

**SUMMARY OF THE OFMDFM DEPARTMENTAL BOARD MEETING
ON 7 APRIL 2003**

PRESENT: Mr Hamilton, Mr Haire, Mr Grimason, Mr Jardine,
Ms Bunting, Ms Flanagan, Mr McCartney, Mrs Angus,
Mr Jackson.

IN ATTENDANCE: Mrs Rooney, Mr Ferguson (Secretary).

APOLOGIES: Mr Gray, Mr McConnell, Dr Smyth

1. Minutes of Last Meeting

The minutes of the Departmental Board meeting on 24 March 2003 were noted and agreed.

2. Matters Arising

The Board noted that arrangements were in hand to circulate around the Department Mr Grimason's paper on co-ordinating publicity in OFMDFM.

3. Standing Items

a) Preparation for Restoration

Ms Flanagan updated the Board on a range of possibilities for the restoration of the devolved administration. The Board also discussed issuing guidance for civil servants during the election period and agreed that this should be issued on the date of dissolution when the election period begins. Departments are already aware of the issues under either suspension or devolution.

b) Contingency Planning

Mrs Angus reported that the Central Emergency Planning Unit were continuing to monitor the situation and the Board would be appraised of any developments.

4. Papers

a) Bullying and Harassment Policy

Mrs Angus outlined the background to the draft departmental Bullying and Harassment Policy statement. The Board discussed a number of issues relating to the draft policy and agreed that:

- ❖ the Board was strongly supportive of such a policy;
- ❖ any comments on the draft policy should be passed to Mrs Angus by 11 April;
- ❖ the policy should be pursued without further recourse to the Board; and
- ❖ awareness training sessions should be used to reinforce the policy.

b) Employer Supported Volunteering Policy

Mrs Angus outlined the background to the draft Employer Supported Volunteering policy, which had its roots in the Active Community Initiative (ACI). The Board discussed a number of issues relating to the draft policy, which was agreed in principle subject to there being some monitoring of the take up of volunteering opportunities.

c) Departmental Values

The Board discussed and agreed a proposal from Mrs Angus to develop a set of Departmental values and associated behaviours that would be reflected in the People Strategy currently being prepared.

5. Current Issues

a) Resource Accounts – Year ended 31 March 2003

The Board noted recent correspondence from the Treasury Officer of Accounts regarding the Department's Resource Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2003. Mrs Angus confirmed that preparatory work on the accounts was already underway and that arrangements were in hand to hold a number of seminars on fraud awareness and budget management.

6. Tour de Table

- Mr Jackson updated the Board on recent media interest in the work of the Review of Public Administration team;
- Mr Jardine updated the Board on a recent ministerial announcement of a £50 million integrated development fund;
- Mr Haire updated the Board on a number of forthcoming meetings including one relating to North Belfast and the integrated development fund;
- Ms Bunting updated the Board on the latest developments relating to the transformation of loyalism;
- Ms Flanagan updated the Board on legislative proceedings this week to renew provision to legislate for NI by Order-in-Council during suspension and on the outcome of the seminar on corporate governance of North/South Bodies.

7. Any Other Business

No other business was discussed.

8. Date of next meeting

Due to annual leave and other commitments it was agreed that the additional Departmental Board meeting scheduled for Friday 18 April should be cancelled. Date of next meeting to be agreed.

Michael Ferguson

7 April 2003.