

**SUMMARY OF THE OFMDFM DEPARTMENTAL BOARD MEETING
ON 24 MARCH 2003**

PRESENT: Mr Haire, Mr Grimason, Mr McConnell, Dr Smyth
Mr McCartney, Mrs Angus, Mr Rooney, Mrs Devlin.

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr Ferguson (Secretary).

APOLOGIES: Mr Hamilton, Mr Gray, Mr Jardine, Ms Bunting,
Ms Flanagan.

1. Minutes of Last Meeting

The minutes of the Departmental Board meeting on 10 March 2003 were noted and agreed.

2. Matters Arising

The Board noted that Ministers had cleared the Equality Scheme Progress Report and that a paper was being prepared for circulation to all staff on the Prince's Trust Volunteer Programme.

3. Standing Items

a) Preparation for Restoration

Mrs Devlin updated the Board on a briefing given to the Permanent Secretaries Group on 21 March. Mr Haire emphasised that it was essential that the Department must be in a position to respond effectively.

b) Contingency Planning

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

4. Papers

a) Team Brief

The Board discussed the Departmental brief for March 2003 and agreed a change to the text prior to circulation.

b) Co-ordinating Publicity in OFMDFM

The Board discussed and agreed to circulate around the Department a paper tabled by Mr Grimason suggesting new procedures designed to improve the co-ordination of publicity activities within the Department.

[Action: Mr Grimason]

5. Tour de Table

- Mr Grimason updated the Board on two potential information issues for the coming week, the 'Into the West' Report and Team NI.
- Mr Rooney updated the Board on plans to establish within the next week a Public Private Innovation Unit within his Division.
- Mr McConnell updated the Board on plans to make a public announcement about the current status of the Review of Public Administration.
- Dr Smyth updated the Board on the corporate governance seminar planned for 1 April.

- Mr Haire noted that the 'Into the West' Report would be published later in the week . Mr Haire also reported that the closing date for applications for the post of Head of the Washington Bureau had now passed.
- Mr McCartney updated the Board on his offer to brief the Departmental Solicitors Office on current political developments.
- Mrs Angus updated the Board on the OFMDFM SDA for 2003/04, which had sent to Ministers for clearance, and the risk management framework

6. Any Other Business

No other business was discussed.

7. Date of next meeting

The next meeting of the Departmental Board will be on Monday 7 April 2003 at 10.45 am.

Michael Ferguson

24 March 2003.