

**MINUTES OF PERMANENT SECRETARY GROUP MEETING  
HELD ON FRIDAY 24 JUNE 2005 IN ROOM GD14, STORMONT CASTLE  
AT 8.45 am**

- Present:** Nigel Hamilton  
Clive Gowdy  
Will Haire  
John Hunter  
Noel Lavery  
Andrew McCormick  
Aideen McGinley  
Gerry McGinn  
Stephen Peover  
Stephen Quinn  
Alan Shannon  
Pat Toal
- Apologies:** Stephen Grimason  
Nick Perry  
Bruce Robinson
- In Attendance:** Rosalie Flanagan  
Colm Shannon  
Edgar Jardine  
Bill McCluggage  
Brian Acheson  
Debbie Sweeney (Secretary)

**1. Minutes and Summary**

The Minutes of the meeting held on Friday 17 June were agreed with one minor amendment.

**2. Matters Arising**

There were no matters arising.

**3. PSG(E)**

Common Regional Infrastructure

Brian Acheson introduced the Northern Ireland Common Regional Infrastructure proposition.

The Programme Support Office was originally conceived to advise PSG(E) in its oversight of the Strategic Information Systems Programme (SISP). The proposition is not to have all support services delivered from a new central

source but to create the governance arrangements to ensure the delivery of various support services is managed efficiently for all Departments.

Specific issues were raised and the e-Government Unit was asked to address how the Programme Support Office could be strengthened in order to assist SROs in managing the overall collective risks, ensure that existing projects were not subjected to challenges which would result in delays and achieve the new dynamic through clear, simple and value adding arrangements.

PSG were in agreement of a Common Regional Infrastructure of all NICS organisations and were keen to understand how the concept could be advanced.

PSG asked that the e-Government Unit develop a fuller articulation of the benefits of the approach and give consideration to the implications for existing accountabilities of the proposed way forward and report back to PSG after the summer.

**[Action – Bill McCluggage]**

### Contact Centre Strategy

Bill McCluggage informed PSG that Deloitte had been working with the Unit to develop a multi-channel contact centre's strategy for the NICS. The aim being to ensure that as more and more NICS organisations embrace this form of service delivery, standards of customer service improve and access to government services is simplified.

PSG asked the e-Government Unit with the Project Board to develop a strategic outline case. PSG(E) were asked to consider a NICS-wide customer access brand, more definition on the potential volume of NICS business which could be carried out by CCS and to look at the amount of investment required to reach the quality of service as set out in the vision statement.

Edgar Jardine asked that any comments or concerns regarding the draft Strategy Report be forwarded to Bill McCluggage by 1 July 2005.

**[PSG to Note]**

### ICT Services Review

Edgar Jardine explained that the rationalisation of back office technology stemmed from the Gershon Review. The recommendation was the establishment of a Shared Service Centre which would supply desktop ICT services to Departments and agencies and replace the common services supplied by the 6 ISUs. The Outline Business Case (OBC) has not been completed as the external consultants (Gartner) have not given their definitive views on costs, but due to the length of time the project has taken to reach OBC, Edgar Jardine thought it best to update PSG before the OBC was complete to save further delay.

PSG agreed the broad direction of the Review but noted that the formal OBC was not complete.

## A Better Organisation of Service Delivery Throughout NI

It was agreed that Will Haire's paper of 21 June be deferred to PSG on 1 July to be associated with Greg McConnell's RPA update.

**[Action: Secretary]**

### 4. **NICS Pay Update**

John Hunter updated PSG on the NICS 2005 Pay Claim. It was agreed that NICS pay should be discussed at the next Good Governance meeting on 13 July.

### 5. **IFI Board Meeting**

John Hunter said the Board and its new Chair met on Friday 17 June.

### 6. **Tour de Table**

#### Budget Process

Andrew McCormick said a paper on the budget process was being prepared for the Good Governance meeting.

#### Special Advisers

Rosalie Flanagan informed PSG that the roles of the Special Advisers had been revised, with Claire McCarthy dealing with all media interests and NIO business and Phil Taylor covering Departments and major NIO policy issues.

#### Pension Changes

John Hunter said an information circular on pension changes had been issued.

#### Provision of Legal Services

John Hunter asked colleagues to consider nominating a member of staff at Grade 6 or 7 to act as secretary to the Review of the Regulation of the Provision of Legal Services.

**[Action: PSG]**

Harvard

John Hunter said he was looking at alternative dates but current dates should remain in diaries until further notice.

**DEBBIE SWEENEY**  
**27 June 2005**