

**MINUTES OF PERMANENT SECRETARY GROUP MEETING
HELD ON FRIDAY 23 NOVEMBER 2007
IN THE GLASSHOUSE, STORMONT CASTLE
AT 8.45 AM**

Present: Nigel Hamilton
Andrew McCormick
Barney McGahan
Aideen McGinley
Malcolm McKibbin
Stephen Peover
Stephen Quinn
Bruce Robinson
David Sterling
Paul Sweeney

In Attendance: Rosalie Flanagan
Stephen Grimason
Deirdre Kenny
David Gavaghan
Ed Vernon } Agenda item 4
Paul Priestly }
Brandon McMaster } Agenda item 5
David Watkins }
Cathy Robinson }
Debbie Sweeney - Secretary

1. Apologies: Will Haire
Leo O'Reilly
Alan Shannon
Oswyn Paulin
John McMillen

2. Minutes of Meeting held on 9 November 2007

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

3. Matters Arising

Celtic Forum

PSG agreed the Celtic Forum held in Edinburgh had been very successful.

Nigel said at a meeting prior to the start of the Celtic Forum he met with John Elvidge and Jon Shortridge and had discussed a range of issues including UK Wide Boards. Nigel had issued a note to Permanent Secretaries on 19 November on the subject.

4. SIB – Capital Realisation Update

David Gavaghan and Ed Vernon updated PSG on their proposed approach to the management, realisation and optimisation of assets.

5. NIAO Presentation : Follow up to NIAC Report on Organised Crime

Brandon McMaster, David Watkins and Cathy Robinson explained the emerging findings of the NIAO's Study into the departmental response to the Challenge of Organised Crime.

Nigel thanked Brandon, David and Cathy for their update on Organised Crime. He said an early meeting of the Fraud Forum would be timely and an invite should be extended to the PSNI in order to strengthen relationships.

6. Security of Data

Nigel referred to his note to Permanent Secretaries and the press release from Minister Robinson regarding the protection of data.

A review had been ordered and this would be carried out by Bill McCluggage.

The issue would remain on the agenda for the foreseeable future.

[Bruce to note]

7. Executive and Assembly Update

Rosalie briefed PSG on the Executive meeting held on 22 November.

Rosalie said the next Executive Meeting would be held on 18 December.

[PSG to note]

8. Tour de Table

Membership of Audit Committees

Barney asked about the membership of audit committees. Bruce said he would ask David Thomson to contact Barney.

[Action: Bruce]

Financial Management Issues

Bruce said he would be commissioning PKF to undertake a piece of work to produce a Financial Management Toolkit for Departmental Boards.

NI Direct

Bruce said the NI Direct project was progressing and he would be appointing a project manager to oversee the exercise. The post would be filled by a temporary promotion to Grade 5.

Avian Flu

Malcolm McKibbin said avian flu had been detected in Norfolk and Suffolk.

Next Week's PSG

Next Week's PSG will be a breakfast meeting held in the Board Room in Clare House and will begin at 0800hrs. Nick Macpherson will address PSG.

DEBBIE SWEENEY
November 2007