

**MINUTES OF PERMANENT SECRETARY GROUP MEETING  
HELD ON FRIDAY 26 OCTOBER 2007  
IN THE GLASSHOUSE, STORMONT CASTLE  
AT 8.45 AM**

**Present:** Nigel Hamilton  
Will Haire  
Greg McConnell  
Andrew McCormick  
Malcolm McKibbin  
Leo O'Reilly  
Stephen Peover  
Stephen Quinn  
Alan Shannon  
David Sterling  
Paul Sweeney  
Chris Thompson

**In Attendance:** Stephen Grimason  
Rosalie Flanagan  
John McMillen  
Oswyn Paulin  
David Gavaghan } Agenda item 4  
Martin Spollen }  
Ed Vernon }  
Olive Maybin - Agenda item 5  
David Lammey - Agenda item 7  
Debbie Sweeney - Secretary

1. **Apologies:** Aideen McGinley  
Bruce Robinson

2. **Minutes of Meeting held on 19 October 2007**

The minutes of the meeting held on 19 October were agreed.

3. **Matters Arising**

Nigel Hamilton expressed his thanks and appreciation for the work by officials to complete the Budget, ISNI and PfG documents.

Leo O'Reilly said Minister Robinson in his speech had thanked officials from all Departments.

Foot and Mouth and Bluetongue

Malcolm McKibbin updated PSG on Foot and Mouth and Bluetongue.

### Giant's Causeway

Stephen Quinn and Stephen Peover updated PSG on Giant's Causeway issues.

### PPS 14

Stephen Peover updated PSG on the PPS 14 decision.

### PWC Invite

It was agreed that Nigel Hamilton would attend the event on 21 November.

### BT Invite

It was agreed that DFP would be represented at the dinner.

### IPA Invite

It was agreed that Aideen McGinley and Alan Shannon would attend the IPA dinner in Dublin on 9 November.

### Connswater Community Green Way

Alan Shannon agreed to provide advice to DE and any other Department who may receive a letter from the Connswater Community Green Way asking for support for their lottery bid.

**[Action: Alan Shannon]**

## **4. Executive and Assembly Business**

Ed Vernon said he would be examining the scope for generating cash releasing efficiencies and improving delivery and performance within Departments and across the wider public sector. He said he would engage quickly with, and begin with those with large asset owning Departments. David Gavaghan said SIB would circulate a proforma to assist Departments.

Nigel asked that the SIB team return to PSG again in four weeks time to report progress.

**[Action: Secretary]**

Leo O'Reilly briefed PSG on the Budget Announcement.

Rosalie updated PSG on the previous day's Executive Meeting.

## **5. Workplace 2010**

Chris Thompson said the Executive had unanimously agreed that Workplace 2010 should progress to the next stage of procurement. This stage would now be subject to the lifting of a court injunction. The injunction was a result of a legal

challenge by one of the unsuccessful bidders, it was hoped there would be a judgement soon. If there was a positive ruling the contract could be awarded in Autumn 2008. Chris said he would keep PSG informed on progress.

## **6. Reform Update**

Chris said the HR Connect : Deployment of Recruitment Services had gone live from 22 October. The DFP Leading Reform events had taken place and feedback was very positive.

Future @ Work would be branching out to Clarence Court and Castle Buildings. Feedback from Focus Groups indicated too many bulletins and it was agreed that a single bulletin would issue covering all Reform issues.

## **7. FOI**

David Lammey said FOI processes had been reviewed and the feedback from Departments had been positive. Performance figures had been very good but there were still some aspects of response-handling which still needed to be addressed.

PSG agreed in principle that departments would make a judgement as to the level of senior involvement in FOI requests depending on the nature of the request.

PSG agreed in principle that business areas with appropriate expertise or 'lead' Departments should assist Central FOI team in devising case-specific guidance, even in instances where they have not been in receipt of the request themselves.

PSG agreed that the Central FOI team should continue to play a pivotal role in FOI compliance and the team would be reviewed again before its proposed wind up in April 2009.

## **8. Tour de Table**

### Classroom Assistants

Will Haire updated PSG on the possibility of further strike action by classroom assistants.

### Next Week's PSG

PSG on 2 November will be an HR meeting.