

New TSN

Annual Report 2001

Summary

Foreword

We, and all Ministers are fully committed to our New Targeting Social Need (New TSN) policy. As an Executive, we have been working to tackle the problems of poverty and exclusion that many people in our community face, by making such issues central to the **Programme for Government**.



In March 2001, we published **Making it Work** which set out the Executive's New TSN policy and detailed Action Plans for each Government Department showing how the policy was being implemented. In addition, we also made clear our intention to report on progress, so that people can see for themselves that Departments are delivering on their commitments.

We have published the first progress report and believe that people will see that progress has been positive and productive. To complement the progress report all Departments have published revised Action Plans taking account of achievements and the priorities identified in the Programme for Government.

We remain steadfast in our determination to ensure that New TSN is effectively implemented, believing that it will contribute to the Executive's vision - building a more cohesive, just and inclusive society for all.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David Trimble".

**Rt Hon DAVID TRIMBLE MP, MLA
FIRST MINISTER**

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mark Durkan".

**MARK DURKAN MLA
DEPUTY FIRST MINISTER**

Summary

The **New TSN Annual Report 2001** details progress on the key actions taken forward across Government up to 31 March 2001. It comprises reports on each Northern Ireland Department which detail achievements and highlights significant actions to be addressed in the oncoming period.

Each Department has published its revised New TSN Action Plan, taking account of progress and new priorities, and detailing the outcomes of all action points.

New Targeting Social Need

The New Targeting Social Need (New TSN) policy aims to tackle social need and social exclusion by targeting efforts and available resources on people, groups and areas in greatest objective social need. The policy is being advanced through three complementary elements: tackling unemployment and increasing employability; tackling inequality in other policy areas such as health, housing and education; and Promoting Social Inclusion (PSI).

New TSN is unique in that it is not a programme with its own budget. Instead it is a policy running through all relevant existing spending programmes across all Northern Ireland Departments. This means Departments changing the way they target the money they have, so that more of it can be used to benefit those who are most disadvantaged. It also involves targeting efforts, which may mean changing the way things are done so that programmes and services are organised and delivered in ways which are more helpful to disadvantaged people.

Unemployment/Employability

It is Government's view that, for many people, the best protection against poverty is a job with a decent wage. Hence, New TSN is particularly concerned with tackling the problems of unemployment and with increasing people's employability. Although all Departments have considered how they can contribute towards this aspect of the policy, it is particularly relevant to three – Department for Employment and Learning, Department of Enterprise Trade and Industry, and Department of Education.

For example: DEL established a **Taskforce on Employability and Long-term Unemployment** headed up by its Minister. The Taskforce is preparing an Action Plan which integrates actions across Government Departments and Agencies. Much of DEL's actions have concentrated on improving employability, focusing on the low levels of qualifications and basic skills among the socially disadvantaged through **New Deals** and **Jobskills Access**. DETI have targeted efforts and resources towards tackling unemployment working to attract new inward investment projects in Northern Ireland to be located in disadvantaged areas. DE have been working on practical ways of meeting the needs of young people after school, introducing work-related programmes.

Addressing Other Social Needs

New TSN recognises that people who are disadvantaged are more likely to experience other types of social need, such as: poor health; achieving lower levels of attainment in education; living in poor housing; and are less likely to be able to access the services for which their need is greatest. In the areas of social welfare, housing, urban regeneration and community development, the

Department for Social Development (DSD) has played a leading role in taking forward New TSN. A few examples of what has been achieved include the **Warm Homes** initiative, launched to tackle fuel poverty and a **Common Selection Scheme** introduced to ensure that all future social housing tenancies will be let taking account of social needs.

The Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety has implemented action on a number of key areas. On improving the health and wellbeing of disadvantaged people, consultation has taken place on a public health strategy and the funding allocation formula to Health and Social Services Boards has been further refined to ensure a more equitable distribution according to health and social care need. To tackle persistent health issues in areas of greatest need, **Health Action Zones** have been established, and support for childcare provided through **Sure Start**, particularly in disadvantaged areas.

Within the Department of Education the **School Support Programme** provides support to low and under achieving schools. Resources from the Executive's **Children's Fund** are being used to implement a regional programme of support for school age mothers and pregnant school-girls. At a more strategic level the Department for Regional Development is building social need considerations into its regional development plans, and the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister and Department of Finance and Personnel have undertaken valuable research to inform future work to implement New TSN and monitor spending.

Cross-Departmental Work

Many departments are working together to address social needs and create the circumstances to improve employment opportunities. The Northern Ireland Tourist Board together with the Department of the Environment, Department of Agriculture and Rural Development and Department of Culture Arts and Leisure have been working towards a framework for the development of rural tourism in disadvantaged areas.

Promoting Social Inclusion (PSI)

The Promoting Social Inclusion element of New TSN involves Departments working together and with partners outside Government to identify and tackle factors which can contribute to social exclusion. Much progress has been made through this aspect of New TSN. For example, the Executive plans to publish its strategic response to the PSI working group's report on **Travellers** which will provide detailed recommendations on issues like Traveller accommodation, health, education, training and employment. Another priority area being addressed is the issue of teenage parenthood. The consultation document **Myths and Reality** aims to address the adverse consequences of teenage pregnancy and early motherhood. During 2001 consultation will be undertaken to enable future PSI priorities to be identified by the Executive.