

Key Outcomes from Strategic Leadership Board (SLB) 14 April 2010

1. Welcome

- Minister Poots welcomed all attending and commenced by noting the changes in membership. He formally thanked Heather Moorhead, CE of Northern Ireland Local Government Association (NILGA) and John McGrillen as the Society of Local Authority Chief Executives (SOLACE) representative, for their commitment and valuable contribution to the SLB.
- Minister Poots also welcomed David McCammick, Chair of SOLACE to the Board.

2. Minutes of Meetings

- Minutes from the previous SLB meeting on 25 February 2010 were approved, subject to the amendment of the section on Guidance on “Call in Procedures” in Statutory Transition Committees (STCs) to include the additional bullet point set out below:

“that Policy Development Panel A had expressed the view that Transition Committees should, as far as possible, focus on operational issues and avoid issues that are likely to be contentious and require the use of the adverse impact call-in.”
- The revised minutes are available on the Local Government section of the DOE website on www.doeni.gov.uk and the NILGA website www.nilga.org.

3. Matters Arising

- Minister Poots provided an overview and background of recent discussions with Executive party representatives on local government reform on the options to find a way forward.
- It was discussed that these meetings have been constructive and further meetings will take place.
- The Minister reiterated that although extremely tight, it is still possible to deliver local government reform within the current timescale providing boundaries issues are resolved and there is a clear demonstration that efficiencies can be delivered.

- It was agreed that a Rates' Convergence Paper will be presented to Policy Development Panel C within the next 3 / 4 weeks.

4. Local Government Reform Monthly Progress Report (SLB 10/2010)

- It was discussed that the monthly progress report has not been greatly changed since the last SLB meeting, but will require substantial revision when the way forward is clearer.
- It was recommended that the Department's Programme Management Office carefully assess and, where relevant, challenge the detail when they receive Transition Committee returns to provide further clarity when reporting against key milestones.

5. Further Local Government Paper on Achieving Efficiencies through Regional Collaboration and Funding Contribution to the Reform Programme (SLB 11/2010)

- NILGA and SOLACE members presented a joint document on local government's further proposals on the way forward for a strong local government and creating efficiencies through voluntary collaboration.
- Detail of this paper is available on the DOE and NILGA websites.
- Minister Poots expressed appreciation of the work by local government and that this paper provided a good foundation to go forward.
- The Minister said that he welcomed the local government sector being in control and accountable for driving forward efficiencies.
- Members agreed that further work was required on the detail of these proposals now that there was agreement on the way forward in terms of efficiency savings.

6. Proposals for voluntary Regional Transition Committee (vRTC)/ voluntary Regional Transition Management Team Structures (vRTMT) (SLB 12/2010)

- A paper on the proposed structures for the establishment of a voluntary Regional Transition Committee (vRTC) and Management Team was approved.
- It was agreed that arrangements should be made to finalise membership and set up the first meeting of the vRTC.
- A paper will be presented at the next SLB on governance and terms of reference of the vRTC.

7. Regional Transition Co-ordinating Group Update (SLB 13/2010)

- An update was provided on the RTCG meeting which took place on 25 March 2010.
- For any further information please refer to the Key Outcomes document issued after the RTCG meeting or the papers which are available on the NILGA and DOE websites.

8. Branding paper (SLB 14/2010)

- The branding paper was noted and the preferred option of a phased approach to branding was endorsed.
- This guidance will be held and issued when appropriate.
- Members also discussed that caution should be taken when branding is addressed as it could potentially lead to contentious issues being dealt with prematurely.

9. Joint Forum Update and Staff Severance Paper (SLB 15/2010)

- A Joint Forum update paper was noted. This covered updates on the Severance Scheme; System for Filling Senior Posts; Staff Transfer Scheme and Vacancy Controls.
- Proposals for a Staff Severance Scheme were agreed in principle.
- Members also agreed that further clarity on the future of the programme and funding is needed before the proposals can be implemented.

10. Legislation Programme Update (SLB 16/2010)

- An update on DOE and Transferring Functions legislation was noted.

11. AOB

- Minister Poots confirmed that the Department is currently preparing an economic appraisal to identify potential efficiencies in the delivery of waste services and a range of structures for their realisation, including a Single Waste Authority.

Date of Next Meeting

- The next SLB meeting is scheduled for Wednesday 23 June 2010 at 10am.

Please note: The information above may be subject to change. The formal minutes will represent the information in finalised format.

Joint Secretariat