

**PERMANENT SECRETARIES' STOCKTAKE
FRIDAY 5 March 2021**

8:45 VIA ZOOM

Attending

Jenny Pyper (Chair), Andrew McCormick, Hugh Widdis, Denis McMahon, Peter May, Sue Gray, Alex Gordon, Richard Pengelly, Mike Brennan, Tracy Meharg, Katrina Godfrey, Mark Browne, Roisin Coleman (Secretary), Hannah Cavalleros.

1. Apologies

There were no apologies.

2. Minutes of previous meetings & matters arising

Minutes of the meeting held on 19.2.21 were agreed and an update on matters arising provided.

3. NICS Recruitment planning

Sue Gray provided a brief update on NICS Recruitment planning following discussion at the NICS Board on the 26 February 2021.

4. Covid Recovery

HOCS confirmed that an Executive workshop on Covid recovery would take place on the 10th March. There was discussion around the focus of the event and the critical pressures being faced by the Executive. HOCS proposed that the workshop should focus on identifying Executive recovery priorities in the face of limited resources in terms of budget, time and staffing. It was also agreed that early decisions are also needed from the Executive in relation to Covid funding for 2021/22. HOCS suggested that DoF might prepare a presentation on the budget position for the workshop.

[ACTION: Sue Gray]

Following debate around the staffing pressures, Mike Brennan undertook to engage with the CBI to explore the possibility of assistance from the private sector.

[ACTION: Mike Brennan]

5. Tour de Table

Dfl

Katrina Godfrey raised the issue of the draft NICS response to the NIAO report on Major Capital projects. Sue advised that she had received one response (from TEO) to her draft reply circulated to Perm Secs on the 1st

February, and asked for any further responses to be sent to her as soon as possible.

[ACTION: Permanent Secretaries]

It was agreed that the TEO response to DoF would be circulated for information.

[ACTION: HOCS Office]

There was also discussion around the role and remit of the NICS Board and NEDs in general, and it was agreed that this should be discussed further at a future date.

[ACTION: HOCS Office]

DoF

Sue Gray provided an update on the timeline for decisions relating to the NICS pay award.

OLC

Alex Gordon advised on the recent Legislation Programme Board meeting.

DOH

Richard Pengelly advised of a recent cyber attack at Queen's University

6. The next meeting will take place virtually on Friday 12 March 2021