

**SUMMARY OF THE OFMDFM DEPARTMENTAL BOARD MEETING  
ON 3 FEBRUARY 2003**

**PRESENT:** Mr Haire, Mr Gray, Ms Bunting, Mr Grimason,  
Dr Smyth, Ms Flanagan, Mr McConnell, Mr McCartney,  
Mr Rooney.

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

**APOLOGIES:** Mr Hamilton, Mr Jardine, Mrs Angus.

**1. Minutes of Last Meeting**

The minutes of the Departmental Board meeting on 27 January 2003 were noted and agreed.

**2. Matters Arising**

The Board noted that the Team Briefing templates would be carried over to the meeting on 10 February and that the acceptance of gifts and hospitality was included on the agenda for today's meeting.

**3. Standing Items**

**a) Direct Rule including Assembly Issues**

Ms Flanagan updated Board members on the latest developments in relation to direct rule and Assembly issues and in particular prospects for a return to devolution.

**b) Staffing and Finance Issues**

Mr Haire's paper to Board members on flights to Great Britain was tabled for discussion as a separate agenda item (see item 5a).

**c) Information Issues**

Mr Grimason updated Board members on announcements planned for this week in relation to the reinvestment and reform initiative.

**d) Contingency Planning**

Mr Haire updated Board members on the latest developments in relation to contingency planning issues.

**4. Current Issues**

**a) PSG Away Day**

Mr Haire updated Board members on the Permanent Secretaries Group Away Day on 28 January. Mr Haire reported that the purpose of the Away Day was to look at the role, future direction and work programme of the Permanent Secretaries Group and outlined some of the main points arising from the day's deliberations. Mr Haire concluded by saying that it had been a useful get together with some further refinement work being carried out over the next few weeks.

**b) Acceptance of Gifts and Hospitality**

The Board discussed the Circular setting out the Guidelines on the Acceptance of Gifts and Hospitality, which was issued at the beginning of January with a cover note from Mr Hamilton. The Board noted a number of issues relating to the unique role of some parts of OFMDFM and the flexibilities contained in the Guidelines. It was recognised that keeping accurate records of gifts and hospitality was key to the successful operation of the Guidelines and that mediums such as the team brief should be utilised to remind staff of their importance.

## **5. Papers**

### **a) Flights to GB: Use of Business Class**

The Board discussed a paper circulated by Mr Haire that sought their views on making greater use of economy class flights to Great Britain. A wide range of points of view were raised covering issues such as maximising value for money, same day flights and the use of business lounges for business purposes. Mr Haire indicated that business travel arrangements were currently being reviewed and the views of Board members would be fed into that process. The Board agreed that the same arrangements should be made across all departments.

## **6. Tour de Table**

No additional issues were raised under Tour de table.

## **7. Any Other Business**

No other business was discussed.

## **8. Date of next meeting**

The next meeting of the Departmental Board will be on Monday 10 February 2003 at 10.45 am.

**Michael Ferguson**

4 February 2003.