

**MINUTES OF PERMANENT SECRETARY GROUP MEETING
HELD ON FRIDAY 17 NOVEMBER 2006
IN ROOM GD14, STORMONT CASTLE
AT 8.45 AM**

Present: John Hunter
Will Haire
Andrew McCormick
Aideen McGinley
Gerry McGinn
Stephen Peover
Stephen Quinn
Bruce Robinson
Alan Shannon
Paul Sweeney
Pat Toal

In Attendance: Brian Doherty
Rosalie Flanagan - Agenda Item 2
Stephen Grimason
Roy Keenan } - Agenda Item 3
Roy McClelland }
Debbie Sweeney - Secretary

1. **Apologies:** Nigel Hamilton
Nick Perry

2. **Restoration Update**

Rosalie Flanagan briefed PSG on the detail of the Northern Ireland (St Andrews Agreement) Bill. The Bill included the Pledge of Office for Ministers to the new Assembly and confirmed the election date of 7 March.

Rosalie said a Programme for Government meeting was scheduled for Monday 20 November. It was envisaged that the first meeting would be chaired by a Deputy Speaker.

Bruce Robinson updated PSG on the Economic Package. He said the Parties would be writing to the Chancellor requesting clarification of the announced package.

3. **Review of mental Health**

Roy Keenan said the Strategy had progressed very well and there had been considerable work put in to briefing Trusts and MLAs. As recommended at PSG on 7 July, he had organised a seminar involving key policymakers from Departments to appraise them on the key findings of the various reports. The seminar was well attended and the feedback very positive with an endorsement to meet again.

PSG recommended that a further meeting of the Interdepartmental Group should be set up and work commissioned from the Departments mostly involved.

Andrew McCormick said he would return to PSG with proposals on how to take forward the Strategy.

[Action: Andrew McCormick]

4. Minutes of Meeting held on 10 November

The minutes of the meeting held on 10 November were agreed.

5. Matters Arising

Prince's Trust Gala Dinner

Nigel Hamilton to attend.

Beef Industry

Pat Toal updated PSG on the investigation into the entry to the food chain without having been tested for BSE of a bovine animal aged over 30 months.

6. Reform Update

Bruce Robinson updated PSG on Fit for Purpose and progress made on Workforce Planning.

PSG discussed Procurement Board meetings and Bruce asked PSG to re-think the format of the meetings and whether Permanent Secretaries should actually attend the meetings. He would welcome feedback on the format from Permanent Secretaries.

Stephen Peover suggested that the presentation of information should show the disaggregation of spending.

Bruce said there had been considerable take-up from stakeholders for the afternoon session of the Reform Event on 12 December. He asked that there be substantial representation from Departments also at the afternoon session.

[Action: PSG]

Bruce updated PSG on the Network Project and Workplace 2010.

8. Tour de Table

Delivering New Funds

John Hunter reminded the Departments involved to keep on track with the delivery of New Funds.

PSC

John updated PSG on the PSC.

Regulation of Legal Services

John said Sir George Bain would issue his report on the Regulation of Legal Services on 23 November.

PSG Sub-Group

John said the Sub-Group had met with the Civil Service Commissioners. Gareth Johnston had reported on Diversity and would at a later date report to PSG on the subject.

CSA White Paper

Alan Shannon said the CSA White paper would be issued for consultation on 27 November.

Strategic Review of Education

Will Haire said the Strategic Review of Education Review, led by Sir George Bain, would be completed by 4 December.

Judicial Review

Gerry McGinn updated PSG on the Consumer Council Judicial Review.

HMA Dublin

Gerry updated PSG on his dinner in Dublin with David Reddaway.

RPA Meeting

Stephen Peover said the Minister had met with Political Parties and there had been a good level of engagement.

Economic Challenges 2nd Report

Stephen Quinn said the first draft of the Assembly's 2nd Report on Economic Challenges facing Northern Ireland was prepared. The Report had been passed to DFP to deal with fiscal policy or new financial commitments.

DEBBIE SWEENEY
20 November 2006