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NORTH SOUTH MINISTERIAL COUNCIL

TOURISM SECTORAL FORMAT

FARMLEIGH, DUBLIN

1 APRIL 2009

JOINT COMMUNIQUÉ

The eighth North South Ministerial Council meeting in Tourism sectoral format was held in Farmleigh, Dublin on Wednesday 1 April 2009.

The Northern Ireland Executive was represented by Arlene Foster MLA, Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment and Michelle Gildernew, MP, MLA, Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development. The Irish Government was represented by Martin Cullen TD, Minister for Arts, Sport and Tourism.

Ministers received an update from the Chairperson, Mr Hugh Friel, on the work of the Tourism Ireland Board

Ministers noted Tourism Ireland's draft Business Plan for 2009, which is under consideration by sponsor Departments, in line with budgetary processes in the two jurisdictions. Both sponsor Departments will work together to finalise the Business Plan and bring it forward for approval at a future NSMC meeting.

Ministers considered a report on progress from Tourism Ireland's Chief Executive, Paul O'Toole, and noted that the worsening economic and travel environment will have a bearing on the final visitor numbers for the year.

The Council received a presentation on Tourism Ireland's review of European markets. The Ministers noted that following on from the review the key strategic approach will re-focus on and prioritise those source markets which offer the best potential for Ireland to increase visitor flows.

Council also considered a paper on Tourism statistics and:

welcomed the decision of the Central Statistics Office (CSO) to continue the Household Travel Survey on an updated basis;

noted the ongoing cooperation between the Northern Ireland Tourist Board and the CSO on the Northern Ireland Country of Residence Survey; and

noted the establishment of a new Tourism Statistics Liaison Group with representatives from tourism and statistical agencies from both jurisdictions and looked forward to being kept informed of the Group's work.

The Council noted Tourism Ireland's Annual Report and Accounts for 2007.

The Council accepted the resignation of Mr Tom McGrath from the Board of Tourism Ireland Limited and thanked him for his contribution to the work of the Board. It approved the appointment of Mr Howard Hastings as a Director.

Joint Secretariat
1 April 2009