

**MINUTES OF PERMANENT SECRETARY GROUP MEETING  
HELD ON FRIDAY 20 OCTOBER 2006 IN ROOM GD14, STORMONT CASTLE  
AT 8.45 AM**

**Present:** Nigel Hamilton  
Will Haire  
Andrew McCormick  
Greg McConnell  
Gerry McGinn  
Stephen Peover  
Stephen Quinn  
Bruce Robinson  
Alan Shannon  
Paul Sweeney  
Pat Toal

**In Attendance:** Robert Hannigan - Agenda Item 4  
Des Armstrong - Agenda Item 5  
David Orr  
Bill Pauley - Agenda Item 6  
Rosalie Flanagan  
Colm Shannon  
Debbie Sweeney - Secretary

1. **Apologies:** John Hunter  
Aideen McGinley  
Nick Perry  
Stephen Grimason

2. **Minutes of Meeting held on 13 October 2006**

The minutes of the meeting held on 13 October were agreed.

3. **Matters Arising**

Good Government

Nigel said the Good Government meeting scheduled for Monday 16 October had been cancelled.

Top 200

Nigel said he had circulated the minute from Sir Gus O'Donnell to Permanent Secretaries, following the event on 5 and 6 October. The next Top 200 event would be held in March 2007.

#### 4. **Political Update**

Robert Hannigan updated PSG on the events of the previous weekend at St Andrew's. He asked Permanent Secretaries to pass on his thanks to all those involved in the provision of briefings/updates to the Political Talks Team, often at short notice. Robert specifically thanked Rosalie Flanagan and OFMDFM for their contribution to the finalisation of the Agreement.

PSG discussed the Agreement and Restoration.

Nigel said that CPG had organised SCS Seminars on the St Andrew's Agreement; they had been arranged for Monday 23 October and Wednesday 25 October. SCS members had been notified and Nigel said he was hoping for a large attendance.

#### 5. **Achieving Excellence**

David Orr updated PSG on the implementation of the Achieving Excellence initiative. The initiative is considered to have potential to deliver significant value for money savings from construction procurement.

Des Armstrong explained that CPD had completed an assessment of the progress on the implementation of the Achieving Excellence initiative. A progress report will be presented to the procurement Board on 14 November. The draft paper was based on self-assessment of progress by Achieving Excellence Champions. The content of the draft paper was discussed at the Government Construction Clients' Group meeting on 12 October 2006.

David Orr said the Central Procurement Directorate would be happy to discuss the paper in more detail at Departmental Board level.

**[PSG to note]**

#### 6. **PEACE III**

Bill Pauley updated PSG on the progress with developing the 2007-13 PEACE programme.

PSG discussed and supported Bill's paper but suggested that there should be a greater focus on reconciliation projects. They agreed the four broad areas suggested but thought the 19 sub-programmes were too specific and restrictive and should be recast.

Bill said he would re-draft the paper, taking into account PSG views.

#### 7. **Six Months Results on Reform**

Bruce introduced the first edition of the quarterly reporting of the Reform Programme document. Bruce encouraged colleagues to have this document a standing item for Departmental Boards.

**[Action: PSG]**

## 8. **Shared Service Centre Principles**

Bruce introduced his discussion paper on Shared Service Principles, which set out the fundamental principles that should underpin the operation of shared services within the NICS. PSG agreed there were clear benefits in having a consistent approach to the Governance arrangements for Shared Services Centres. Bruce asked PSG for comments they may have on issues of principle to be forwarded to him by the end of October. The item would be discussed further by PSG when Peter Small's review of applied learning was also received.

## 9. **Tour de Table**

### Single Electricity Market

Stephen Quinn said the Single Electricity Market would be discussed at BIIGC on 24 October 2006.

### Single Farm Payments

Pat Toal said details of Single Farm Payments would be issued on Tuesday 24 October; as with last year, individuals who received payments would be named.

### Poundbury

Stephen Peover and Alan Shannon updated PSG on their visit to Poundbury.

### Chamber of Commerce Invite

It was agreed that Nigel, Will and Stephen Quinn would attend the Northern Ireland Chamber of Commerce and Industry President's Banquet on 22 November.

### CSR

Bruce Robinson said he would be writing to Permanent Secretaries regarding the CSR, setting out key action points and the next steps.

### Next Week's PSG

### Agenda

Smithsonian  
Restoration