bruce Robinson would consider attending the Institute of Directors Annual Dinner on Thursday 5 February in the Europa Hotel.

FOI – Advisory Panel on Public Sector Information Members (Unsalariated)

The Advisory Panel on Public Sector Information is currently seeking four new members all of whom will be required to have a background in public sector information and in particular a member representing Northern Ireland who present specific Northern Ireland interests. Closing date for application is Monday 9 February 2009. Bruce Robinson said he would speak to David Lammey.

[Action: Bruce Robinson]

PAULINE BOYLE

20 January 2009