

**HOCS MEETINGS WITH THE FIRST MINISTER AND DEPUTY FIRST MINISTER  
IN PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS, 9 FEBRUARY 2016**

**Present:**

<b>First Minister</b>	<b>deputy First Minister</b>
<b>Stephen Brimstone</b>	<b>Mark Mullan</b>
<b>Richard Bullick</b>	<b>Gail McKibbin</b>
<b>Timothy Johnston</b>	
<b>Jeremy Gardner</b>	
	<b>Malcolm McKibbin</b>
	<b>Neill Jackson</b>

**Renewable Heat Incentive Scheme**

1. HOCS outlined the negative reaction which had emerged from some investors and suppliers to the proposal to close the scheme and the consequent risk of legal challenge.
  - 1.1 Following discussion, it was felt that the scheme should be left open until a date to be determined to allow for the completion of applications already in progress (to be further defined).
  - 1.2 Richard Bullick to speak to Timothy Cairns, DETI Special Adviser, and Aidan McAteer to progress this. HOCS to advise DETI Permanent Secretary of FM/dFM views.
 

**[Action: Richard Bullick  
and HOCS]**

**China Office/Civil Contingencies**

2. HOCS advised Ministers that the funding for the Executive's China Office was not in the OFMDFM baseline and that this needs to be addressed with DFP through the normal budgetary processes.
  - 2.1 On civil contingencies, DOE had withdrawn its Emergency Preparedness and Response funding for Councils in 15/16, although it subsequently provided £500k. Councils had responded well to recent events but to ensure future co-

operation, HOCS considers it to be necessary to reinstate funding of about £400k in 16/17 and beyond to ensure regional and sub-regional arrangements and resources are in place. Such funding could either be made available through DOE or OFMDFM. DOE had, as yet, not made any decision on 16/17 funding for Councils to assist in preparing for, and responding to, civil contingencies events. It would therefore be helpful to send a positive signal to local government on funding.

- 2.2 FM & dFM agreed that both issues should be accorded priority this year and in future years.

### **Branding/Logos**

3. HOCS presented illustrations of the proposed logos (including colours) of the departments post restructuring. FM and dFM advised that they were content with the colours. HOCS will advise the Departmental Restructuring Project Manager.

**[Action: HOCS]**

### **USA/China Trips**

4. It was agreed in principle that the proposed visit to China should be timed to work in with an InvestNI mission in November.
- 4.1 It was agreed that any timing constraints on FM and dFM's availability in November should be identified and notified to HOCS. HOCS will check if there were any potential problems with availability of appropriate Chinese politicians / senior stakeholders in November in Beijing and Shenyang.

**[Action: Private Offices**

**and HOCS]**

### **Surgical Systems Ireland Limited: Complaint**

5. HOCS advised FM and dFM that he was the subject of the latest in a series of complaints by Surgical Systems Ireland Limited which had originated in a payment dispute with a Health Trust. He had referred the complaint to DFP Permanent Secretary who has commissioned an investigation by its Non-Executive Director. FM and dFM noted the position.

### **Any Other Business**

### **Programme for Government**

6. HOCS outlined the following process for the preparation of the next Programme for Government:-
  - (i) Between now and May Senior Civil Servants and Special Advisers would engage to develop a draft outcome-focused PfG framework with suggested outcomes, indicators and measures.
  - (ii) Key stakeholders outside central government would be engaged to validate the direction of travel; build support for the approach; and explain what will happen after the elections.
  - (iii) Focus groups would be convened before May to see what outcomes the public would expect.
  - (iv) Between May and the end of 2016, in conjunction with developing the budget, economic strategy and ISNI, actions that need to be taken to move the indicators in the right direction would be determined.
  - (v) FM and dFM agreed to consider that HOCS should act as SRO for the delivery of the next Programme for Government to provide him with the authority to intervene in other departments where necessary.

6.1 FM and dFM advised that they were inclined to agree with this approach.

**Commonwealth Youth Games**

7. FM and dFM agreed that a final decision on hosting the Commonwealth Youth Games would be unlikely to be made until after the election as there was considerable work required on the development of the business plan. In the meantime it was noted that expert economic and financial assistance was being provided to the Association to assist in the development of the plan.

**OFMDFM**  
**9 February 2016**