

**SUMMARY OF THE OFMDFM DEPARTMENTAL BOARD MEETING
ON 2 DECEMBER 2002**

PRESENT: Mr Haire, Mr Gray, Ms Flanagan, Mrs Bunting,
Mr Grimason, Mr McConnell, Mr McCartney, Mr May.

IN ATTENDANCE: Miss Dullaghan, Mr Ferguson (Secretary).

APOLOGIES: Mr Hamilton, Mr Jardine, Dr Smyth, Mrs Angus

1. Minutes of Last Meeting

The minutes of the Departmental Board meeting on 25 November 2002 were noted and agreed.

2. Matters Arising

Publication Scheme

The Board noted the introduction of the Departmental Publication Scheme and the impact this would have in relation to the provision of summaries of senior management meetings.

3. Standing Items

a) Direct Rule including Assembly Issues

The Board noted and discussed a number of issues reported on by Ms Flanagan including: -

- ❑ decision making arrangements for North/South implementation bodies;
- ❑ slippage in parts of the legislative programme;
- ❑ round table talks involving the main political parties; and
- ❑ agenda items for a British Irish Inter-Governmental Conference meeting scheduled for mid December.

b) Staffing and Finance Issues

North Belfast Unit

Mrs Bunting from the Equality Directorate submitted a paper to the Board setting out the business case for appointing a Deputy Principal (Operations) to the North Belfast Unit. The Board noted that the post was covered by existing departmental running costs and agreed that the post could be filled.

Economic Policy and Public Service Directorate

Mr Jardine From the Economic Policy and Public Service Directorate submitted a paper to the Board setting out the business case for a Staff Officer post for the Reinvestment and Reform Initiative and a Deputy Principal post for the Central Information Technology Unit (Northern Ireland). The Board noted that the Staff Officer post for the Reinvestment and Reform Initiative was covered by existing departmental running costs and agreed that the post could be filled. However, the Board also noted that the Deputy Principal post in the Central Information Technology Unit (Northern Ireland) was not contained within existing departmental running costs and it was agreed that Mr Haire would discuss with the Director of Corporate Services alternatives for identifying funding for this post.

[Action: - Mr Haire / Mrs Angus]

December Monitoring

Mr Haire updated the Board on 4 bids being submitted to DFP to meet pressures identified as part of the December monitoring round, these included bids for: -

- PEACE Programme Gap Funding;
- the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland;
- the strategic investment body; and
- the Island of Ireland Peace Park.

The Board noted that some internal bids had still to be met but it was anticipated that these could be delivered within existing departmental resources.

c) Information Issues

No other information issues were identified beyond those associated with the matters discussed under agenda item 3a.

4. Tour de Table

- Mrs Bunting updated the Board on work that was ongoing to address community relations issues at interface areas in East Belfast.
- Mr McConnell drew the Boards attention to a forthcoming meeting his team were having with one of the political parties to discuss the Review of Public Administration; and
- Mr McCartney made the Board aware of reports in the local press in which the former Deputy First Minister criticised selection procedures for the post of Permanent Secretary in the DOE, which excluded candidates from the Republic of Ireland by stipulating that candidates should be UK citizens.

5. Any Other Business

No issues were raised under any other business.

6. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Departmental Board will be on Monday 9 December at 10.45am.

Michael Ferguson

10 December 2002.