



Contents

Introduction

Publications

Think Tanks

Policy

New Policies

Conferences

Consultations

Forthcoming

Coming Up

Past Events

Contact Us

Policylink
Bulletin 12
June 2006

1

Contents

- | | | | |
|---|--|----|------------------------------------|
| 1 | Contents | 7 | Conferences and seminars coming up |
| 2 | Introduction | 8 | Current consultations |
| 3 | New official publications | 9 | Forthcoming consultations |
| 4 | New from research institutes and think tanks | 10 | Policy reviews coming up |
| 5 | Policy Developments | 11 | Summary of key past events |
| 6 | Newly announced policies and strategies | 12 | Contact us |





Contents
Introduction
Publications
Think Tanks
Policy
New Policies

Conferences
Consultations
Forthcoming
Coming Up
Past Events
Contact Us

Policylink
Bulletin 12
June 2006

2

Introduction

Editorial

Welcome to the twelfth issue of the policylink bulletin!

We have included three features in this edition of the bulletin. The first looks at Sustainable Development and the implications for policy and practice in NI. This flows from a policy seminar that PIU hosted on 9 May at which Jonathon Porritt, Chairman of the UK Sustainable Development Commission spoke on this topic. The second gives a flavour of the role, aims and responsibilities of the Northern Ireland Court Service. The third article looks at migration trends, and the economic and wider implications for Northern Ireland.

Introduced in this bulletin is a section on Policy Developments which highlights items of interest from the European Commission.

In the 'New from Research Institutes and Think Tanks' section read the recent report from Ark NI, "Cross-Community Integration and mixing: does it make a difference?" which looks at policy intervention programmes in NI which have attempted to address prejudice and stereotyping. Also in this section Geoff Mulgan and Fran Bury have been looking at the future of local government in "Double Devolution: the renewal of local government".

As usual, this edition includes details of:

- official reports and publications;
- current and forthcoming
- consultations;
- articles from research institutions;
- conferences and seminars; and
- policy reviews coming up.

Hopefully there is something of interest for everyone! As always, you can email us at policylink@ofmdfmi.gov.uk with your views or suggestions.

Just another note, if you are a regular user of our Policylink website you will see that it has undergone some changes. The website originally went live in September 2003. The aim of the website was to promote best practice and provide access to a range of resources to support policy making. Following customer feedback, PIU has worked to expand and enhance Policylink. Along with the quarterly policy bulletins, and the Practical Guide to Policy-Making in NI, the website now includes:

- local case studies which demonstrates good practice in policy-making;
- an A-Z of policy support resources;
- links to other relevant websites;
- Northern Ireland Research Database.

Special Features

Coming up on the website in the future we will be adding links to on-line policy journals which should prove to be a useful resource to all those working in policy areas.

If you want to check out the website go to www.ofmdfmi.gov.uk/policylink.

Sustainable Development
In Northern Ireland
Sustainable Development:
"a continuing process of economic and social development in both developing and industrialised nations that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs".
Source: 1987 Brundtland Commission of the UN

Abstract:

On 9 May 2006, Secretary of State, Mr Peter Hain launched the first ever Northern Ireland Sustainable Development Strategy. This strategy recognises that a healthy environment, a thriving economy, prosperity and qualities of life are all inextricably linked. To coincide with the launch of the strategy, OFMDFM's Policy Innovation Unit hosted a policy seminar focusing on the implications of the Sustainable Development Strategy for Northern Ireland. In this article, James McElDowney of the Policy Innovation Unit examines briefly the concept of sustainable development, summarizes the main elements of the strategy and outlines the implications it will have for both policy and practice in NI. Some of the themes raised at the policy seminar are also highlighted which may be of interest for those who were unable to attend.

Sustainable Development: The Concept

The concept of sustainable development refers to a form of economic growth which satisfies society's needs in terms of well-being in the short, medium and above all long-term. The assumption that 'development must meet today's needs without jeopardizing the prospects for growth of future generations' is a fundamental one which calls for a new approach to policy-making to ensure that economic, social and environmental policies mutually reinforce each other.

Sustainable development is therefore not just about protecting the environment. It is about ensuring stable, social and economic growth for all. For this reason it is often defined as being based on three inter-dependent and mutually supporting pillars:

- Social (People)
- Environmental (Place)
- Economic (Prosperity)

These three pillars are inextricably linked. Each one is equally important. It is only possible to achieve significant and sustainable development in one pillar providing this would not create a detrimental effect in another.

A Sustainable Development
Strategy for Northern Ireland
[http://www.doeni.gov.uk/epd/
sustainable%20development.asp](http://www.doeni.gov.uk/epd/sustainable%20development.asp)

Sustainable Development Commission
[www.sd-commission.gov.uk/pages/
aboutus.html](http://www.sd-commission.gov.uk/pages/aboutus.html)

First steps towards sustainability

The recently published First steps towards sustainability: A sustainable development strategy for Northern Ireland has been drawn up involving input from all Government Departments as well as input from a stakeholders group comprising over 40 representatives across all sectors of NI society (including the UK Government's advisor on sustainable development – the Sustainable Development Commission).

The strategy is based on six guiding principles namely: (i) respecting the limits of the planet's environment, resources and biodiversity (ii) meeting the diverse needs of all people in existing and future communities (iii) building a strong, stable and sustainable economy (iv) promoting good governance (v) ensuring policy is developed and implemented on the basis of sound scientific evidence (vi) promoting opportunity and innovation.

Six priority areas for action are identified relating to:

- Climate change and energy
- Sustainable consumption and production
- Natural resource protection and environmental enhancement
- Sustainable communities
- Governance
- Learning and communication

Each of these priority areas will form the basis for business planning and decision making by Departments and their agencies. Each priority area is dealt with in detail in the 173 page strategy document complete with a set of strategic objectives and associated targets for each priority area.

Key issues form the Policy seminar:

The policy seminar hosted by PIU to coincide with the launch of the strategy provided a valuable opportunity to explore the implications of the new strategy in more detail. The keynote speaker, Jonathon Porritt, Chair of the UK Sustainable Development Commission gave a thought provoking presentation on the theme of "Improving policy development in NI". He stressed that sustainable development was "the only thing that stands between us and an utterly miserable descent into ecological collapse, resource wars, worsening inequity and social implosion". Referring to some 25 years of the "banal rhetoric" that has characterised the debate in the UK in general, there was now a need to respond to the issue of climate change described by Sir David King, Chief Scientific Advisor to the UK Government as "...the most severe problem that we are facing today- more serious even than the threat of terrorism".

Recognising the potential for NI to be a world leader in respect of sustainability, Mr Porritt warmly welcomed the "ambitious" agenda set by the NICS to be carbon neutral by 2015. Moreover the scale of our renewable energy resources should not be under-estimated.

In terms of the role of Government and the policy toolkit available to him (see inset left), he addressed this issue under five themes. Firstly there is a need for improved policy making where it was essential to seek longer term value for money actions in order to achieve more mutually reinforcing outcomes (involving economic benefits, environmental protection and social justice rather than crude trade-offs). Secondly in the delivery of policy it was essential to involve a range of agencies and to achieve greater inter-departmental coordination. Thirdly under the theme of "Walking the Talk", it was incumbent on us all to take sustainable development forward through action plans incorporating a watchdog role for the Government's independent Sustainable Development Commission. Fourthly the role of sustainable procurement needed to be recognised which had the potential to make NI a regional leader. Finally there was a need for leadership.

Mr Porritt strongly believes that it is the role of Government to take the lead, facilitate and incentivise. Citizens would follow and it would impact on their quality of life in the immediate short term as well as in the future. There was a need for implementation or as Mr Porritt stated there were 236 days remaining for action to occur this year.

This presentation was followed by an inspiring presentation by Joe McGuinness, Principal of St Matthew's Primary School, Belfast. Located in a deprived area in East Belfast, the school has developed a fruit cooperative scheme in which fair trade fruit is sourced from local traders and sold to children each morning. The aim has been to encourage healthy eating. The project has also helped to educate children and parents on the benefits of a healthy eating lifestyle. The fruit cooperative has been developed into a savings scheme for children. There is now widespread support for the scheme among parents, the dental health of the children has improved and the amount of litter has dramatically reduced following the banning of junk food. The project represents a unique and innovative way to improve the general health and well being of children. It has been recognised in the National Teaching Awards as the regional winner of the Healthy Living School award in NI.

The significance of this project was best understood when Mr McGuinness revealed "We had never heard of sustainable development when we started out. We just thought about our situation carefully and decided to do something that would transform the fortunes of our school. It turned out we discovered sustainable development".

In the subsequent discussion a number of themes were taken up. These included:

- the applicability and extension of sustainability in the schools sector including the transferability of the St Matthew's case study to other areas and the role of such a model in producing social change;
- the benefits of using sustainable development as a model to encourage better participation and policy delivery;
- the international context and role of organisations such as Oxfam in recycling taking into account its work with local authorities and the need for further links of this nature the role of citizens and their engagement in the process.

Implications for policy and practice

In light of the issues raised at the conference it is reasonable to ask what are the implications of sustainable development for both policy and practice in NI? In considering the issues raised by the seminar, there are four key issues worth noting. First: the sustainable development agenda represents an enormous challenge requiring a high level of commitment across all Government departments. This requires the adoption of a holistic view including a joined-up approach to policy making. It will require cross-cutting objectives, clearly defined at the outset with meaningful buy-in from across departments.

Second, NI has the potential to become a world leader in terms of sustainability policies and practices. There is opportunity for the region to develop its own identity. This is already evidenced in the priority areas for action outlined in the strategy document. NI has extended the four priority areas within the existing UK Framework by adding a further two, namely governance and learning and communication. In the case of governance it is not just environmental governance but it includes corporate governance and political governance. In turn this will involve joined-up Government, better regulation and synergy between local and central Government. In practical terms, this will involve all departments contributing to a series of implementation plans in order to translate objectives into actions on the ground. Sustainable Development will be fully integrated into the Comprehensive Spending Review, future spending reviews and relevant Public Service Agreements.

Third, to be successful, sustainable development requires active citizenship. This requires meaningful engagement and the involvement of key stakeholders. Jonathon Porritt stressed that it is not possible to fashion a sustainable society without the prompt engagement of citizens at different levels of society.

Finally the monitoring of progress against measurable targets and performance measures will be an essential pre-requisite for delivering and reporting on progress. The role of the Sustainable Development Commission, its remit and the need for an independent watchdog function along with consideration of the establishment of a Sustainable Development Forum will need to be addressed during the development of the implementation process.

Much work remains to be done in respect of fine-tuning the policy agenda for sustainable development in Northern Ireland. It will require a fully integrated approach across all departments, involving the voluntary and community sector, active citizenship and key stakeholders. In support of this, the Policy Innovation Unit hope to develop further seminars which will be relevant to the sustainability theme. It is open to suggestions and is happy to discuss proposals for future events with departments and stakeholders alike.

The Northern Ireland Court Service is the Lord Chancellor's department in Northern Ireland. It is an independent Civil Service in its own right, and was established in April 1979. Its role is to:

- provide administrative support for the Northern Ireland courts, i.e. the Court of Judicature, County Courts, Magistrates' Courts and Coroners' Courts;
- enforce civil court judgments through the Enforcement of Judgments Office;
- support the Lord Chancellor in discharging his ministerial responsibilities in Northern Ireland including responsibility for judicial appointments and legal aid.

Northern Ireland Court Service

The corporate aim of the Court Service is 'serving the community through the administration of justice'. The Court Service employs some 750 staff – the majority of whom work in the frontline delivery of court administration in 21 courthouses across Northern Ireland. In addition to running the courts, the Court Service is also responsible for:

- The Enforcement of Judgments Office – which provides a centralised service for the enforcement of civil court money judgments;
- The Coroners Service – an independent judicial service for the investigation of deaths;
- The Social Security Commissioners and Child Support Commissioners – this tribunal determines appeals on points of law under the Social Security and Child Support legislation; and
- The Court Funds Office – manages £200m funds held in court on behalf of minors and patients.

The Court Service is the Sponsor Department for two Non-Departmental Public Bodies – the Northern Ireland Legal Services Commission, and the Judicial Appointments Commission.

NI Legal Services Commission – is responsible for delivering public funded legal services (legal aid). It was established in November 2004 in succession to the Legal Aid Department of the Law Society of Northern Ireland. The legal aid budget in Northern Ireland in 2005-06 is £60m.

Judicial Appointments Commission – The Commission makes recommendations for judicial appointments. It is chaired by the Lord Chief Justice of Northern Ireland, Sir Brian Kerr, and comprises 12 other members. It was established in June 2005 and has a budget of £1.3m.

Key Priorities

The Court Service Corporate Plan for 2005-08 sets-out three key priorities:

- modernising courts business
- Improving access to justice
- promoting public confidence in the justice system.

Introduction

In recent years there has been an increasing awareness of the importance of understanding long-term and newly emerging socioeconomic trends to identify key future challenges and opportunities and to enable policy makers and others to formulate an evidence-based strategic policy response to such issues.

At a national level HM Treasury, in the Long-term Public Finance Report: an Analysis of Fiscal Sustainability, identifies several long-term challenges that will shape and inform the development of government's priorities arising from the 2007 Comprehensive Spending Review. The significance which is accorded to the area of "strategic futures" is demonstrated by for example the establishment of the Foresight Programme of futures research.

This article focuses on one of the key trends identified by HM Treasury and of particular relevance to NI – that is the changing structure of the UK population as a result of an ageing native population and an increased flow of migrant workers, particularly from Eastern Europe. This paper provides a short overview of the significance of the issue of migration to Northern Ireland.

Migration Trends

Context

Migration has not been high on the policy agenda in NI as historically NI has been characterised by a net outflow of individuals. However, flows of migrant workers into NI have accelerated over recent years with figures from the Department of Social Development showing that a total of 31,421 foreign nationals applied for national insurance numbers between April 2003 and June 2005, which is approximately 1.8% of the population of Northern Ireland. The main driver behind the significant influx of migrant workers to NI has been EU enlargement - the Accession monitoring report published in August 2005 indicates that a total of 7,755 people registered under the Work Registration Scheme between May 2004 and June 2005. The Racial Equality Strategy for Northern Ireland published by OFMDFM in 2005, notes that the speed and extent of the increase in the number of migrant workers in Northern Ireland, poses complex challenges to Government and society alike. This article highlights the potential economic challenges and opportunities presented by the increased numbers of migrant workers in NI and also the wider implications that should be taken into account in the strategic planning process.

Economic Implications

Migrant workers are an important source of labour supply and can potentially make a very significant contribution to the local economy. The increased flow of migrant workers to NI is essentially a response to demand for labour from the private sector and much higher relative wages in NI compared to wage levels in the migrant's country of origin.

The inflow of migrant workers to NI in recent years has been beneficial in meeting the increased demand for labour in certain sectors of the economy including construction, nursing and the tourism sector. For example, a recent research commissioned by OFMDFM and the SIB on the capacity of the construction industry in NI to deliver the £16 billion investment planned under ISNI, identified potential skills/labour shortages in the construction sector as a possible constraint on the delivery of the ISNI. A shortage of labour could result in wage inflation in the construction sector which could threaten the delivery of key aspects of the ISNI as this inflation would erode the real value of the ISNI.

The issue of demographic ageing has received much attention in recent years because of the demands this will place on for example the cost and delivery of public services. The importance of migrant workers as a source of supply to local labour markets will also become of increasing importance to NI as the local population continues to age. Countries such as Scotland faced with rapid demographic ageing welcome the flow of migrant workers as it has helped to rebalance the ratio between the active and inactive sectors of the population. Therefore, from the NI policy maker's perspective it is clearly important to understand the level of migration required to meet future demand for labour in NI and to plan and adapt policies to ensure that this can be met.

However, the continuation of the accelerated flow of migrant workers to NI could potentially have an adverse impact on the local labour market.

Economic theory suggests that while the overall level of employment would increase, increased numbers of migrant workers could result in:

- Lower wages for natives
- Lower native employment
- Higher native unemployment

A reduction in the wage rate resulting from an increased supply of labour could potentially lead to an increase in the already substantial number of economically inactive individuals in NI as it would reduce the gap between benefits and work.

However, if properly managed, the increased numbers of migrant workers in NI could offer opportunities for economic development. Analysis undertaken by Regional Forecasts, has shown that based on 15,000 additional migrant workers in NI in 2005 and assuming an additional 4,000 each year to 2030 could lead to the creation of 66,000 jobs and add £2 billion to Gross Value Added. Research highlights that a possible impact of a substantial increase in migrant workers to an economy is to create new business opportunities such as the development of specialist services for and by members of the new migrant population to meet new demands for goods and services.

Wider Implications

In addition to the economic challenges and opportunities presented by Northern Ireland's growing migrant population, there are also wider implications which should be taken into consideration in making strategic policy decisions in relation to the issue of migration. Neil Jarman notes that the NI policy response has tended to focus on responding to issues of harassment and discrimination, improving the quality of information, advice and services to migrants and raising awareness of many of these issues among employers and statutory agencies. However, the continuation of the accelerated flow of migrant workers to NI will also have an impact on health, education and housing provision. For example, demand for housing will be higher than planned in the Regional Development Strategy. Furthermore, social policy will need to address the increased social tensions resulting from increased numbers of migrant workers.

Value of Futures Work

Patterns of migration to NI have changed significantly in recent years; historically there was a net outflow of individuals from NI but in the last two years (April 2003 – June 2005) over 30,000 workers have entered NI. This large influx of migrant workers to NI represents a significant future challenge to the Northern Ireland economy but will also bring positive opportunities for economic development. There are wider policy implications arising from increased migration such as the impact of increased numbers of migrant workers on the provision of services and the need to take action to address social tensions and harassment.

The value of adopting a futures based approach to such issues lies in the early identification of emerging trends, in enabling policy makers and others to consider a range of possible future scenarios, identify the preferred future and finally adapting planning and adapting policy to achieve the desired future – that is – a future where Northern Ireland takes advantage of the opportunities presented by migration for social diversity and economic development.





Contents	Conferences
Introduction	Consultations
Publications	Forthcoming
Think Tanks	Coming Up
Policy	Past Events
New Policies	Contact Us

3

New official publications

Summary

13 March 2006

New Deal Statistical Bulletins:

(i) New Deal for 18 to 24 Year Olds in Northern Ireland: Statistics from April 1998 to December 2005

(ii) New Deal 25+ in Northern Ireland: Statistics from June 1998 to December 2005

For further details visit:

<http://www.delni.gov.uk/pubs-new-deal.htm>

These Statistical Bulletins are part of a regular series analysing key statistical information for the New Deal programmes in Northern Ireland.

Data has been provided on numbers participating in New Deal, on key personal characteristics of participants (such as gender and community background), on the New Deal Options chosen within the programme and on destinations after leaving the programme.

20 March 2006

Participation, qualification and destinations statistics relating to Higher Education in Northern Ireland in the 2004/05 academic year

For further details visit:

<http://www.delni.gov.uk/statistical-profile-of-ni-he-2004-05>

This bulletin provides a statistical profile of Northern Ireland Higher Education for the academic year 2004/05. This includes information on enrolments, qualifications gained and destinations of leavers.

April 2006

Post-Consultation Report on Rate Reliefs for Business in Northern Ireland

Contact: Linda McAllister by email at linda.mcallister@dfpni.gov.uk

For further details visit:

<http://www.ratingreviewni.gov.uk>

This post-consultation report summarises the views expressed during the public consultation on proposed rate reliefs for business carried out in 2005. The report also sets out the Government's response to the reliefs proposed and the next steps to give effect to those measures being taken forward in legislation effective from April 2007.

4 April 2006

Renewing Communities Action Plan

For further details visit:

http://www.dsdni.gov.uk/40708_action_plan.pdf

This cross-Departmental Action Plan aimed at renewing disadvantaged communities includes measures valued at £33 million and places a particular emphasis on addressing the needs of Protestant working class communities, as identified by the Government Taskforce. Over 60 targeted actions, relating to 5 fundamental challenges, have been identified in the Plan. The majority of these will be available across Northern Ireland, to those areas experiencing high levels of deprivation. The plan will complement existing measures aimed at tackling disadvantage and will concentrate on rebuilding confidence, reviving hope and restoring pride through additional investment in education, community capacity, regeneration, improving public service delivery and freeing communities from paramilitary influence

4 April 2006

Report of the Taskforce on Protestant Working Class Communities

For further details visit:

http://www.dsdni.gov.uk/40708_task_force.pdf

The Taskforce Report considers the particular challenges currently faced by Protestant communities in working class areas and makes recommendations on how they may be addressed. Key concerns include low educational attainment and employability, low community development capacity, housing and regeneration issues and ongoing paramilitary influence. The Taskforce was established in March 2004 in response to concerns that Protestant communities appeared to be benefiting less from the wide range of Government policies and programmes available to them. The findings of the report are addressed by the Renewing Communities Action Plan, also published on 4 April.

May/June 2006

Report of the Panel on the Review of Housing Growth Indicators.

Contact: Ian Raphael by email at ian.raaphael@drdni.gov.uk

For further details visit:

www.drdni.gov/shapingourfuture

The panel's report sets out a consideration of the matters which were addressed at the Examination in Public held during 14-17 February 2006. This report, which makes 27 recommendations, was received by the Department on 31 March 2006. The public release of this report will coincide with an announcement confirming revised housing figures and publication of a paper setting out the Department's 'Response to the Panels' report.

8 June 2006

Northern Ireland Family Practitioner Services Statistical Report 2004/05

Contact: S Fitzpatrick by email at FitzpatrickS@csa.n-i.nhs.uk

For more details visit:

http://www.centralservicesagency.com/display/annual_statistical_reports

Statistical information in relation to the volume and cost of health services provided by Dentists, Doctors, Pharmacists and Opticians. The publication will include information on the number of persons registered with a GP, numbers of various practitioners, number and cost of prescriptions dispensed, number of dental treatments, number of sight tests, etc.

June 2006

'Get in on the Act': A Practical Guide to the Human Rights Act for Public Authorities in Northern Ireland

Contact: Kiera Lloyd by email at kiera.lloyd@ofmdfmni.gov.uk

The Guide is an educational and reference tool which introduces and explains the relevance of the Human Rights Act and the European Convention on Human Rights to public servants. Copies will be made available to all public authorities, and it is intended to put the Guide online. The Guide also includes a Human Rights Act Impact Assessment Pro Forma which will be used by all policymakers in assessing possible human rights impacts of policies and decisions.

June 2006

North-South Language Body Annual Report and Accounts 2001

Contact: Stephen Shimmon by email at stephen.shimmon@dcalni.gov.uk

The Annual Report and Accounts 2001 for the North South Language Body are due to be published in June 2006.

July 2006

Ordnance Survey of Northern Ireland (OSNI) Annual Report and Accounts 2005-06

Contact: Robert Gartley by email at robert.gartley@osni.gov.uk

The Annual Report and Accounts for Ordnance Survey of Northern Ireland 2005/06 are due to be published in July 2006.

July 2006

Best Practice Guidance on Providing Public Services to Deaf People who use British Sign Language or Irish Sign Language.

Contact: Phillips Wilson by email at phillips.wilson@dcalni.gov.uk

The guidance includes examples of good practice for employers, useful tips on how to communicate with deaf people and how to ensure that the method of communication is the most efficient and cost effective for the situation. The guidance also gives details of how to book an interpreter, what levels of qualification are desirable, and for what types of situation. All departments will receive copies of the guidance for distribution to relevant areas.

July 2006

Summary of HPSS Expenditure

Contact: Frank Williamson by email at Frank.williamson@dhsspsni.gov.uk

The Summary of HPSS Expenditure in NI offers a comprehensive analysis of the expenditure by Boards and Trusts in the 2004/05 financial year. This is the first time such information will have been made available to the public. The report details spend on hospital, community and personal social services by the main care programmes and key service areas e.g. nursing homes. In addition the Summary offers information on the cost of the various staff groups and to the expenditures e.g. clinical supplies and services.

To be published August 2006

Renewable Energy Strategy

Contact: Rosemary Agnew by email at rosemary.agnew@dardni.gov.uk

A needs-based policy for the use of agriculture and forestry to assist the competitive development of land based renewable energy sources.

To be published August 2006

Rural Strategy 2007 – 2013

Contact: Rosemary Agnew by email at rosemary.agnew@dardni.gov.uk

The Rural Strategy 2007-2013 will guide future rural development policy in Northern Ireland. It has the overall theme of diversifying the rural economy and sustaining rural communities.

Late 2006

Northern Ireland Road Safety Strategy
Annual Report 2005

Contact: Brian Moore by Tel. 028 9054 0612

For further details visit: www.roadsafetyni.gov.uk

The Northern Ireland Road Safety Strategy 2002 – 2012 gives a commitment to carry out a review of the progress made on delivering the measures highlighted in the strategy and in achieving its objectives and targets to allow reappraisal of the targets and the effectiveness of the measures introduced to deliver them. The first review will look at progress made on delivering the measures highlighted in the strategy and in achieving its objectives and targets. The outcome of the review will be reported within the Northern Ireland Road Safety Strategy Annual Report 2005.





Contents
Introduction
Publications
Think Tanks
Policy
New Policies

Conferences
Consultations
Forthcoming
Coming Up
Past Events
Contact Us

Policylink
Bulletin 12
June 2006

4

New from research institutes and think tanks

Summary

'Securing the Future'

For more details visit:

www.democraticdialogue.org/harm.htm

Proceedings from a series of round tables organised by Democratic Dialogue and the Probation Board for Northern Ireland, addressing crime and justice issues

'A Picture of Health?'

For more details visit:

www.democraticdialogue.org/health.htm

Proceedings from a series of round tables organised by Democratic Dialogue and Stratagem, on public health and health inequalities.

Cross-Community integration and mixing: does it make a difference? – April 2006

For more details visit:

<http://www.ark.ac.uk/publications/updates/update43.pdf>

For many years, policy intervention programmes in Northern Ireland have attempted to address prejudice and stereotyping through increasing contact between Protestants and Catholics. Schemes such as the programmes of the Community Relations Council, the introduction of Education for Mutual Understanding (EMU) and Cultural Heritage (CH) in the Northern Ireland curriculum and programmes for groups of young people from different backgrounds have often been seen as key to the diminishing of violence.

From 2003 to 2005, the Young Life and Times (YLT) Survey has monitored changing attitudes to community relations issues among 16 year olds across NI. One aim of doing so is to contribute to policy-making on community relations and evaluation of policy.

Devolution Monitoring Report –
May 2006

For more details visit:
www.ucl.ac.uk/constitution-unit/research/devolution/devo-monitoring-programme.html

Latest in a series of reports, compiled by a team of Northern Ireland researchers, as part of UK-wide devolution-monitoring project collated by the Constitution Unit at UCL

Promoting person centred care
at the front -line

For more details visit:
<http://www.jrf.org.uk/knowledge/findings/socialcare/0296.asp>

With frontline workers crucial to making care more person-centred, this research seeks to understand both their experiences and the barriers and opportunities they face. Recent policy developments highlight the importance of a more 'person-centred' approach within community care services. Within this framework, however, little attention has been given to the role played by frontline workers in delivering on these policy imperatives. Understanding the roles and experiences of frontline workers is crucial in understanding how frontline care can be made more 'person-centred'. The University of Stirling has looked at the barriers to and opportunities for promoting person-centred care for older people, disabled people and people from minority ethnic groups.

Living and working in areas of
street sex work

For more details visit:
<http://www.jrf.org.uk/knowledge/findings/housing/0236.asp>

This study examines how residential areas characterised as being used by female street sex workers are shared by different sections of the community. In light of debates about managing 'the street scene', researchers from Staffordshire, Loughborough and Strathclyde Universities considered whether residential streets could serve as shared spaces where residents and sex workers could coexist

What will it take to end child
poverty in the UK?

For more details visit:
<http://www.jrf.org.uk/child-poverty/>

Our aim: -
To produce costed options for ending child poverty in the UK by 2020.

Key facts: -

The proportion of children living in poverty has doubled in the past generation. The UK has proportionally more poor children than most rich countries. In 1999, the Prime Minister committed to ending child poverty by 2020. In 2005, 3.4 million children were living in poverty. 700,000 children have been lifted out of poverty between 1998 and 2005. This is a reduction of 17%. The target was 25%.

Our questions: -

- What will it take to end child poverty?
- What will policies to end child poverty cost?
- Will current policies eradicate child poverty by 2020?
- What will happen if we don't end child poverty?

Central and East European migrants in low wage employment in the UK

For more details visit:

<http://www.jrf.org.uk/knowledge/findings/socialpolicy/0226.asp>

This research explores the employment of migrants from East and Central Europe in low-wage occupations - agriculture, construction, hospitality and au pair work - and what determines employer demand for migrant labour in these sectors. The study, conducted before and after enlargement of the EU on 1 May 2004, involved surveys and interviews with over 600 migrants and 500 employers.

Double Devolution: the renewal of local government

For more details visit:

<http://www.youngfoundation.org.uk/index.php?cat=113>

Geoff Mulgan and Fran Bury continue working on the future of local government, with the publication of the collection of essays 'Double Devolution: the renewal of local government' and the first of two events at 11 Downing Street.

The book makes the case for an ambitious programme of reorganisation of central, local and neighbourhood government structures and advocates the 'Double Devolution' of powers – from central government to local, and from local government to very-local.

The impact of education policies on primary school teachers' work

For more details visit:

http://www.policyhub.gov.uk/news_item/education_policies_teachers06.asp

On 9 May 2006, the Association of Teachers and Lecturers (ATL) published research (Coming full circle: the impact of New Labour's education policies on primary school teachers' work) which revisited 50 primary schools that were previously studied in the early '90s. The report illustrates that there have been more changes in teachers' attitudes and practices in the last 5 years than in the previous 20 years. Despite criticisms of over-prescription, the report demonstrates widespread endorsement by teachers and head teachers of the changes in teaching methods developed through the national literacy and numeracy strategies. Teaching methods have also been enhanced by ICT and the role of teaching assistants. Teachers perceive that the way in which they have responded to the reforms has contributed to their professionalism.

Obesity, diet and exercise

For more details visit: [www.cls.ioe.ac.uk/downloads/CLS_Briefing_Obesity\(2\).pdf](http://www.cls.ioe.ac.uk/downloads/CLS_Briefing_Obesity(2).pdf)

The Centre for Logitudinal Studies (CLS) is an ESRC Resource Centre responsible for three of Britain's birth cohort studies:

- 1958 National Child Development Study (NCDS)
- 1970 British Cohort Study (BCS70)
- Millennium Cohort Study (MCS)

In this briefing paper CLS are looking at obesity and the dietary and exercise habits of cohort members.

Land Economy

by Mischa Balen,
puts the case for redeveloping
agricultural land into a
combination of woodland, housing
and infrastructure.

For more details visit:

<http://www.adamsmith.org/>

The most radical change in land use in decades:

At the centre of that case is the fact that much agricultural land, including green belt land, is not particularly green: some of Britain's farmland has more intensive use of fertilizers and pesticides than anywhere else in the world. Modern farming techniques turn huge swathes of land into monoculture wastelands ugly to look at and providing no habitat for insect, bird or animal life.

Coupled with this is the fact that our planning system precludes development, even sympathetic development, and creates a restriction in supply for housing which excludes many would-be first time buyers from the market. People live longer, and more choose to live singly; when immigration is added in, a constant increase in demand occurs, but without a corresponding increase in supply. Mischa Balen calls for "the re-greening of England," with a radical proposal that some farms, including some greenbelt land, should be converted into a mixture of woodland and housing.

Work and Pensions Select
Committee Inquiry into Pensions
Reform
Submission by Institute for Public
Policy Research (IPPR)

For more details visit:

[http://www.ippr.org.uk/
publicationsandreports/
publication.asp?id=459](http://www.ippr.org.uk/publicationsandreports/publication.asp?id=459)

The Pension Commission's Second Report is an exhaustively researched, coherently argued and valuable contribution to the debate over the future of pensions provision in the UK. The Institute for Public Policy Research (IPPR) agrees with some of its recommendations, but disagrees with others. In this submission IPPR gives an exact account of its agreements and disagreements with the recommendations. Where it disagrees, it explains why, and gives details of its preferred alternative

Price: Free

Publication Date: 14 May 2006

EU Enlargement
Bulgaria and Romania - migration
implications for the UK

For more details visit:

[http://www.ippr.org.uk/
publicationsandreports/
publication.asp?id=457](http://www.ippr.org.uk/publicationsandreports/publication.asp?id=457)

This IPPR Fact File provides an independent analysis of the likely impact of Bulgarian and Romanian accession to the EU, paying particular attention to past enlargement experiences and examining the drivers for migration this time round. The report considers that there are potential benefits for both acceding and existing member states. For instance, through Bulgaria and Romania's adoption of EU policies on protection of the environment, and addressing issues of organised crime, drugs and irregular immigration, enlargement will spread peace, stability and prosperity to an additional 30 million people in eastern Europe.

Price: Free

Publication Date: 25 April 2006





Contents
Introduction
Publications
Think Tanks
Policy
New Policies

Conferences
Consultations
Forthcoming
Coming Up
Past Events
Contact Us

Policylink
Bulletin 12
June 2006

5

Policy Developments

Summary

Dec 2005

Commission issues Green Paper to tackle obesity

Further details available at:
<http://www.ofmdfmi.gov.uk/index/promoting-ni/onieb/brussels-current-bulletin/brussels-health-issues.htm>

The European Commission published a major Green Paper entitled 'Promoting healthy diets and physical activity: a European dimension for the prevention of overweight, obesity and chronic diseases' in December. The Green Paper is a response to the rising prevalence of obesity across Europe and the fact that unhealthy diets and lack of physical activity are leading causes of avoidable illness and premature death in the EU.

March 2006

European Social Rules for Road Transport

Further details available at:
<http://www.ofmdfmi.gov.uk/index/promoting-ni/onieb/brussels-current-bulletin/brussels-bulletin-transport.htm>

On 2 February the European Parliament and the Council adopted, separately, the agreement they had reached on the draft European legislation to improve driving times and rest periods for professional drivers and step up checks on lorries. These new rules bring the practices of the different EU Member States closer together and contribute to road safety.

April 2006

Free movement of workers?

Further details available at:

<http://www.ofmdfmi.gov.uk/>

[index/promoting-ni/onieb/](#)

[brussels-current-bulletin/](#)

[brussels-employment.htm#move-workers](#)

In February the Commission published a report on the functioning of transitional arrangements for the free movement of workers since the 2004 enlargement of the EU. Currently a total of 12 of the original EU15 Member States have imposed restrictions on the movement of workers from the eight new central and eastern European EU States - only the UK, Ireland and Sweden have not applied restrictions. Hungary, Poland and Slovenia have applied reciprocal restrictions to nations from EU15 Members States which have applied restrictions.

April 2006

2006: European Year of Workers Mobility

Further details available at:

<http://www.ofmdfmi.gov.uk/>

[index/promoting-ni/onieb/](#)

[brussels-current-bulletin/](#)

[brussels-employment.htm#worker-mobility](#)

In a separate development the Commission launched the European Year of Workers' Mobility in late February. The year aims to raise awareness and increase understanding of the benefits of working in a new country and/or occupation, as well as highlighting how the EU can help workers move. The Commission unveiled a job search website which provides information on around one million vacancies throughout the EU as part of the launch.





Contents
Introduction
Publications
Think Tanks
Policy
New Policies

Conferences
Consultations
Forthcoming
Coming Up
Past Events
Contact Us

Policylink
Bulletin 12
June 2006

6

Newly announced policies and strategies

Summary

3 April 2006

Rationalisation and centralisation of all NICS Generic Training

Contact Steve Hare by email at Steve.hare@dfpni.gov.uk

Provision of all generic training for all grades in all NI Departments will be centralised via an internal SSC

4 April 2006

Expansion of Pathways to Work pilots for people receiving incapacity benefits.

Contact: Jim Russell by email at Jim.russell@delni.gov.uk

Pathways to Work is a new and innovative approach to helping people receiving incapacity benefits engage with the labour market. Pilots began in 3 areas in October 2005. A second phase of expansion started in April 2006 and a third phase is planned by December 2006. By the end of the year the new service will be available to a third of annual new claimants in Northern Ireland.

8 May 2006 – Launch date
The New Strategic Direction for Alcohol and Drugs 2006-2011
Further details available at:
<http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/nsdad-execsummmmary-may06.pdf>

The New Strategic Direction for Alcohol and Drugs 2006-2011 contains a series of short, medium and long term outcomes in support of the overall aim to reduce the level of alcohol and drug related harm in Northern Ireland. It contains a number of Key Priorities, addresses two broad themes (Children, Young People & Families and Adults & General Public) and is supported by five pillars: -

- Prevention and early intervention;
- treatment and support;
- law and criminal justice;
- harm reduction and monitoring;
- evaluation and research.

These pillars reflect that there has to be a consistent, co-ordinated and above all integrated response to these issues.

May/early June 2006 - expected release date
Planning Policy Statement 15:
Planning and Flood Risk
Contact: John Davison by email at John.Davison@doeni.gov.uk

This Planning Policy Statement sets out the Department's planning policies to minimise flood risk to people, property and the environment. It embodies the Government's commitment to sustainable development and the conservation of biodiversity. It adopts a precautionary approach to development and the use of land that takes account of climate change and is supportive to the wellbeing and safety of people.

Early June - Date to be confirmed.
Announcement on the detail of the reliefs for domestic ratepayers to be introduced from April 07
Contact: Brian McClure by email at brian.mcclure@dfpni.gov.uk
<http://www.ratingreviewni.gov.uk/>

Further detail will be made available on the scope of the reliefs to be provided under the new capital value system and which will come into effect from April 2007. This will include the new rate relief scheme, which will provide assistance to those on low incomes and just above the housing benefit threshold. Information will also be provided on the operation of the transitional relief scheme, which will provide assistance to those most adversely affected by the move to the new system.

June 2006
Launch of Policy on Architecture and the Built Environment for Northern Ireland
Contact: Richard Lutton by email richard.lutton@dcalni.gov.uk

The Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure (DCAL) is leading an interdepartmental group in the development of government policy on Architecture and the Built Environment for Northern Ireland. It is intended that the policy will support commitment to the achievement of the highest standards of design in publicly funded construction projects.

Summer 2006

10-year overarching strategy for children and young people

Further details available at:

<http://www.allchildrenni.gov.uk/strategy.htm>

The strategy will set out what will be done across the Northern Ireland administration over the course of the next ten years to bring about improvements in the lives of Northern Ireland's children and young people. It is intended to be a high level framework, expressed in terms of a common vision, underlying values and principles, with a focus on high level outcomes for children and young people and effective measures and indicators of progress.

June/July 2006

Ministerial policy announcement following the Consultation Paper on "Liquor Licensing – The Way Forward"

Contact: Pat McAlister by email: Pat.mcalister@dndni.gov.uk

The proposals are designed to deregulate the law on liquor licensing and registered clubs by liberalising aspects of the system and removing unnecessary burdens. As a counterbalance stronger enforcement measures are proposed for the police and courts. Following completion of the Review of Public Administration, it is proposed to transfer responsibility for liquor licensing and clubs from the courts to district councils.

June/July 2006

Publication of final version of "Northern Ireland's Libraries: A Framework for Change"

Contact: David Polley by email at david.polley@dcalni.gov.uk

After consultation, rural proofing and EQIA, DCAL will launch the final version of the new policy framework for the library service. It is expected that this publication will shape the direction of the library service for the next 10-20 years.

July 2006

Launch of Raising Awareness Exhibition

Contact: Phillips Wilson by email phillips.wilson@dcalni.gov.uk

The Raising Awareness exhibition was designed by a sub-group of the Sign Language Partnership Group, a team led by one of the Group's deaf members. The Exhibition gives a brief history of British Sign Language and Irish Sign Language, some helpful signs and useful facts and figures. The exhibition will tour Government Departments before being displayed in public areas.





Contents
Introduction
Publications
Think Tanks
Policy
New Policies

Conferences
Consultations
Forthcoming
Coming Up
Past Events
Contact Us

Policylink
Bulletin 12
June 2006



Conferences and seminars coming up

Summary

Wednesday 7th June 2006
Waterfront Hall, Belfast

Creative Youth Partnerships
Conference

Contact David Mann by e-mail –
david.mann@dcalni.gov.uk

Creative Youth Partnerships is a three year initiative aimed at creating, developing and sustaining creative arts programmes for children and young people. The conference is a one day event for everyone interested in the exploration of creativity with children and young people including teachers, youth leaders and members of the arts community. It is a unique opportunity for delegates to network, collaborate and develop new creative synergies in what promises to be a truly engaging and celebratory experience.

7 to 9 June 2006 Europa Hotel,
Belfast

Xchange Conference 2006

Contact: Xchange by email at
xchange@deni.gov.uk
Further details available at:
www.xchange2006.com

The Xchange Conference 2006 builds on the successful Xchange 2005 event in Birmingham and provides a continuing international platform for debate, where the delegates' knowledge and successful experiences of ICT in schools can be collected and exchanged in a creative environment that seeks to explore and inform the relationship between policy, research and practice about learning. It is second of a series of four, hosted across the UK from 2005-2008. The next events are in Edinburgh and Cardiff in 2007 and 2008.

7 June 2006 07.45-10.00, IoD
Belfast, 4 Royal Avenue, Belfast

Oracle Executive Forum –
developments in shared services

Contact: Lorraine Corry by email
at lorraine.corry@iod.com

This interactive forum will address how organisations have implemented best practice shared service solutions and have successfully captured maximum efficiency and effectiveness benefits. Learn how the focus of the shared service centre of the future has moved from managing internal support functions into a key strategic tool for managing organisational change.

Free of Charge

8 June 12.30-14.15, Martha
Magee Room, University of Ulster,
Magee

1st Thursday on tour in Derry -
The University and the Economy
in the North West

Further details available at:
[www.iod.com/northernireland/
events](http://www.iod.com/northernireland/events)

This networking/discussion lunch will focus the development of third level education in the NW region and its contribution to economic development. Speakers are Prof Jim Allen of UU and David McAuley from DEL. The expansion and development of the Magee campus of the University of Ulster in the city is identified as a key objective of the Regeneration Plan recently published by Ilex, the urban regeneration company charged with transforming Derry/Londonderry.

Cost: £15 inc VAT and lunch.

8 June 2006, Council Chamber,
Queen's University, Belfast,
9.00 am to 4.30 pm

'Securing the Future'

Further details from
Robin@democraticdialogue.org

Second of four round tables organised by Democratic Dialogue and the Probation Board for Northern Ireland, addressing crime and justice issues – this time, retributive, rehabilitative and restorative models of justice.

8 - 9 June 2006, Bush Hotel,
Carrick-on-Shannon,
Co. Leitrim

Building a Sustainable Future
Conference

For further information and a full
programme please visit
www.greenbox.ie
or telephone Greenbox at
071 985 6998.

Ireland's first Eco Tourism Conference, which will be part-financed by the European Union, will be hosted by the GreenBox and Lá Nua Eco Housing Project.

Attendance is 85euro including lunch, 45euro for Greenbox Network Members and 45euro for the field trip on the 9th June.

28 June 2006 – 5.45pm (prompt)
CIPFA Headquarters, 3 Robert
Street, London WC2N 6RL
PMPA Lecture: Managing in a
Political Environment
Contact: Sandra Harper by
Tel. 020 7543 5679,
fax: 020 7543 5695 or by
email: info.pmpa@cipfa.org
To book online visit
www.pmpa.co.uk
All requests acknowledged.
Tea/coffee will be available from
5.00pm and the lecture will be
followed by a reception from
7.00pm to 8.00pm.

Leadership in a political environment is particularly complex because it has to be exercised at both a political and managerial level. The most effective public organisations are those where leadership at both levels is strong and the two work together harmoniously; where the balance of power is appropriate and well understood. Where the balance is wrong the relationship becomes dysfunctional and the relevant parties and the public suffer. Mass, immediate, global communication; tightening budgets; rising expectations; more transparent accountability and most important, growing public apathy and antipathy to the political process and politicians, what one might call the failure of representative democracy, means the job is getting more difficult. Cheryl Miller and Richard Penn will consider what evidence there is to support these contentions and, if true, what can be done about them.

30 June 2006, Causeway Hospital,
Coleraine

Northern Ireland Best Practice
Scheme.

Further details available at:
[www.bestpracticeni.gov.uk/
bpevents.htm](http://www.bestpracticeni.gov.uk/bpevents.htm)

Learning Activity hosted by Regional Supplies Service/Causeway Health and Social Services Trust. This event will give delegates the opportunity to look at how IT has been utilised to achieve an effective electronic stock management and requisitioning system, through partnership working. It is open to staff from the public sector and voluntary/community sectors and is free of charge.

Date and venue to be announced
Seminar for constituency and
advice centre workers on domestic
rating reform

Contact: Brian McClure by email at
brian.mcclure@dfpni.gov.uk
Further details available at:
<http://www.ratingreviewni.gov.uk/>

The purpose of the seminar will be to advise constituency and advice centre workers on the detail of the changes to be made to the domestic rating system from April 2007, prior to the publication of the new capital values from June this year.





Contents
Introduction
Publications
Think Tanks
Policy
New Policies

Conferences
Consultations
Forthcoming
Coming Up
Past Events
Contact Us

Policylink
Bulletin 12
June 2006



Current consultations

Consultation start date/period

The consultation continues until
30 September 2006

NI Community Festivals Policy and
Guidance Framework

Contact David Mann by e-mail
David.Mann@dcalni.gov.uk

Summary

The Community Festivals Fund was launched on 13 February 2006.
The policy will ensure:

- a co-ordinated approach that will not disadvantage smaller or emerging festivals;
- a clear and co-ordinated single source of advice for festival organisers on the availability of funding and support services and the criteria and timescales for accessing them;
- the co-ordinated collection of information on festivals and its use in evaluation; and
- capacity building and development for festivals building on existing strengths.

14 March - 9 June 2006.

Draft PPS 14 Sustainable
Development in the Countryside.

Contact: Jim Hetherington by email
at jim.hetherington@drdni.gov.uk
Further details available at:
[www.drdni.gov.uk/DRDwww_
regionalplanning/](http://www.drdni.gov.uk/DRDwww_regionalplanning/)

DRD is holding 6 meetings as part of the consultation exercise to hear views on draft PPS14. The meetings will be held in the evening during May in Cookstown, Enniskillen, Ballymena, Omagh, Banbridge and Limavady

30 March 2006 to 21 June 2006
Consultation on "Protect Life –
A Shared Vision"
The Northern Ireland Suicide
Prevention Strategy

Further details available at:
[http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/
showconsultations?txtid=15454](http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/showconsultations?txtid=15454)

On the 30th March 2006 the then Minister for Health, Shaun Woodward MP, announced the launch of a 12 week public consultation on the draft suicide prevention strategy for Northern Ireland "Protect Life – A Shared Vision". The strategy sets out a range of actions, aimed at the general population and those most at risk, to reduce the suicide rate.

31 March 2006 for 12 weeks
Draft Sub-Regional Transport Plan

Contact: srtp@drdni.gov.uk

The Sub-Regional Transport Plan (SRTP) is the last of three Transport Plans developed to assist in the delivery of the Regional Transportation Strategy 2002 – 2012 (RTS). The SRTP is concerned with the main towns and villages outside the Belfast Metropolitan Area and the rural areas. The purpose of the SRTP is to identify, on a local basis, what transport measures are required, where they should be located, and the improved outcomes that will result. Overall guidance, in terms of total spend and types of transport measures, has been provided by the RTS.

3 April 2006 to 14 July 2006
Coleraine Borough Houses in
Multiple Occupation
Subject Plan 2016 Issues Paper
Contact: John Coulter by email at
john.coulter@doeni.gov.uk

Further details available at:
[http://www.planningni.gov.uk/
AreaPlans_Policy/Plans/Coleraine/
default.htm](http://www.planningni.gov.uk/AreaPlans_Policy/Plans/Coleraine/default.htm)

The Coleraine Borough Houses in Multiple Occupation Subject Plan 2016 is a development plan being prepared by the Planning Service, an Agency within the Department of the Environment. As part of the preparation of the Subject Plan the Department published an Issues Paper on Monday 3rd April 2006, the aim of which is to promote debate on issues that are likely to influence the preparation and development of the Plan. The issues raised in the Paper, which are not exhaustive, include Housing Market and HMOs, Spatial Policy, Balanced Communities, Area Amenity and Physical Infrastructure.

21 April to July 2006
Draft housing Amendment
(NI) Order 2006

Further details available at:
[http://www.dsdni.gov.uk/index/
current_consultations.htm](http://www.dsdni.gov.uk/index/current_consultations.htm)

The draft Housing (Amendment) (Northern Ireland) Order 2006 and Explanatory Memorandum. The draft Order is intended to effect the transfer of responsibility for the Social Housing Development Programme from the Department for Social Development to the Northern Ireland Housing Executive.

8 May 2006 – 4 August 2006
The Draft Water Abstraction and
Impoundment (Licensing)
Regulations (Northern Ireland)
2006

Further details available at:
[www.doeni.gov.uk/foi/search/
details.asp?docid=3419](http://www.doeni.gov.uk/foi/search/details.asp?docid=3419)

The proposed Regulations will introduce controls over the abstraction and impoundment of water. These controls are necessary in order to meet the requirements of the Habitats and Water Framework Directives. The Regulations will make it unlawful to abstract or impound water unless authorised under the Regulations.

May to August 2006
Street cleansing vehicles
Contact: Adele Willis by email at
adele.willis@doeni.gov.uk

The aim of the Taxis (NI) Order 2006 is to have in one dedicated statute, the primary powers to deal with a wide range of matters relating to the regulation of taxi operators, drivers and vehicles in Northern Ireland. This follows a comprehensive review of taxi regulation that led to the extensive public consultation exercise carried out in 2005.

June 2006 – September 2006
Taxis (NI) Order 2006

Contact: John Brogan by e-mail at
john.brogan@doeni.gov.uk

Many organisations these days employ a large proportion of their workforce in the management of data and knowledge using IT. The cost of electricity is becoming a major expense in such 'data centre operations'. Fortunately, users do have options which can dramatically reduce electricity consumption both in operating and future planned data centres. This briefing seminar with APC – American Power Conversion – will explain what these options are FOC

Closing date for comments 30
June 2006

EQIA screening document relating
to the creation of the Shared
Service Centre for generic training.

Contact: Steve Hare by email at:
Steve.hare@dfpni.gov.uk

No unjustifiable adverse impact which could not be mitigated by normal NICS policies. Open for comment from interested parties until 30 June 2006.





Contents
Introduction
Publications
Think Tanks
Policy
New Policies

Conferences
Consultations
Forthcoming
Coming Up
Past Events
Contact Us

Policylink
Bulletin 12
June 2006



Forthcoming consultations

Late May 2006 to Late Sept 2006
Consultation on Revision of the
Northern Ireland Highway Code

Contact: Harry Green by
Tel. 02890 540073
www.roadsafetyni.gov.uk

The Department propose to issue the Consultation on revision and update of the Highway Code late May 2006 with a proposed deadline for replies by late Sept 2006.

Consultation period - end of May
2006 for 12 weeks
Ports Policy Review

Contact: Trevor Boyd by email
at Trevor.boyd@drdni.gov.uk

The Department for Transport is currently undertaking a review of ports policy for the United Kingdom, and hopes to issue a consultation paper by the end of May 2006. A short consultation paper focusing on issues specific to Northern Ireland will be published in parallel to supplement the UK consultation. It is likely that the consultation period will be twelve weeks.

Consultation period - end of May
2006 for 12 weeks

Proposal to make a Street Works
(Amendment)(Northern Ireland)
Order

Contact: Aileen Gault by email at
aileen.gault@drdni.gov.uk

The Department proposes to make a Street Works(Amendment) (Northern Ireland) Order that would consolidate and update street works legislation in Northern Ireland. The proposed amendments would broadly restore parity with corresponding legislation in England and Wales

12 week consultation period from June 2006

Environmental Impact Assessment (Agriculture) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2006

Contact: eia@dardni.gov.uk

A consultation on new EIA Regulations to subsume the current Uncultivated Land and Semi-Natural Areas EIA Regulations, to introduce new rural restructuring rules and to introduce changes arising from a review of the current regulations.

June 2006

Consultation on the transposition of Council Directive 2002/99 (animal health rules for the production, processing and distribution of products of animal origin for human consumption).

Contact: Colette McMaster by email at Colette.McMaster@dardni.gov.uk

This consultation will cover the legislative requirements necessary to implement Council Directive 2002/99 – known as Hygiene 4

June 2006

Preliminary consultation on the PEACE III Programme facilitated by the Special EU Programmes Body (SEUPB)

Further details available at: www.seupb.org

Preliminary public consultation at a number of venues throughout Ireland, north and south, during June 2006 with option of written or on-line input to the process.

June 2006

Preliminary consultation on the Cross Border Cooperation Programme facilitated by the Special EU Programmes Body (SEUPB)

Further details available at: www.seupb.org

Preliminary public consultation at a number of venues throughout Ireland, north and south, and Western Scotland, during June 2006 with option of written or on-line input to the process

June 2006

Clean Neighbourhoods

Contact: David Latimer by email at david.latimer@doeni.gov.uk

A preliminary consultation is due to be published in June 2006 to assist in the development of proposals aimed at improving the quality of the local environment. This will cover such issues as litter, dogs, nuisances and the use of fixed penalty notices.

Expected to commence June 2006

EU Regulation 1/2005 Welfare of Animals During Transport

Contact: John Terrington by email at
john.terrington@dardni.gov.uk

Consultation on new EU Regulation 1/2005 which comes into force in January 2007. The new Regulation aims to improve animal welfare by raising transportation standards and ensuring enforcement of those standards.

Expected to commence June 2006

Proposals for New Animal Welfare Legislation in Northern Ireland

Contact: John Terrington by email at
john.terrington@dardni.gov.uk

Consultation on proposals for new animal welfare legislation that takes account of the provisions of new animal welfare legislation for England and Wales. Amongst other issues, the consultation proposes enabling preventive action to be taken before suffering occurs and provides for stronger penalties for more serious breaches.

30 June 2006 – Consultation provisionally planned to commence for 3 months

The new District Council Good Relations Challenge Programme (part of the Shared Future Policy)

Contact: Community Relations Unit Tel 02890522658 or visit the website
www.asharedfutureni.gov.uk

A 3 month consultation exercise with Key Stakeholders is provisionally planned to begin on 30 June 2006 on the proposed new District Council Good Relations Challenge Programme.

Expected to commence June 2006

Consultation on a Proposal for a Draft Diseases of Animals Order

Contact: Jeffery Mc Watters by email at
jeffrey.mcwatters@dardni.gov.uk

Following consultation on proposed changes to animal health legislation between May and August 2004, consultation on the Proposal for a Draft Diseases of Animals Order (likely to commence in June 2006) will afford consultees a further opportunity to consider and comment on the detail of the proposed changes to primary legislation.

A 12 week consultation period is anticipated to take place June/July 06

Legislation to empower the Loughs Agency to licence aquaculture in the Foyle and Carlingford areas

Contact: Jackie McQuillan by email at
Jackie.mcquillan@dardni.gov.uk

A consultation on the legislation to empower the Loughs Agency to licence aquaculture in the Foyle and Carlingford areas. Aquaculture in Lough Foyle is currently operating unregulated.

Anticipated consultation period
June to August 2006

Consultation on a Bilateral Agreement Between UK and IRL on Mutual Recognition of Driving Disqualifications

Contact: Cathy Johnston by email at
cathy.johnston@doeni.gov.uk

The purpose of the Bilateral Agreement is to allow each administration to recognise and take action on the other's driving disqualifications, regardless of where the offences took place, as envisaged by the EU Convention on Driving Disqualifications.

June – September 2006
Draft Rates (Amendment)
(Northern Ireland) Order 2006

Contact: Brian McClure by email at
brian.mcclure@dfpni.gov.uk

<http://www.ratingreviewni.gov.uk/>

Legislation is already in place to allow the publication of capital values for domestic property in Northern Ireland, and the use of those values to calculate rate bills from April 2007.

This Order in Council will introduce further reforms to the rating system from April 2007. These include a new rate relief scheme for those on low incomes; transitional relief for those most adversely affected by the move to the new system; and a new valuation tribunal.

On the non-domestic side, the draft Order will include provisions to introduce farm diversification relief, relief for certain ATMs in rural areas, relief for quarry operators carrying out environmental friendly works and special easement from vacant rating for local enterprise agencies.

Expected to commence in Summer of 2006.

Consultation on draft legislation on the cessation of the functions of Enterprise Ulster

Contact: Malcolm Haigh by email at
Malcolm.haigh@delni.gov.uk

In March 2006, when announcing the outcome of the Review of Public Administration, the Secretary of State indicated that Enterprise Ulster is to be abolished. The Department is preparing draft legislation in order to formally dissolve and wind up the Corporation. Before proceeding to implement the draft legislation the Department will issue a consultation document seeking the views of interested parties.

Due to issue for consultation in Summer 2006

The Future of Pathology Services in Northern Ireland

Contact: Dreena Evans by email at
dreena.evans@dhsspsni.gov.uk

DHSSPS commissioned a review of clinical pathology laboratory services in Northern Ireland, aimed at providing the Department with a strategic plan for strengthening and developing effective, high quality clinical pathology laboratory services, responsive to the needs of patients and users.

The review examines the current provision of pathology services and makes recommendations for the future provision of these services. The Department intends to issue the report for consultation this summer.

Expected to issue Summer 2006

Sports Policy Framework and Strategy for NI, 2006 - 2016

Contact: Ciaran Mee by email at ciaran.mee@dcalni.gov.uk

DCAL, in partnership with the Sports Council, is developing a new Sports Policy Framework and Strategy for Northern Ireland. This will detail the vision and rationale for sport and establish key priorities and actions for the future development of sport in N.I. The overall aim will be to produce a 10 year Policy Framework/Strategy for Sport which reflects Government's policy and priorities for sport and with which key stakeholders can identify. DCAL is hoping to publish a draft Policy Framework for consultation in the summer.

July 2006

Consultation on implement OFFC Regulation 882/2004

Contact: Margaret Hood by email at Margaret.Hood@dardni.gov.uk

This consultation will cover the legislative requirement necessary to implement Regulation 882/2004 (Food and Feed Controls) in so far as it relates to animal health and welfare issues

Due to issue for public consultation July/August 2006. The period for consultation has yet to be decided
Control of Development in Airport Public Safety Zones

Contact: Emma Maguire by email at Emma.Maguire@doeni.gov.uk

This document will provide general information on Airport Public Safety Zones (PSZ) and set out updated planning guidance for the control of development in PSZs. It will also address the role of the airport operator and deal with compensation issues that may arise as a result of the guidance. PSZs currently exist at Belfast City and Belfast International Airports.

Mid July to mid September 2006
A Consultation on Draft Regulations Recovery of Health Services Costs in All Cases Involving Personal Injury Compensation

Contact: Stephen Popplestone by email at stephen.popplestone@dhsspsni.gov.uk

The draft Recovery of Health Services Charges (NI) Order 2006 should be laid at Westminster in May. It will introduce legislation allowing the current recovery of hospital costs scheme in respect of people injured in road traffic accidents to be extended to all accidents in respect of which personal injury compensation is paid. The Order will empower the making of regulations dealing with the details of the extended scheme and the consultation will be about their content.

An anticipated consultation is due to take place August 2006

European Fisheries Fund

Contact: Paddy Campbell by email at
paddy.campbell@dardni.gov.uk

The European Fisheries Fund (EFF) will be the new fund for EU fisheries grants from January 2007 to December 2013. The draft Northern Ireland Strategic Plan issued to industry for consultation on 7 April 2006 was to seek views on the NI strategic priorities for inclusion in the UK National Strategic Plan. Responses were due by 19 May 2006. It is anticipated the UK Operational Plan will issue for consultation by August 2006.

August 2006 - Consultation

Draft Banbridge, Newry and Mourne Area Plan 2015

Contact: John Coulter by email at
john.coulter@doeni.gov.uk
www.planningni.gov.uk

The Draft Banbridge and Newry and Mourne Area Plan 2015 is a development plan being prepared under the provisions of Part III of the Planning (Northern Ireland) Order 1991 by the Planning Service, an Agency within the Department of the Environment. Development plans inform the general public, statutory authorities, developers and other interested bodies of the policy framework and land use proposals that will be used to guide development decisions within the local area. Following publication of the Draft Area Plan there will be an eight week public consultation period through which representations / objections may be lodged. Later, there will be a public display of these representations / objections and a period of eight weeks in which to lodge counter objections.





Contents
Introduction
Publications
Think Tanks
Policy
New Policies

Conferences
Consultations
Forthcoming
Coming Up
Past Events
Contact Us

Policylink
Bulletin 12
June 2006

Policy reviews coming up

Summary

November 2005 – December 2006

Review of Inshore Fisheries Management in NI.

Contact: Eileen Sung by email at eileen.sung@dardni.gov.uk or Paddy Campbell by email at paddy.campbell@dardni.gov.uk

A review of inshore fisheries management in NI is being undertaken as part of DARD's contribution to the UK Fisheries Administrations' joint response (Securing the Benefits) to the Prime Minister's Strategy Unit report on UK Fisheries, Net Benefits.

The review will identify, evaluate and recommend options for the management of the inshore fisheries sector.

It is anticipated the group will consider various options for the management of the inshore sector and report to the Minister recommending a way forward

May 2006

Review of Less Favoured Areas (LFA) support policy.

Contact: Rosemary Agnew by email at rosemary.agnew@dardni.gov.uk

A review examining the rationale for the provision of support within Less Favoured Areas (LFA) and reviewing the current LFA Scheme in terms of its effectiveness against this rationale and the outcomes it delivers.

Early June 2006

5 Year Review of the Regional Development Strategy

Contact: Ian Raphael by email at Ian.raaphael@drdni.gov.uk

www.drdni.gov.uk/shapingourfuture

The Consultation document will set out the findings arising from the first 5 year review of the Regional Development Strategy (RDS) for Northern Ireland 2025. This includes a summary of progress on RDS implementation, the identification of new issues and proposed amendments to the RDS.

June 2006

Review of Higher Education in Further Education

Contact: Siobhan Logue by email at

Siobhan.logue@delni.gov.uk

This review will look at existing policy and processes in relation to higher education delivered in the further education sector. The main aim is to identify and implement improvements to the approval, quality assurance, funding and allocation of student numbers for Higher Education in Further Education courses.

June 2006

Final evaluation of DEL's Targeted Initiatives – Londonderry, Strabane, West Belfast and Gr. Shankill

Contact: Tom Hunter by email at Tom.hunter@delni.gov.uk

Targeted Initiatives have been operating in pilot form since 2003. They are testing innovative ways of helping those with barriers which are preventing them securing work. An interim evaluation was completed in 2005-06 and the final evaluation will focus on the effectiveness and performance of 3 key elements viz. Job Assist Centres; a Transitional Employment Programme, and the community based Stakeholder Forums.

June 2006

Evaluation of think / create / innovate: the regional innovation strategy for Northern Ireland'

Contact: Alistair Pyper by email at Alistair.pyper@detini.gov.uk

www.detini.gov.uk/thinkcreateinnovate

DETI have commissioned an external evaluation of the Regional Innovation Strategy, not only to assess the extent to which it has delivered against its actions and objectives, but also to assess the extent to which it has made a positive difference to the Northern Ireland R&D and innovation system and infrastructure. The evaluation will also contribute to the identification of the key priorities for Northern Ireland's R&D and innovation system during the period 2006-2010. An external review is to be commissioned on the effectiveness of DEL initiatives on Widening Participation in Higher Education to underrepresented groups. The review will inform the development and implementation of a NI regional strategy for widening participation.

July 2006

Review of Widening Participation in Higher Education

Contact: Siobhan Logue by email at

Siobhan.logue@delni.gov.uk

An external review is to be commissioned on the effectiveness of DEL initiatives on Widening Participation in Higher Education to underrepresented groups. The review will inform the development and implementation of a NI regional strategy for widening participation.

July 2006

Evaluation of "Developing a successful Social Economy 2004-07, NI Government's strategy for the Social Economy"

Contact: Alistair Pyper by email at Alistair.pyper@detini.gov.uk

DETI will commission an independent evaluation to assess the impact of the strategy on the Social Economy sector and to provide evidence to enable decisions to be taken on the future Social Economy policy in advance of March 2007





Contents	Conferences
Introduction	Consultations
Publications	Forthcoming
Think Tanks	Coming Up
Policy	Past Events
New Policies	Contact Us

11

Summary of key past events

Summary

2nd May 2006
Creative Industries Workshop
The Mount Conference Centre, Belfast.
Contact David Mann, Arts & Creativity Branch by
e-mail at David.Mann@dcalni.gov.uk

Representatives of all the Creative Industries sub-sectors participated together with sectoral organisations and the relevant government departments and agencies (DCAL, DETI, DEL and InvestNI).

The aim of the workshop was to seek the views of the sector, identify issues common to the diverse range of businesses and clarify what the sector feels are the priority actions for government to take forward.

This work was done in facilitated breakout groups which fed back to the plenary group and all participants had an opportunity to indicate their view on what the priority outcomes should be. The facilitators captured the discussions throughout the day and will produce a factual report on the findings.





Contents	Conferences
Introduction	Consultations
Publications	Forthcoming
Think Tanks	Coming Up
Policy	Past Events
New Policies	Contact Us



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