

PERMANENT SECRETARIES' STOCKTAKE (PSS)

Friday 20 March 2026, 09:00am
Executive room, Stormont Castle

In attendance:

Katrina Godfrey (Chair)	Alex Gordon (<i>virtually</i>)
Emer Morelli	David Malcolm
Moira Doherty	Ian Snowden
Deborah Brown	Neil Gibson
Mike Farrar	Susan Anderson
Louise Crilly	Declan McGeown

Colin Woods (Agenda item 3 only)

Debbie Murphy (Secretariat)
Jayne Byrne (Secretariat)

1. Welcome and Apologies

HoCS provided apologies and Katrina Godfrey chaired the meeting in her absence. Hugh Widdis provided apologies with Deborah Brown deputising.

2. Minutes & Actions arising from PSS 13 March 2026

The minutes of the meeting of 13 March 2026 were agreed subject to minor amendments communicated in advance.

Actions from the previous meeting were reviewed and discussed.

3. Accelerating Infrastructure Presentation

Colin Woods DfI presented on the Accelerating Infrastructure Report and its relevance here noting that many of the principles could potentially apply to this jurisdiction. Presentation focussed on the need for ambitious and courageous decision making and systems reform in line with other jurisdictions to keep pace. KG noted that more clarity is needed on the intended endpoint. The presentation recommended consideration be given to a 'Transforming Infrastructure Delivery Strategy/Plan'. Discussion included the potential for focussing on a small number of key shared priority infrastructure projects and focus on the delivery of those and how a reformed system of delivery could be trialled. Budget implications and need for clarity on accountability were noted.

Action: Members to provide feedback on slides to CW in advance of preparation of a paper for a future NICS Board meeting.

@ 9.45 am CW CW left the meeting

4. Tour de Table

4.1 TEO

MD updated on CCPB engagement on meningitis outbreak. Additionally, there has been engagement in relation to Middle East in order to understand preparedness in terms of potential response to fuel shortages.

4.2 DfE

IS noted working through arrangements in relation to support available for energy costs and the potential impact on gas and electricity should the conflict continue. Additionally, the continuing issues in relation to officials' experiences attending committee was noted.

4.3 DfC

EM updated on engagement with DfE in relation to potential arrangements in relation to energy support payments.

@ 10am MD & IS left the meeting

4.4 DfI

DMcG advised of the positive reception to the Consultation Responses Report: Developer Contributions for Wastewater Infrastructure and continuing work in this area.

4.5 DoH

MF provided an update on the meningitis outbreak noting number of cases falling and no link to Kent outbreak. Also updated on continuing work on fiscal matters and a potential new partnership agreement.

4.6 DSO

LC provided an update on a current issue, litigation work and judicial reviews.

4.7 DE

DM provided update in relation to software provision being rolled out across all schools.

4.8 DoF

NG provided an update on the ongoing work on fiscal sustainability and advised of forthcoming attendance of DoF officials at a Finance Committee meeting regarding a call for evidence

4.8 OLC

AG provided an update on legislative programme and engagement with Assembly Bills office.

4.9 DoJ

DB provided an update in relation to engagement with NIAO.

4.10 DAERA

KG provided an update on the publication of the NIAO report on the Raising a Concern policy, a recent visit to Brussels and a summit due to take place in June/July and advised of potential impacts of global conflicts on fertiliser costs and knock on effects.

5. AOB

No AoB was raised.

6. Date of next PSS meeting:

Friday 27 March 9.00 – 10.30

Meeting closed 10:40