



North South Ministerial Council
An Chomhairle Aireachta
Thuaidh Theas

North South Ministerial Council

2009 ANNUAL REPORT

Health

Aquaculture and Marine

Transport

Special EU Programmes

Food Safety

Language

Environment

Education

Tourism

Trade and Business Development

Inland Waterways

Agriculture

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The background features a series of overlapping, semi-transparent blue circles of varying shades, creating a sense of depth and movement. Diagonal lines in light blue and white are scattered across the upper portion of the image, adding a dynamic, geometric feel.

INTRODUCTION BY JOINT SECRETARIES

Introduction by Joint Secretaries

INTRODUCTION

We are pleased to report that in 2009 there were a number of significant developments in relation to the work of the North South Ministerial Council (NSMC).

A total of 30 NSMC meetings were held during 2009, including 3 Plenary meetings. In a period of unprecedented economic difficulty, the Plenary meetings in particular provided Government and Executive Ministers with an opportunity to exchange views on the respective measures they are implementing to promote growth and protect employment. Ministers also discussed the scope for future mutually beneficial co-operation in dealing with the economic downturn.

Throughout 2009, Ministers meeting in the framework of the North South Ministerial Council, co-operated and took action on a wide variety of issues of direct relevance to both jurisdictions. These included: the fight against Swine Flu; collaboration on the provision of cancer treatment services in the North West and paediatric cardiology on the island; infrastructure development including the major A5 and A8 Roads projects and the development of the Dublin/Belfast rail service; road safety including the co-ordinated introduction of lower blood alcohol levels in both jurisdictions; progress in the development of an all-island animal health and welfare strategy; the removal of illegally dumped cross border waste; co-operation on child protection and suicide prevention; tackling educational under-achievement and special education needs.

In addition, Ministers reviewed the work of the North South Implementation Bodies and Tourism Ireland Limited. They received reports from the Chairpersons, Vice-Chairpersons and Chief Executives of the Bodies on performance measured against targets set out in their Business and Corporate Plans. Ministers agreed the 2009 Business Plans and budgets, including efficiency savings, prepared on the basis of guidelines agreed by the Department of Finance and the Department of Finance and Personnel.



The Joint Secretariat in co-operation with the Royal Irish Academy and Armagh City and District Council held an event in Armagh on the occasion of the tenth anniversary of the North South Ministerial Council at which Sir George Quigley gave a lecture entitled “Ireland 2020”.

The provision of new accommodation for the NSMC Joint Secretariat in Armagh reached the concluding stages at the end of 2009 with the Joint Secretariat expected to re-locate to its new premises, built by Armagh City and District Council, during April 2010. We would like to thank the staff of Armagh City and District Council for their ever reliable support to the NSMC Joint Secretariat. We look forward to a strengthening of the partnership as we prepare to move to the new premises in 2010.

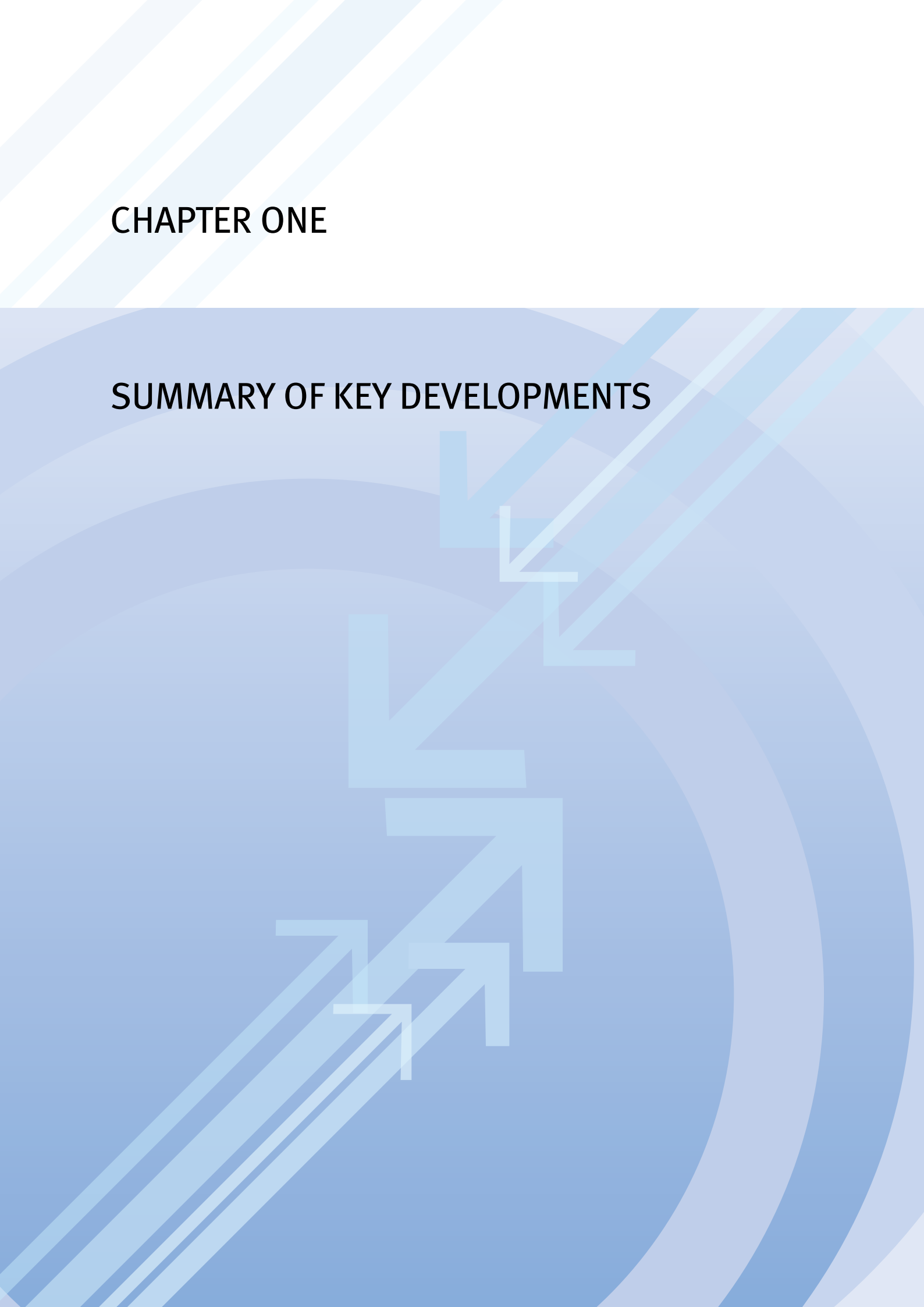
In conclusion we would also like to thank officials in the Northern Ireland Executive Departments, Irish Government Departments, the North South Bodies and the Joint Secretariat for their valued help and co-operation throughout the year.

Mary Bunting
Joint Secretary (North)

Tom Hanney
Joint Secretary (South)

CHAPTER ONE

SUMMARY OF KEY DEVELOPMENTS



CHAPTER ONE: Summary of Key Developments

BACKGROUND

1.1 This report covers the work of the North South Ministerial Council (NSMC) in the period January to December 2009. During the year there were 30 meetings of the NSMC – 3 in Plenary format, 2 in Institutional format and 25 in sectoral format. A full list of these meetings is available at Annex 1.

1.2 At these meetings, Ministers took important decisions relating to the work of the North South Implementation Bodies and Tourism Ireland Limited (the Bodies) and Areas for Co-operation. Full details of what was discussed, including matters relating to corporate governance in the Bodies and progress in the work programmes in the Areas for Co-operation, are contained in Chapters 2, 3 and 4.

WORK OF THE JOINT SECRETARIAT

1.3 In addition to preparing, organising and following up NSMC Plenary and Ministerial meetings, the Joint Secretariat has been actively involved in dealing with a range of substantive issues related to cross border mobility. These include the Border People website, cross border banking and pensions issues and welfare benefits for cross border workers. Further details of the Joint Secretariat's work on these issues are given in Chapter 3.

OUTREACH EVENTS

1.4 An important aspect of the work of the NSMC Joint Secretariat is to effectively communicate the activities of the NSMC. During the year, the Joint Secretariat responded to requests for briefings from a range of



Pictured at the special event held in Armagh on the occasion of the 10th anniversary of the establishment of the North South Ministerial Council are Noel Dorr, a former Secretary General of the Department of Foreign Affairs, deputy First Minister Martin McGuinness MP, MLA, Sir George Quigley who gave a lecture entitled "Ireland 2020" and the Mayor of Armagh City and District Council, Councillor Thomas O'Hanlon

visiting groups including students from the University of Notre Dame; the Minister for Public Services and senior officials from Kosovo; and the Chevening Fellows, a group of mid-career professionals from new democracies and developing countries ranging from Bangladesh to Vietnam.

1.5 The Joint Secretariat also maintains contact with a wide range of stakeholders relevant to its work, including the cross border partnerships, COMET, the Inland Waterways Association of Ireland, IBEC/CBI Joint Business Council, the Centre for Cross Border Studies and the International Centre for Local and Regional Development. The Joint Secretariat also liaises closely with officials in both administrations who are taking forward work on the North West Gateway Initiative.

1.6 A highlight of the year was a prestigious event held in Armagh on 2 December on the occasion of the tenth anniversary of the establishment of the North South Ministerial Council. The event was organised jointly by the Royal Irish Academy, Armagh City and District Council and the Joint Secretaries of the North South Ministerial Council. It included a lecture given by Sir George Quigley before an invited audience on the subject of "Ireland 2020", followed by a response from Mr Noel Dorr, a former Secretary General of the Department of Foreign Affairs in Dublin. Guests included deputy First Minister Martin McGuinness, MP, MLA.

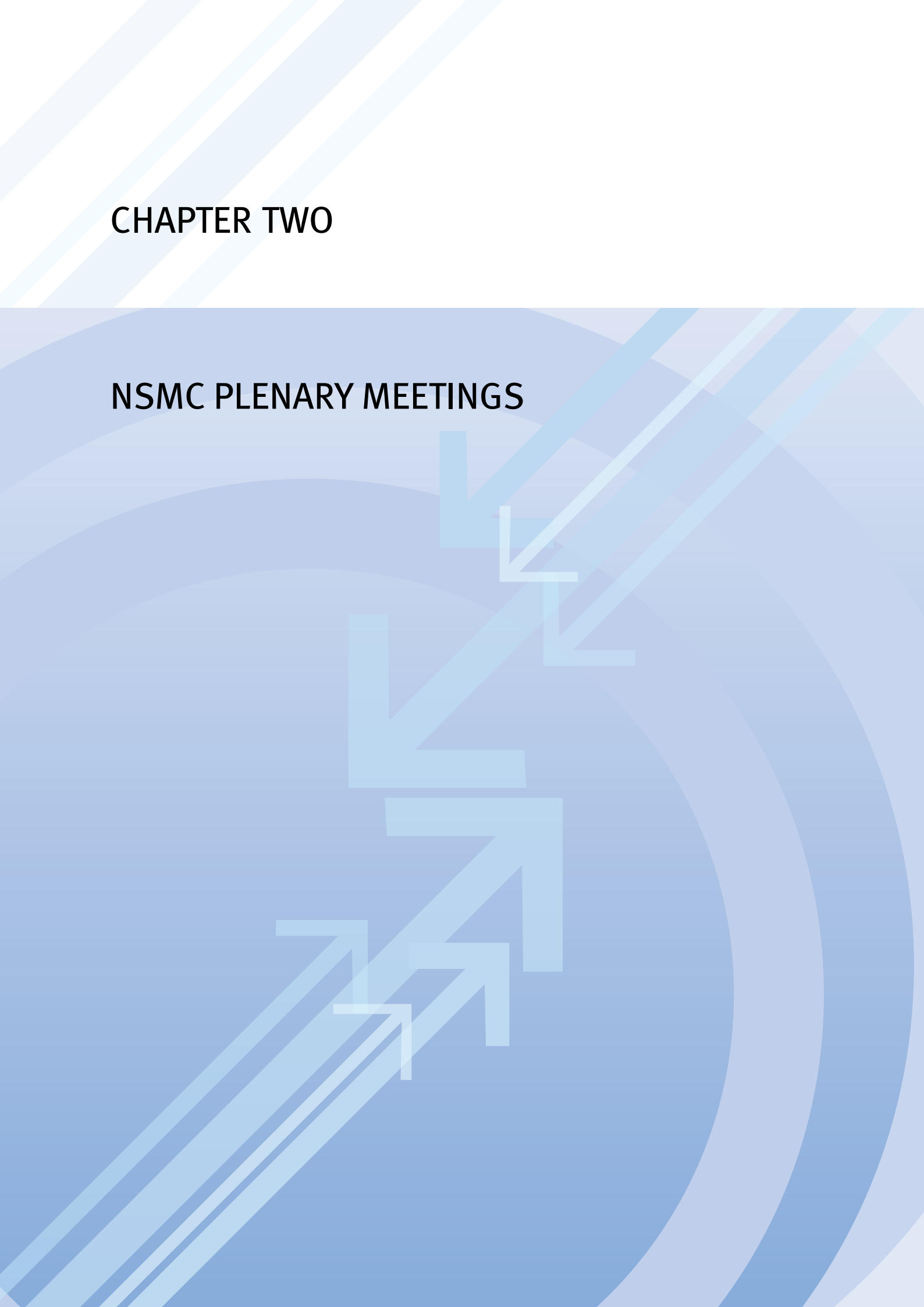
NSMC JOINT SECRETARIAT NEW ACCOMMODATION PROJECT

1.7 Excellent progress has been made in the construction of new, purpose-built, accommodation for the NSMC Joint Secretariat in Armagh. Construction of the new building started in June 2009 and is well advanced. It will be completed in March 2010 with staff moving in shortly afterwards. Armagh City and District Council is responsible for all construction costs and will lease the building to the NSMC Joint Secretariat. At the NSMC meeting in Institutional format on 11 November, Ministers agreed that, where practicable, future NSMC meetings will be held in the new accommodation. This should, in the longer term, represent a more cost effective use of resources.



CHAPTER TWO

NSMC PLENARY MEETINGS



CHAPTER TWO: NSMC Plenary Meetings



Pictured at the NSMC Plenary meeting in the University of Ulster at Magee on 23 January are deputy First Minister Martin McGuinness, MP, MLA, An Taoiseach Brian Cowen, TD, and First Minister the Rt Hon Peter Robinson, MP, MLA.

2.1 The NSMC met in Plenary format in January 2009 at the University of Ulster at Magee, in July 2009 at Farmleigh House, Dublin, and in December 2009 in Limavady. At each of these meetings the Irish Government delegations were led by the Taoiseach, Brian Cowen, TD, and the Northern Ireland Executive delegations were led by the First Minister, the Rt Hon Peter Robinson, MP, MLA and the deputy First Minister, Martin McGuinness, MP, MLA. The Joint Communiqués issued after each meeting are available at www.northsouthministerialcouncil.org.

2.2 At the meetings, Ministers discussed the economic downturn and its impact, particularly on the banking sectors in both jurisdictions. They also discussed the scope for future mutually beneficial North South co-operation to assist both administrations in their efforts to promote growth and protect employment.

JOINT SECRETARIES PROGRESS REPORT

- At the Plenary meetings Ministers took stock of developments in the various NSMC areas for co-operation on the basis of progress reports submitted by the Joint Secretaries. Key issues discussed which are covered in greater depth in Chapter 4, included:
- progress on the A5 and A8 road projects;
- work on mutual recognition of driving disqualifications and penalty points;
- the co-ordinated approach to the introduction of new lower blood alcohol limits; road safety strategies and cross-border enforcement;
- progress on a draft all-island Animal Health and Welfare Strategy;

- the impact of the animal feed contamination incident in both jurisdictions;
- cross border co-operation on child protection;
- the ten point all-island action plan on suicide prevention;
- close co-operation on dealing with the A/H1N1 outbreak (Swine Flu);
- the commencement of a Service Level Agreement between the Health and Social Care Board for Northern Ireland and Our Lady's Hospital Crumlin, Dublin, on the provision of paediatric congenital cardiac services;
- removal of illegally dumped waste;
- the Dublin/Belfast rail service;
- the impact of the collapse of the viaduct at Malahide and subsequent re-opening of the rail line;
- continued co-operation in Education including tackling educational underachievement, meeting special education needs including the development of the Middletown Centre for Autism; and
- progress on cross border mobility issues including the Border People website.

ST. ANDREWS AGREEMENT REVIEW

2.4 In December the Council noted that the St Andrews Agreement provided for a Review Group to report with recommendations to the North South Ministerial Council (NSMC) and that the Review Group intends to provide a final report to the next Plenary.

NORTH SOUTH CONSULTATIVE FORUM

2.5 The Council noted the Northern Ireland Executive's ongoing review of the Civic Forum and paragraph 22 of the St Andrews Agreement. It noted that the Irish Government submitted its proposals to the Northern Ireland Executive in September 2008 and that the Irish Government facilitated a consultative conference on 15 October 2009 with the participation of social partners and other civil society groups from across the island. The Council agreed to bring to an early conclusion discussions on the North South Consultative Forum.

NORTH SOUTH PARLIAMENTARY FORUM

2.6 The Council noted that the establishment of this Forum is a matter for the Oireachtas and the Northern Ireland Assembly. Paragraph 21 of the St Andrews Agreement was noted as was the proposal by the Speaker of the Northern Ireland Assembly to hold a North South Parliamentary Conference.

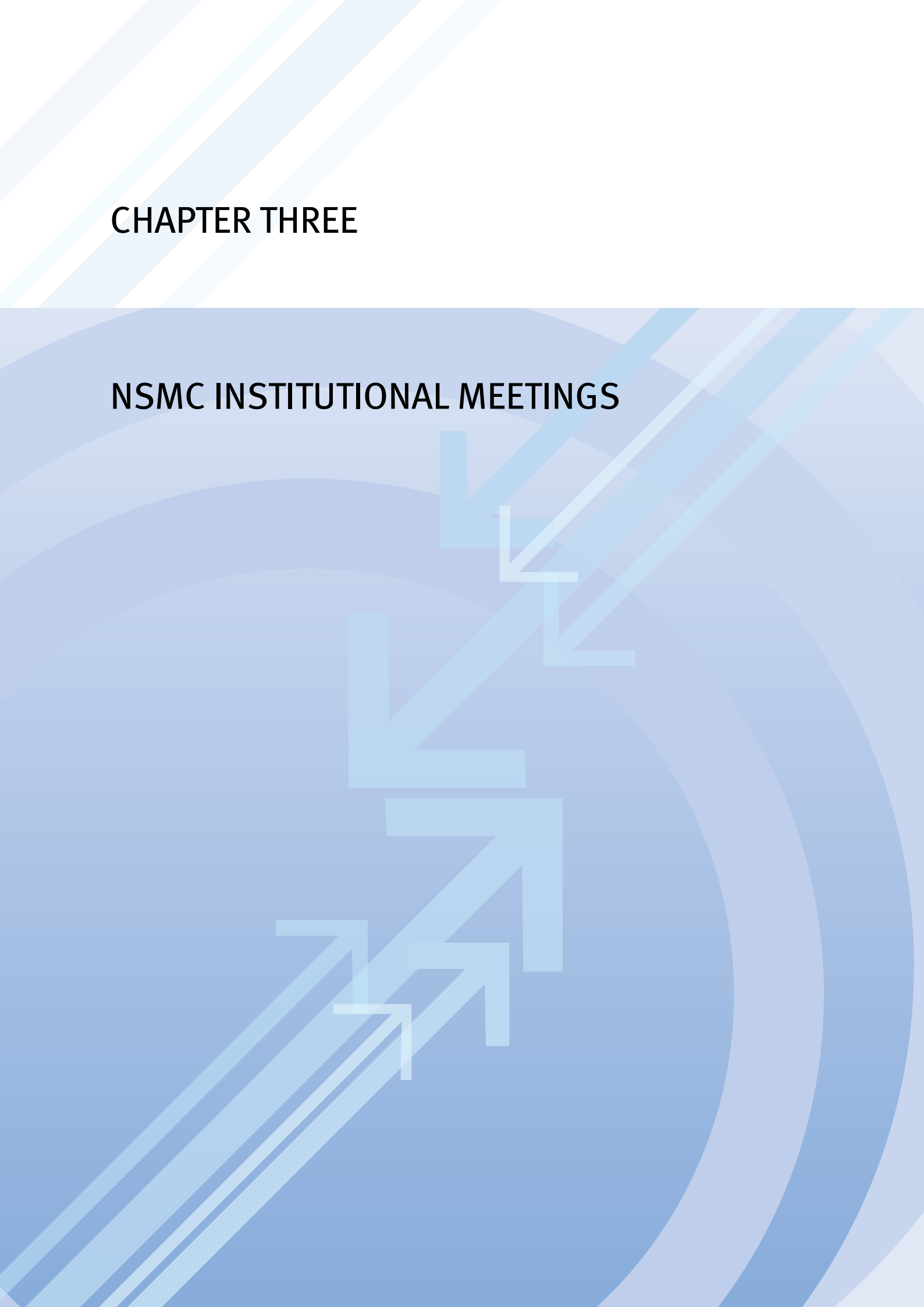
SCHEDULE OF FUTURE MEETINGS

2.7 At each Plenary the Council considered and agreed a schedule of future meetings.



CHAPTER THREE

NSMC INSTITUTIONAL MEETINGS



CHAPTER THREE: NSMC Institutional Meetings



Pictured at the NSMC meeting in Institutional format on 28 April are deputy First Minister Martin McGuinness, MP, MLA, Minister for Foreign Affairs Micheál Martin, TD, First Minister the Rt Hon Peter Robinson, MP, MLA, and Junior Minister Jeffrey Donaldson, MP, MLA.

3.1 The NSMC met twice in Institutional format - in Farmleigh House, Dublin on 28 April and in Stormont Castle on 11 November. Minister for Foreign Affairs Micheál Martin, TD, First Minister the Rt Hon Peter Robinson, MP, MLA, the deputy First Minister Martin McGuinness, MP, MLA, and Minister for Social Development Margaret Ritchie, MLA, attended both these meetings. Junior Minister Jeffrey Donaldson, MP, MLA, attended the April meeting and Junior Minister Robin Newton, MLA, attended the November meeting.

CROSS BORDER MOBILITY

3.2 Cross border mobility issues have been an important subject for discussion at Institutional meetings. Ministers have considered matters that effect people's ability to move across the border, in either direction, to work, study or live.

BORDER PEOPLE WEBSITE

3.3 The Council welcomed the progress made in the development, marketing and management of the Border People website www.borderpeople.info which provides access to high quality public service information for people who cross the border to live, work or study. The website is attracting approximately 10,000 visits per month and funding for the further development of the website for the 3-year period 2009-2011 has been secured under INTERREG IVA. A marketing strategy for the website targeted specific events in the border region at Halloween and Christmas.

CROSS BORDER BANKING

3.4 Ministers noted the positive outcome of discussions held with a wide range of interested groups, including business and consumer organisations and the main banking institutions on the issue of cross-border banking charges. These discussions have resulted in the

publication, for the first time, of a detailed comparative table of the cost of typical cross-border transaction charges on the Border People website and the transparency which this now provides for consumers. Many of the banking groups have either implemented, or are in the process of implementing, new IT platforms which can result in reduced cross border transaction fees. In addition, the implementation of the EU Single European Payments Directive and the EU Payment Services Directive should reduce the costs of cross-border transactions in the future.

PENSIONS

3.5 Ministers noted that a number of possible options had been identified on the transfer of pension rights on a cross-border basis. However, given the cost implications and the current economic climate, the Council agreed that reciprocal membership arrangements of the Transfer Network and the Transfer Club pension schemes in the respective jurisdictions is not a viable option at this time. A plan is in place to inform teachers about changes in pension arrangements for those teachers who wish to transfer to work in the other jurisdiction. As a first step, an information seminar will be held with the main teachers' Trade Unions.

NORTH SOUTH BODIES' ISSUES

3.6 Ministers discussed a range of issues relating to the Bodies including the implementation of cumulative efficiency savings in their 2009 and 2010 budgets and agreed other cost saving measures. The Council was also advised of a range of human resource issues relating to the Bodies.

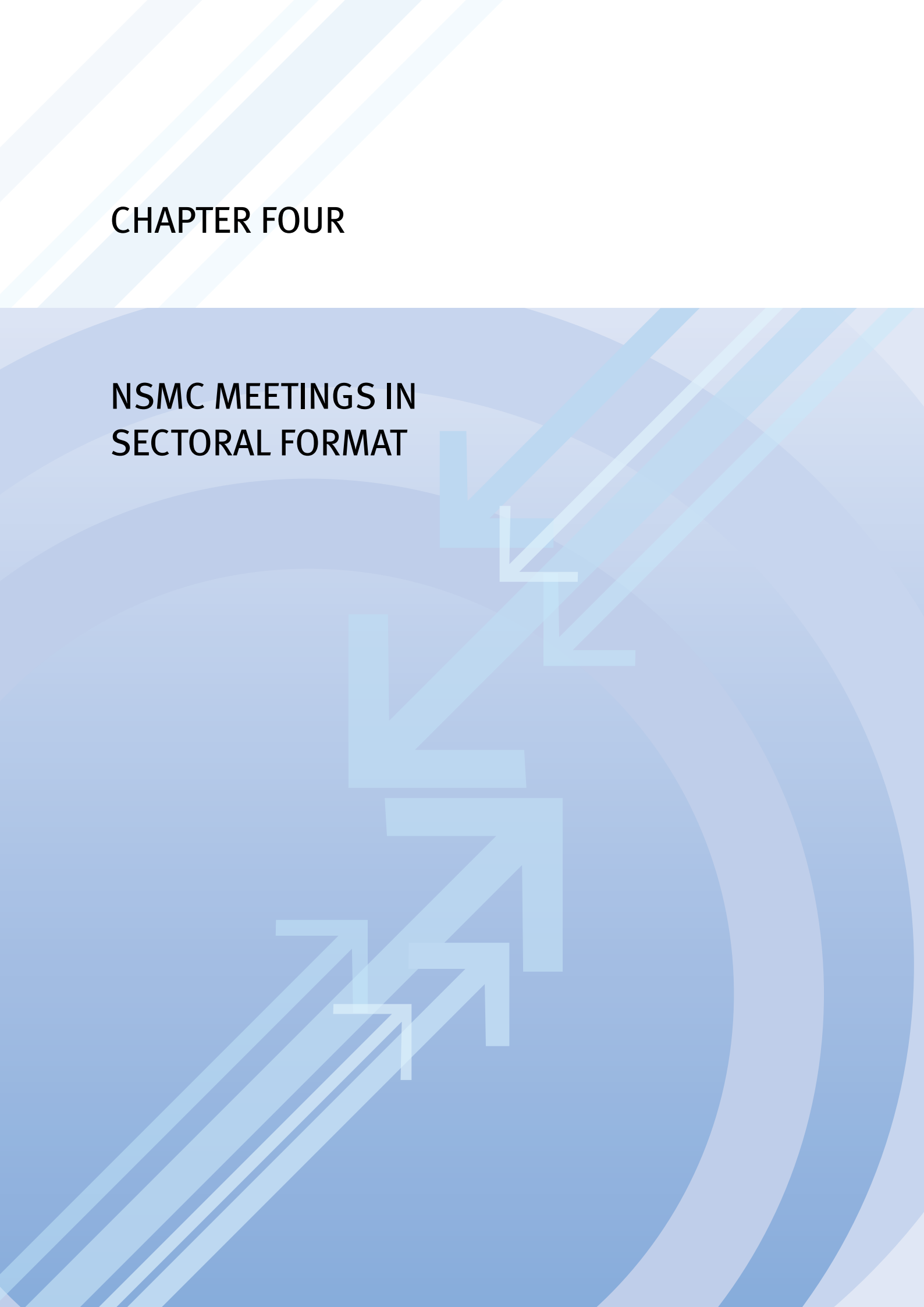
EU MATTERS RAISED WITHIN NSMC

3.7 Ministers had a broad discussion on co-operation on EU matters. They noted the work on EU related matters in the relevant NSMC Areas for Co-operation. These included developments in Agriculture, Aquaculture and Marine and Special EU Programmes.



CHAPTER FOUR

NSMC MEETINGS IN SECTORAL FORMAT



Introduction

This chapter provides a summary of NSMC meetings in sectoral format in 2009. The Joint Communiqués from these meetings are available at www.northsouthministerialcouncil.org.

Agriculture



Pictured at the NSMC meeting in Agriculture sectoral format on 20 March are Sammy Wilson, MP, MLA, Minister of the Environment, Michelle Gildernew, MP, MLA, Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, and Brendan Smith, TD, Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Food.

4.1.1 The NSMC met in Agriculture sectoral format in Dublin on 20 March and on 18 November and in Greenmount on 21 July. Brendan Smith, TD, Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Food and Michelle Gildernew, MP, MLA, attended all three meetings. Sammy Wilson, MP, MLA, Minister of the Environment attended the March meeting. Edwin Poots, MLA, Minister of the Environment attended the July meeting as did Éamon Ó Cuív, TD, Minister for Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs. Robin Newton, MLA, Junior Minister, Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister attended the November meeting.

ANIMAL FEED CONTAMINATION

4.1.2 Ministers took note of the discussion at the NSMC Plenary meeting on 23 January 2009 of the animal feed contamination incident in 2008 and its impact on farmers and producers across the island. It was agreed to continue to work closely together in completing the measures the Irish Government and the Northern Ireland Executive have put in place to tackle the matter. It was also agreed to strengthen cooperation in dealing with major incidents of this nature and officials were

requested to review and, if necessary, revise the existing arrangements.

ALL-ISLAND ANIMAL HEALTH AND WELFARE STRATEGY

4.1.3 Progress on the delivery of the draft All-Island Animal Health and Welfare Strategy was noted, as was the fact that work is in hand to finalise arrangements for a cross-border stakeholder consultation event in the early part of 2010.

PLANT HEALTH AND PESTICIDES

4.1.4 Ministers received a presentation by the Plant Health and Pesticides Steering Group of its report on the joint strategic approach to plant health and pesticides. The report has identified a significant number of areas of mutual interest that would benefit from an agreed framework for co-ordination and delivery. It was agreed that the Steering Group should develop a work programme for consideration at a future NSMC meeting in Agriculture sectoral format.

CHAPTER FOUR: NSMC Meetings in Sectoral Format

COMMON AGRICULTURE POLICY (CAP) & WORLD TRADE ORGANISATION (WTO)

4.1.5 Developments on implementation of the CAP Health Check Agreement, the future of the CAP and WTO, the challenges facing the agriculture sector, in particular in relation to greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets and the current situation of the dairy industry were discussed. The Council requested officials to remain in close contact on these issues and report developments to a future NSMC meeting in Agriculture sectoral format.

RURAL DEVELOPMENT

4.1.6 The Council welcomed the positive impact of co-operation on the 2000-2006 EU Programmes for the cross-border rural economy including the creation of 80 new rural enterprises and assistance to 600 enterprises through the Rural Development measure of INTERREG IIIA. The Council also welcomed the opening for applications of the Rural Development sub-theme of the EU INTERREG IVA Programme and the approval of a PEACE III project which seeks to address issues of sectarianism and racism in a rural context and the allocation of funding for co-operation projects, including cross border projects, under the LEADER elements of the two Rural Development Programmes 2007-13.

RURAL RESTRUCTURING PRESENTATION

4.1.7 At the July meeting the International Centre for Local and Regional Development provided Ministers with an informative presentation on its study on rural restructuring which considers the impact and future of rural restructuring policy and practice.

Education



Pictured at the NSMC meeting on 20 May are Sir Reg Empey, MLA, Minister for Employment and Learning, Cairtriona Ruane, MLA, Minister for Education and Batt O’Keeffe, TD, Minister for Education and Science.

4.2.1 The NSMC met in Education sectoral format in Middletown on 20 May and in Dublin on 25 November. Batt O’Keeffe, TD, Minister for Education and Science, Cairtriona Ruane, MLA, Minister for Education and Sir Reg Empey, MLA, Minister for Employment and Learning attended both these meetings.

EDUCATIONAL UNDER-ACHIEVEMENT

4.2.2 The Council received a presentation from education practitioners on approaches to the integration of newcomer children in schools and the challenges they face were discussed. Ministers noted and welcomed the continued co-operation across the island on this issue. The progress made on a joint publication on best practice in the teaching of literacy and numeracy in schools in disadvantaged areas was noted and it was agreed that the focus of an all-island Children’s Book Week, to be held in 2010, should be primarily on children with little or no tradition of reading at home, those with little access to reading materials and those at risk of falling behind.

SCHOOL YOUTH AND TEACHER EXCHANGES

4.2.3 Ministers welcomed the closer liaison between the professional development services for teachers in both jurisdictions relating to in-service education for teachers in Irish medium education. It was also noted that further exchanges are planned for the 2009-2010 school year between the Inspectorates of both Departments of Education aimed at supporting the continuing development of inspection practice in both jurisdictions.

4.2.4 Ministers noted the progress made to date on developing a framework for a proposed joint programme for the future management and funding of educational exchanges. They also noted the ongoing engagement between the two Departments and the North South Exchange Consortium and the Centre for Cross Border Studies.

TEACHER QUALIFICATIONS

4.2.5 A presentation was made by the Co-Chairpersons of the Standing Committee on Teacher Education North

CHAPTER FOUR: NSMC Meetings in Sectoral Format

and South (SCoTENS) outlining its teacher education work to Ministers who also noted the report of the 2009 annual conference.

EDUCATION FOR CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL EDUCATION NEEDS

4.2.6 Ministers also welcomed the continuing progress of the services available at the Middletown Centre for Autism and the success of the Autistic Spectrum Disorders Conference held on 13 November 2009 on Enabling Communication.

4.2.7 At the NSMC Plenary Meeting in December 2009, the Council welcomed the decision by the Irish Government to lift the pause on capital funding for the Middletown Centre for Autism. The Council further noted that the Minister for Education and Science and the Minister for Education propose to prepare an updated phased multi-annual plan for the future development of the Centre in conjunction with the Board.

EUROPEAN STUDIES PROJECT

4.2.8 A presentation was made to Ministers on the activities, achievements and future plans of the European Studies Project. The overall aim of the European Studies Project is to encourage co-operation between participating students and staff and to contribute to educational development in the wider dimension of the European Community through informing students about current social, economic and political issues and structures at national and European level.

Environment



Pictured at the NSMC meeting in the Environment sector held on 30 October are John Gormley, TD, Minister for the Environment, Heritage and Local Government, Margaret Ritchie, MLA, Minister for Social Development and Edwin Poots, MLA, Minister of the Environment.

4.3.1 The NSMC met in Environment sectoral format on 20 March in Dublin and on 30 October in Armagh. John Gormley, TD, Minister for the Environment, Heritage and Local Government and Margaret Ritchie, MLA, Minister for Social Development attended both meetings. Sammy Wilson, MP, MLA, Minister of the Environment attended the March meeting and Edwin Poots, MLA, Minister of the Environment attended the October meeting.

EU WATER FRAMEWORK DEVELOPMENT

4.3.2 The continuing progress on implementation of the EU Water Framework Directive in relation to shared waters was welcomed by Ministers. A consultation exercise was undertaken on draft River Basin Management Plans for the three cross-border international river basin districts – the North Western, the Neagh Bann and the Shannon. The plans are due to be finalised early in 2010. The focus will then move from the planning phase to implementing the programmes of measures which will be required in order to achieve the objectives of the Directive. A jointly

funded Strategic Environment Assessment was carried out in parallel with the management plans to evaluate the environmental consequences of the plans and programme of measures and to consult with the public in this regard.

ENVIRONMENTAL DATABASES AND RESEARCH

4.3.3 The Environmental Protection Agency and the Northern Ireland Environment Agency presented proposals to Ministers, which were agreed, for the development of a common set of environmental indicators for publication in 2011. The indicators will facilitate the assessment of trends for key environmental areas including air, climate, water, land, biodiversity and waste. The two agencies are also working on a joint environmental research paper which will be brought to Ministers in 2010 and in this regard the agencies are exploring the scope to maximise access to EU funding for environmental research, including the Seventh Framework Programme (FP7) and INTERREG.

CHAPTER FOUR: NSMC Meetings in Sectoral Format

WASTE MANAGEMENT IN THE CROSS BORDER CONTEXT

4.3.4 At both meetings Ministers reviewed progress on work aimed at effecting the repatriation of illegally dumped cross-border waste. A Framework Agreement was endorsed by the Environment Ministers in June 2009 relating in the first instance to the removal of illegally dumped waste at the two priority sites, at Slattinagh, Co. Fermanagh and near Trillick, Co. Tyrone. This will form the basis for action on the remaining 18 sites. Work on these two sites is expected to commence in 2010. The Council welcomed the joint concerted enforcement actions that are continuing to target shipments of waste and noted that future action is planned.

RECYCLABLE MATERIAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

4.3.5 Ministers also welcomed the reconstituted North South Market Development Steering Group which includes representatives from the business and the non-governmental sectors, established to drive forward a market development programme for recyclable material. The Group is seeking to exploit economies of scale in the market for such materials in both jurisdictions with its initial focus on priority waste streams including organics, food waste, domestic waste plastics, construction and demolition waste. Ministers also had an opportunity to share views on policy developments on other waste issues including plastic bags and chewing gum.

Health



Pictured at the NSMC meeting held on 25 November are Michelle Gildernew, MP, MLA, Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, Michael McGimpsey, MLA, Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety and Mary Harney, TD, Minister for Health and Children.

4.4.1 The NSMC met in Health sectoral format in Dublin on 10 June and in Belfast on 25 November. Mary Harney, TD, Minister for Health and Children, Michael McGimpsey, MLA, Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety and Michelle Gildernew, MP, MLA, Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development attended both meetings. Barry Andrews, TD, Minister for Children and Youth Affairs also attended the June meeting.

H1N1 PLANNING

4.4.2 Ministers received progress reports on Swine Flu planning and preparedness and welcomed the range of co-operation and sharing of information and planning on Swine Flu between officials and Ministers in both jurisdictions and the structures that are in place for co-ordination on issues of mutual concern, which had served well to date.

CHILD PROTECTION

4.4.3 Ministers welcomed progress on the implementation of an NSMC Plenary decision to develop a work programme to intensify co-operation

on Child Protection. They also received updates on the work of the cross-border Child Protection Group and its sub groups including the exchange of information on internet safety and social networking sites; the work towards establishing a joint protocol on children in care, or on the child protection register, that go missing; and children moving across the border, where there are concerns; the progress in developing a joint draft communication strategy and leaflets with advice on what to do if worried about a child, and on safer recruitment procedures for employers; the work towards greater co-operation on child protection research and knowledge transfer and the hosting of a successful vetting and barring conference on 11 November. The continuing collaborative work within both jurisdictions on the management of sex offenders was also welcomed.

CANCER RESEARCH

4.4.4 Ministers reviewed continuing co-operation on cancer research, welcomed the extension into Northern Ireland of a Trinity College Dublin project on the human papilloma virus and the setting up of an all-island gene

CHAPTER FOUR: NSMC Meetings in Sectoral Format

library. They also welcomed ongoing clinical trials and research at local, cross-border and international levels and noted progress in planning for the establishment of a biobank for medical research in both jurisdictions while recognising the challenge of advancing these plans in the current economic climate.

HEALTH PROMOTION

4.4.5 Ministers discussed the priorities for health promotion on the basis of a paper prepared by the Institute of Public Health and agreed that future priorities for co-operation will take account of feasibility and sustainability.

SUICIDE PREVENTION

4.4.6 The Council welcomed the broad range of co-operation on suicide prevention including the launch of revised media guidelines and the removal of border area roaming charges by O2 to the Crisis Response Helpline.

PAEDIATRIC CONGENITAL CARDIAC SERVICES

4.4.7 The Council welcomed the commencement of a Service Level Agreement between the Health and Social Care Board and Our Lady's Children's Hospital in Crumlin, Dublin to support provision of paediatric congenital cardiac services.

RADIOTHERAPY

4.4.8 Ministers noted the projected timetable for the development of a new sub regional radiotherapy centre at Altnagelvin Hospital and welcomed the establishment of a cross border sub group to advise on care pathways for the new facility taking account of capacity for patients from County Donegal

EU FUNDING FOR HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE SERVICES

4.4.9 The Council welcomed the award by the Special European Union Programmes Body of £24 million (circa €30 million) for health and social care services under the INTERREG IVA Programme. The project will be managed jointly by both Health Departments and delivered on their behalf by Co-operation and Working Together (CAWT).

Tourism



Minister of Enterprise Trade and Investment, Arlene Foster, MLA, welcomes a group of German travel agents to Parliament Buildings.

4.5.1 Tourism Ireland Ltd is responsible for marketing overseas the island of Ireland as a tourist destination. Tourism Ireland has a Board of 12 members appointed by the NSMC. The Chairperson and Vice Chairperson of the Board are Mr Hugh Friel and Ms Ciara Boyle respectively. The current Board members are listed in Annex Three. The Chief Executive of Tourism Ireland is Mr Niall Gibbons. Further details are available at www.tourismireland.com

NSMC MEETINGS

4.5.2 The NSMC met in Tourism sectoral format in Dublin on 1 April and in Clogher on 16 December. Martin Cullen, TD, Minister for Arts, Sport and Tourism and Arlene Foster, MLA, Minister of Enterprise Trade and Investment attended both meetings. Michelle Gildernew, MP, MLA, Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development attended the April meeting while Junior Minister Gerry Kelly, MLA, attended the December meeting.

4.5.3 At these meetings Ministers received updates on the work of Tourism Ireland and the very difficult global economic conditions which had a negative impact

on tourism performance in 2009. They discussed the conclusions of Tourism Ireland's review of European Markets and noted that the key strategic approach will re-focus on and prioritise those source markets which offer the best potential for Ireland to increase visitor flows. They also discussed Tourism Ireland's review of the Great Britain market including the ten point Action Plan which is designed to ensure that visitor numbers from Great Britain return to growth in the short term.

4.5.4 Ministers welcomed the decision of the Central Statistics Office to continue the Household Travel Survey on an updated basis, noted the ongoing cooperation between the Northern Ireland Tourist Board and the Central Statistics Office and the Northern Ireland Country of Residence Survey as well as the establishment of a new Tourism Statistics Liaison Group with representatives from tourism and statistical agencies in both jurisdictions.

4.5.5 The outgoing Chief Executive of Tourism Ireland, Mr. Paul O'Toole, was thanked for his work and Ministers welcomed the appointment of Mr. Niall



CHAPTER FOUR: NSMC Meetings in Sectoral Format

Gibbons as his successor. They also accepted the resignation of Mr. Tom McGrath from the Board of Tourism Ireland, thanked him for his contribution to the work of the Board and approved the appointment of Mr. Howard Hastings as a Director.

BUSINESS PLAN AND BUDGET

4.5.6 The Council noted that Tourism Ireland had applied efficiency savings to its 2009 Budget in accordance with guidance issued by the two Finance Departments. The 2009 Business Plan was approved and the Council recommended the 2009 budget provision of £55.652m (€71.349m) for Tourism Ireland.

Transport



Pictured at the launch of the jointly supported car sharing website for the North West region are Conor Murphy, MP, MLA, Minister for Regional Development and Noel Dempsey, TD, Minister for Transport.

4.6.1 The NSMC met in Transport sectoral format in Larne on 3 April and in Burt on 4 November. Noel Dempsey, TD, Minister for Transport and Conor Murphy, MP, MLA, Minister for Regional Development attended both meetings. Sammy Wilson, MP, MLA, Minister of the Environment attended the April meeting and his successor as Minister of the Environment, Edwin Poots, MLA, attended the November meeting

4.6.2 At the meetings, Ministers noted and welcomed the opportunity to discuss cross-border co-operation in relation to Strategic Transport Planning and Road Safety.

ROADS

4.6.3 Ministers noted the continued progress on the A5 (Aughnacloy to the North West) and A8 (Belfast-Larne) road projects and that contractor/designers were expected to be appointed for both projects by late Autumn 2009 and that a payment of €9m was made by the Minister for Transport to the NI Consolidated Fund in accordance with the agreed procedure. The extensive works in progress to upgrade the A4 between Dungannon and Augher were noted; also noted was

a route selection report already completed for the N16 Manorhamilton to Glencar Scheme (16km) which is with the National Roads Authority for approval. Ministers also discussed the proposals contained in the Department for Regional Development Investment Delivery Plan for Roads to provide bypasses of Enniskillen and Fivemiletown and noted the publication of the report on the 'Analysis of Need for Upgrading the N16/A4 Route', commissioned jointly by Fermanagh District Council and Sligo County Council.

ROAD SAFETY

4.6.4 Among roads safety issues covered, Ministers noted the background and the current position on new lower drink driving limits in both jurisdictions and agreed that the potential for a co-ordinated approach to the introduction of new limits should be explored. They also discussed the current position on road deaths in each jurisdiction and noted the Declaration made to the EU in relation to bilateral application of the Convention on the Mutual Recognition of Driving Disqualifications between the UK and Ireland which will become operational in late January 2010.

CHAPTER FOUR: NSMC Meetings in Sectoral Format

4.6.5 Progress was reviewed on the existing road safety strategies and on a new strategy for Northern Ireland. Ministers also reviewed continuing cooperation between the two jurisdictions in the areas of advertising and publicity, research and enforcement. They also noted the publication by the Department of Transport of the National Cycle Policy Framework as a follow up to the Smarter Travel policy and also that the Department for Regional Development, through its TravelWise initiative, actively promotes walking, cycling, public transport and car sharing to businesses, commuters and schools.

SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT

4.6.6 Ministers noted that the Department for Regional Development has initiated a review of the Regional Transportation Strategy to ensure more sustainable transport arrangements and that it has produced a report setting out greenhouse gas emissions from transport. They also noted that officials are engaging positively on the sustainable transport agenda and are progressing initiatives that underline the all-island dimension.

4.6.7 The Council was informed that a jointly supported car sharing website for the North West region was operational and was expected to be launched formally before Christmas.

BRIDGES

4.6.8 Ministers noted that Monaghan County Council has appointed a contractor to undertake the replacement of two bridges on the Tyrone Monaghan border and work should be completed in Winter 2010. They also noted that Louth County Council is continuing to undertake a further appraisal of the proposed Narrow Water Bridge project.

FREIGHT FORUM

4.6.9 Following the publication by InterTradeIreland of the study “Freight Transport Report for the Island of Ireland”, the Council agreed at the April meeting that the Department of Transport and the Department for Regional Development should co-operate in organising a Freight Forum. At the December meeting it was noted that, as a first step in organising a Freight Forum, the relevant Departments will jointly organise a meeting of key stakeholders in the freight sector in early December 2009 to identify priority issues for consideration by the Forum. These priority issues are to be considered in depth by working groups comprising representatives of key stakeholders and persons with an interest in promoting a sustainable freight sector throughout the island.

COMMUNITY BASED RURAL TRANSPORT

4.6.10 The Council noted that work is continuing on a community based rural transport pilot in the Fermanagh/Cavan border area in line with the agreed project plan/schedule, that the Departments are satisfied the outcomes will be relevant to consideration of cross-border transport and social inclusion issues and looked forward to a full report being presented to a future NSMC meeting.

RAIL

4.6.11 Ministers discussed progress on the Dublin/Belfast rail link. They noted the position on the Malahide Viaduct collapse and agreed that both companies, Iarnród Éireann and Northern Ireland Railways, will continue to work to recover passenger numbers after the re-launch of the service. They also agreed that the financial implications of the proposals to improve the reliability of trains on the line be reviewed with a view to putting in place a reconfigured fleet as soon as possible.

Aquaculture and Marine



Pictured at the NSMC meeting in Aquaculture and Marine sectoral format on 20 July are Conor Lenihan, TD, Minister of State for Natural Resources, Eamon Ryan, TD, Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources, Michelle Gildernew,, MP, MLA, Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, Ian Titterington, Deputy Director CAFRE and Junior Minister Robin Newton, MLA

BACKGROUND

4.7.1 The NSMC meets on Aquaculture and Marine matters in order to take decisions on policies and actions to be implemented by the Foyle Carlingford and Irish Lights Commission (FCILC). The FCILC has a Board of 12 members appointed by the NSMC which exercises the functions of the Body in relation to the Foyle and Carlingford areas through the Loughs Agency. The Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson of the Board are Mr Tarlach O Crosain and Ms Jacqui McConville respectively. The current Board members are listed in Annex Three. The Chief Executive of the Loughs Agency is Mr Derick Anderson. Further details are available at www.loughs-agency.org.

NSMC MEETINGS

4.7.2 The NSMC met in Aquaculture and Marine sectoral format in Carlingford on 30 April, in Greenmount on 20 July and in Dublin on 18 November. Eamon Ryan, TD, Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources, Conor Lenihan, TD, Minister of State for Natural Resources and Michelle Gildernew, MP, MLA,

Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development attended all three meetings. Junior Minister Jeffrey Donaldson, MP, MLA attended the April meeting and Junior Minister Robin Newton, MLA, attended the meetings in July and November.

PROGRESS REPORTS AND PRESENTATIONS

4.7.3 Ministers received progress reports from the Chairperson and the Chief Executive on the work of the Loughs Agency. These included implementation of its Marine Tourism Development Strategy through the roll out of the projects supported by INTERREG IV and a report on the proactive water quality assessment programme being undertaken by the Agency in the Foyle and Carlingford catchments. Ministers noted that this science-led approach has proved very beneficial to the Agency in conserving and protecting the inland fisheries of Foyle and Carlingford. They also welcomed the Agency's ongoing collaboration with industry partners and other agencies as well as its engagement with stakeholders in carrying out its work.

CHAPTER FOUR: NSMC Meetings in Sectoral Format

4.7.4 Reports were given to Ministers on the successful delivery of angling development events and on the delivery of the Marine Monitoring Vessel, the Ostrea, with the support of EU Financial Instrument for Fisheries Guidance Funding.

4.7.5 Ministers also received a report on a joint research project commissioned by the Loughs Agency and conducted with Queen's University, Belfast and the Marine Institute into the genetic population structure of Foyle salmon and stock composition of the commercial fishery. They noted that the science partnerships established during this project have played a leading role in the development of a major Europe-wide research project on the use of genetic techniques to identify origins of salmon caught at sea (SALSEA).

LOUGHS AGENCY REGULATIONS

4.7.6 At the meetings, five sets of regulations required for the conservation and protection of the fisheries in the Foyle and Carlingford areas were approved. These include the Foyle Area and Carlingford Area (Licensing of Fishing Engines) (Amendment) Regulations 2009; the Foyle Area (Control of Oyster Fishing) (Amendment) Regulations 2009; the Foyle Area and Carlingford Area (Conservation of Eels) Regulations 2009; the Foyle Area and Carlingford Area (Angling) (Amendment)

Regulations 2009; the Foyle Area and Carlingford Area (Coarse Angling) Regulations 2009.

EMERGENCY REGULATIONS

4.7.7 The Council agreed that, in emergency situations, it is appropriate that the Loughs Agency be facilitated in taking prompt action where necessary and approved for a period of one year a procedure for the approval of emergency regulations.

SALMON FISHERMEN'S COMPENSATION SCHEME

4.7.8 Following on from an earlier decision, Ministers noted the completion of the delivery of the Hardship Package for the rationalisation of commercial salmon fishing.

BUSINESS PLAN AND BUDGET

4.7.9 The Council noted that the Foyle, Carlingford and Irish Lights Commission had applied efficiency savings to its 2009 Budget in accordance with guidance issued by the two Finance Departments. The 2009 Business Plan was approved and the Council recommended the 2009 budget provision of £5.1817m (€6.643m) for the Foyle Carlingford and Irish Lights Commission.

Food Safety



Pictured at the launch of the Demonstration Programme of Community Food Initiatives, funded by safefood, are (L to R) Martin Higgins, Chief Executive, safefood, John Dardis, Chairman, safefood Advisory Board, Dr Michael McBride, Northern Ireland's Chief Medical Officer and Marjo Moonen, Chair, Healthy Food for All.

FOOD SAFETY PROMOTION BOARD

BACKGROUND

4.8.1 The NSMC meets on Food Safety matters to take decisions on policies and actions to be implemented by the Food Safety Promotion Board (FSPB). FSPB operates under the brand identifier "safefood". It has an Advisory Board of 12 members, appointed by the NSMC, principally charged with promoting food safety and supporting scientific co-operation between institutions working in that field. Mr John Dardis and Mr Campbell Tweedie are Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson of the Board respectively. The current Board members are listed in Annex Three. The Chief Executive of safefood is Mr Martin Higgins. Further details are available at www.safefood.eu.

NSMC MEETINGS

4.8.2 The NSMC met in the Food Safety sectoral format in Dublin on 10 June and in Belfast on 25 November. Mary Harney, TD, Minister for Health and Children, Michael McGimpsey, MLA, Minister of Health, Social Services

and Public Safety and Michelle Gildernew, MP, MLA, Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development attended both meetings. Barry Andrews, TD, Minister for Children and Youth Affairs also attended the June meeting.

4.8.3 At these meetings the Ministers received Progress Reports from the Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson and Chief Executive. These included progress made on the development of an Obesity Action Forum, the range of promotional activities undertaken by safefood including a campaign in collaboration with the Irish Heart Foundation and the Northern Ireland Chest Heart and Stroke Foundation to raise awareness on reducing dietary salt.

ENTERIC REFERENCE SERVICE

4.8.4 A presentation on proposals for the development of an enteric reference service for the island of Ireland was made to Ministers. They noted the Sponsor Departments' recommendation that, given current public expenditure conditions, safefood should not commission an economic analysis and should defer any further work on the development of enteric reference services.

CHAPTER FOUR: NSMC Meetings in Sectoral Format

SCIENTIFIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE

4.8.5 Ministers noted that the term of office of the current Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC) was to expire on 31 December 2009 and expressed their thanks to the outgoing members. They noted safefood's proposal for a revised structure for the incoming SAC and that nominations for the new SAC will be brought forward for consideration at a future NSMC meeting.

BUSINESS PLAN AND BUDGET

4.8.6 The Council noted that the Food Safety Promotion Board had applied efficiency savings to its 2009 Budget in accordance with guidance issued by the two Finance Departments. The 2009 Business Plan was approved and the Council recommended the 2009 budget provision of £7.664m (€9.826m) for the Food Safety Promotion Board.

Inland Waterways



Pictured at the official opening of Waterways Ireland's Headquarters Building in Enniskillen are, from left to right, Michelle Gildernew, MP, MLA, Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, Gregory Campbell, MP, MLA, Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure, John Martin, Chief Executive, Waterways Ireland. Éamon Ó Cuív TD, Minister for Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs.

WATERWAYS IRELAND

BACKGROUND

4.9.1 Waterways Ireland is responsible for the management, maintenance, development and restoration of the inland navigable waterway systems throughout the island, principally for recreational purposes. It is currently responsible for the following waterways: Barrow Navigation, Erne System, Grand Canal, Lower Bann Navigation, Royal Canal, Shannon-Erne Waterway and Shannon Navigation amounting to approximately 1,000km of navigable waterways. Waterways Ireland is also responsible for the restoration of the section of the Ulster Canal between Clones and Upper Lough Erne and, following restoration, for its management, maintenance and development. The Chief Executive of Waterways Ireland is Mr John Martin. Further details are available at www.waterwaysireland.org

NSMC MEETINGS

4.9.2 The NSMC met in Inland Waterways sectoral format in Enniskillen on 16 January, in Gaoth Dobhair on 9 July and in Belfast on 2 December. Éamon Ó Cuív, TD, Minister for Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs attended all of these meetings. Gregory Campbell, MP, MLA, Minister of Culture Arts and Leisure and Michelle Gildernew, MP, MLA, Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development attended the January meeting. Nelson McCausland, MLA, Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure and Caitriona Ruane, MLA, Minister for Education attended the July meeting. Minister McCausland, and Conor Murphy, MP, MLA, Minister for Regional Development, attended the December meeting.

4.9.3 At each of the meetings, Ministers received a progress report from the Chief Executive on the activities of Waterways Ireland. They noted that between January and October 2009, Waterways Ireland has provided an additional 99 metres of public moorings on the waterways and of the construction of the remaining bridge to reconnect the Royal Canal to the Shannon.

CHAPTER FOUR: NSMC Meetings in Sectoral Format

NEW HEADQUARTERS

4.9.4 The official opening of the new Waterways Ireland Headquarters building in Enniskillen took place in January 2009 and was performed by Gregory Campbell, MP, MLA, Éamon Ó Cuív, TD, and Michelle Gildernew, MP, MLA. The new building received a sustainability award in 2009 from the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors.

MARKETING

4.9.5 Ministers welcomed the continuation of Waterways Ireland's marketing activities with the provision of new publications to promote and support the use of the waterways as well as the sponsorship of key events in 2009.

ULSTER CANAL

4.9.6 They also reviewed progress on the restoration of the Clones to Upper Lough Erne Section of the Ulster Canal and noted that the Strategic Environment Assessment is due to be completed before the end of 2009 and the Environmental Impact Assessment is due to be completed in July 2010 and that possible routes and options are being reviewed.

SHANNON

4.9.7 Ministers received a presentation on Waterways Ireland's activities on the Shannon waterway and noted that since 2000 Waterways Ireland has increased the number of moorings there by over 50% and increased the number of vessels on the Shannon by over 120%. The Council also discussed the severe flooding experienced along the Shannon where unprecedented levels of water were recorded.

ROYAL CANAL

4.9.8 The Council received a presentation on the restoration of the Royal Canal. The Council noted the successful enhancement of the Royal Canal to further develop access to the waterways and waterside activities and to complete its connection to the Shannon.

PROPERTY DISPOSALS

4.9.9 At the meetings Ministers agreed a number of property disposals in the context of a range of development proposals on the waterways.

BUSINESS PLAN AND BUDGET

4.9.10 The Council noted that Waterways Ireland had applied efficiency savings to its 2009 Budget in accordance with guidance issued by the two Finance Departments. The 2009 Business Plan was approved and the Council recommended the 2009 budget provision of €43,080,000 (£33,600,000) for Waterways Ireland.

Language



Nelson McCausland, MLA, Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure and Éamon Ó Cuív, TD, Minister for Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs pictured at the North South Ministerial Council Meeting, in Language sectoral format on 9 July.

THE NORTH SOUTH LANGUAGE BODY (AN FORAS TEANGA/THA BOORD O LEID)

BACKGROUND

4.10.1 The Language Body comprises two separate agencies – The Irish Language Agency/Foras na Gaeilge, and the Ulster-Scots Agency/Tha Boord O Ulstèr-Scotch. The Agencies promote the Irish language and Ulster Scots language and culture, respectively. The Board of the Language Body is appointed by the NSMC. The Chairperson of Foras na Gaeilge is Mr Liam Ó Maoilmhichíl. During 2009 Mark Thompson resigned as the Chairperson of Tha Boord O Ulstèr-Scotch. Ministers thanked him for his work and appointed Mr John Hunter as his replacement. Mr Ó Maoilmhichíl and Mr Hunter are joint Chairpersons of the Language Body.

4.10.2 There are 15 other members on the Board of Foras na Gaeilge and 7 other members on the Board of Tha Boord O Ulstèr-Scotch. These are listed in Annex Three. Mr Ferdie Mac an Fhailigh is the Chief Executive of Foras na Gaeilge and Ms Hazel Campbell is the

Interim Chief Executive of Tha Boord O Ulstèr-Scotch. Further details are available at www.forasnageilge.ie and www.ulsterscotsagency.com

NSMC MEETINGS

4.10.3 The NSMC met in Language sectoral format on 16 January in Enniskillen, on 9 July in Gaoth Dobhair and on 2 December in Belfast. Éamon Ó Cuív, TD, Minister for Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs attended all of these meetings. Gregory Campbell, MP, MLA, Minister of Culture Arts and Leisure and Michelle Gildernew, MP, MLA, Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development attended the January meeting. Nelson McCausland, MLA, Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure and Caitriona Ruane, MLA, Minister for Education attended the July meeting. Minister McCausland and Conor Murphy, MP, MLA, Minister for Regional Development, attended the December meeting.

4.10.4 Ministers received progress reports at these meetings which referred to, inter alia, the ongoing collaboration between Foras na Gaeilge and the Ulster Scots Agency which included a series of lectures on

CHAPTER FOUR: NSMC Meetings in Sectoral Format

“Aspects of our shared heritage”, the completion of a film in Irish about the Ulster-Scots language and culture to be broadcast on TG4 and joint stands at various events e.g. National Ploughing Championships and the Tall Ships event in Belfast. Other projects implemented by the Agencies included FÓN, a learning from new technology project, which won an European Award for Languages, “The Language Label”, on 26 September 2009 and the launch of a new Ulster-Scots Agency Website on 15 October 2009.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE SCHEME

4.10.5 Ministers agreed an amended Financial Assistance Scheme for the Ulster-Scots Agency which affords opportunities for a range of groups and individuals to draw financial support from the Agency for a range of Ulster-Scots activities.

REVIEW OF CORE FUNDING

4.10.6 The Council also welcomed the Foras na Gaeilge review of its core-funded organisations and agreed that core-funding of the Irish language voluntary sector by Foras na Gaeilge be reconfigured to ensure a

more effective, streamlined and cost effective approach to funding of the sector.

ANNUAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTS

4.10.7 Ministers noted that the 2005 Accounts for the North/South Language Body have been cleared formally by both C&AGs and will be signed imminently, after which they will be laid in the respective Houses at a time to be agreed between the Sponsor Departments and also noted that progress is being made in regard to the Annual Reports and Accounts for the years 2006, 2007 and 2008. They also asked for a further progress report at the next NSMC meeting in Language sectoral format.

BUSINESS PLAN AND BUDGET

4.10.8 The Council noted that the North/South Language Body had applied efficiency savings to its 2009 Budget in accordance with guidance issued by the two Finance Departments. The 2009 Business Plan was approved and the Council recommended the 2009 budget provision of £3,433,800 (€4,401,860) for the Ulster-Scots Agency and €20,300,540 (£15,834,421) for Foras na Gaeilge.

Special EU Programmes



Pictured are Finance Ministers Sammy Wilson, MP, MLA and Brian Lenihan, TD.

SPECIAL EU PROGRAMMES BODY (SEUPB)

BACKGROUND

4.11.1 The mission of the SEUPB is to effectively manage and implement funding programmes on behalf of the two Governments and the European Union aimed at delivering social and economic improvements to the people in Northern Ireland and Ireland through cross border, transnational and inter-regional cooperation. The Chief Executive of the SEUPB is Mr Pat Colgan.

4.11.2 The SEUPB is the Managing Authority for the EU Programme for Peace and Reconciliation (PEACE III) and the INTERREG IVA Programme. It is also responsible for monitoring and promoting the Common Chapter, the strategic framework for cross-border co-operation across a broad range of sectors agreed between the two Governments. The Body is also responsible for the North South elements of the Community Initiatives (LEADER +, URBAN II, and EQUAL) in Ireland and Northern Ireland.

SEUPB will also support North/South participation in INTERREG IVB Transnational Programmes and the INTERREG IVC Interregional Programme. Further details are available at www.seupb.org.

NSMC MEETING

4.11.3 The NSMC met in Special European Programmes sectoral format on 8 September in Dublin. Brian Lenihan, TD, Minister for Finance, Sammy Wilson, MP, MLA, Minister for Finance and Personnel and Junior Minister Gerry Kelly, MLA, attended this meeting.

4.11.4 At the meeting Ministers received a progress report from the Chief Executive on the activities of the Special EU Programmes Body. This referred to the PEACE II and INTERREG IIIA Programmes having met all of their annual expenditure targets up to 2007, the SEUPB having put implementation structures in place to provide practical advice to potential project applications to INTERREG IVB and IVC and the progress made on

CHAPTER FOUR: NSMC Meetings in Sectoral Format

the development of the PEACE Network to share the experiences of PEACE funding.

PEACE III

4.11.5 Ministers noted progress made on PEACE III programme implementation. Projects approved have a combined budget of €155.9 million. Ministers also noted that the first 55 projects under Theme 1.2, Acknowledging and Dealing with the Past, with its special focus on victims and survivors have been approved. Ministers also noted that the SEUPB has proactively engaged with underrepresented groups, including the Protestant community, to ensure that all communities participate fully in the programme.

4.11.6 The approval of 14 Local PEACE Action Plans from Local Authority clusters with a combined allocation of over €55m was also noted by Ministers who looked forward to their implementation.

INTERREG IVA

4.11.7 Ministers noted that to date the INTERREG IVA Programme (Northern Ireland/Ireland/Scotland) has approved 34 projects worth €150.9 million and all projects approved are in a position to spend money in line with their letter of offer agreements. Approved projects include Project Kelvin, an ICT infrastructure initiative to enhance broadband connectivity in the North West that has received €30 million. The Council also noted the full participation of local authority based groups in the Programme and Scotland's full participation in the Programme. To date 13 projects with Scottish partners have been approved.

BUSINESS PLAN AND BUDGET

4.11.8 The Council noted that the SEUPB had applied efficiency savings to its 2009 Budget in accordance with guidance issued by the two Finance Departments. The 2009 Business Plan was approved and the Council recommended the 2009 budget provision of £2,930,000 (€3,750,000) for the SEUPB.

Trade and Business Development



InterTradelreland Chairperson David Dobbin and Chief Executive Liam Nellis pictured at the Economic Forum in June at Farmleigh House, Dublin.

BACKGROUND

4.12.1 The Trade and Business Development Body known as InterTradelreland was established to exchange information and co-ordinate work on trade, business development and related matters, in areas where the two administrations specifically agree it would be in their mutual interest. InterTradelreland has a Board of 12 members appointed by the NSMC. These are listed in Annex Three. The Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson of the Board of InterTradelreland are Dr David Dobbin and Mr John Fitzgerald respectively. The Chief Executive is Mr Liam Nellis. Further details are available at www.intertradeireland.com.

NSMC MEETINGS

4.12.2 The NSMC met in Trade and Business Development sectoral format in Dublin on 8 July and in Clogher on 16 December. Mary Coughlan, TD, Tánaiste and Minister for Enterprise, Trade and Employment and Arlene Foster, MLA, Minister of Enterprise, Trade

and Investment attended both these meetings. Conor Murphy, MP, MLA, Minister for Regional Development attended the July meeting and Junior Minister Gerry Kelly, MLA, attended the December meeting.

4.12.3 At the meetings Ministers received progress reports from the Chief Executive on the activities of InterTradelreland (ITI). These included information on the generation of £61.2m/€78.5m business development value and the participation of 328 firms on InterTradelreland's Programme and Networks. Ministers also received presentations from the Chairperson on the strategic review undertaken by the ITI Board.

4.12.4 Ministers praised the series of 'Time for Business' roadshows that ITI had held throughout the island of Ireland at which information was provided to SMEs on the services available to them from ITI, and that ITI had set up a new First Stop Shop service with the aim of assisting businesses throughout both jurisdictions on cross-border trade issues. The Council

CHAPTER FOUR: NSMC Meetings in Sectoral Format

also welcomed the fact that ITI has been developing new ideas and plans relating to science, technology and innovation.

CO-OPERATION ON RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

4.12.5 Ministers noted a paper prepared by InterTradelreland on Co-operation on Research and Development which outlines economic partnership, contains priority activities including the US-Ireland-Northern Ireland R and D Partnership and the European dimension (FP7) and possibilities for both jurisdictions to work together to maximise drawdown of EU funds (not subject to match funding). They welcomed the US-Ireland Research and Development Partnership approach aimed at increasing the level of co-operation amongst researchers across US-Ireland-Northern Ireland, including the developments to date. Ministers also noted opportunities for further collaboration including: the development of an early alert system for potential Seventh Framework Programme proposals;

the identification of areas where both Northern Ireland and Ireland have shared interests and expertise; and the utilisation of InterTradelreland's Research Connections Programme. Ministers requested a report on progress be provided to a future NSMC meeting.

4.12.6 Ministers received a report on an event hosted by the US Ambassador to Ireland at his residence to mark the first four successful projects under the US-Ireland Research & Development Partnership, including the presentation of awards to researchers who have been awarded funding.

BUSINESS PLAN AND BUDGET

4.12.7 The Council noted that InterTradelreland had applied efficiency savings to its 2009 Budget in accordance with guidance issued by the two Finance Departments. The 2009 Business Plan was approved and the Council recommended the 2009 budget provision of £10,781,550 for InterTradelreland.

ANNEX ONE

LIST OF NSMC MEETINGS IN 2009

The background of the page features a series of overlapping, semi-transparent blue circles of varying sizes. Overlaid on these circles are several large, light blue arrows pointing in various directions, creating a sense of movement and progress. The overall color palette is a range of blues, from light to dark.

ANNEX ONE: List of NSMC Meetings in 2009

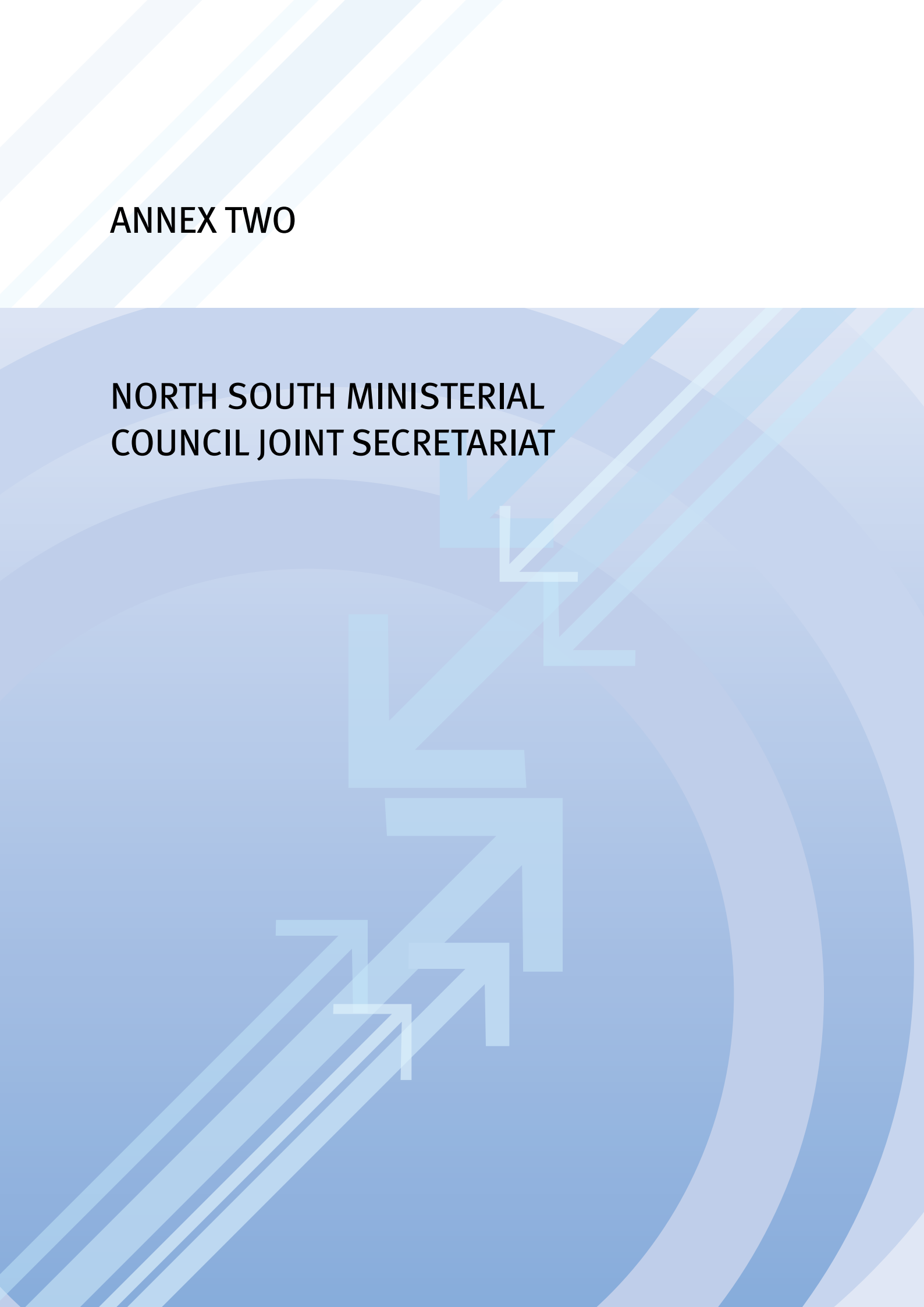
LIST OF NSMC MEETINGS IN 2009

The following table shows the NSMC meetings which were held during 2009:

NSMC Meeting	Date	Location
Plenary	23 January	University of Ulster at Magee
	6 July	Dublin
	14 December	Limavady
Institutional	28 April	Dublin
	11 November	Stormont
Agriculture	20 March	Dublin
	21 July	Greenmount
	18 November	Dublin
Education	20 May	Middletown
	25 November	Dublin
Environment	20 March	Dublin
	30 October	Armagh
Health & Food Safety	10 June	Dublin
	25 November	Belfast
Tourism	1 April	Dublin
	16 December	Clogher
Transport	3 April	Larne
	4 November	Burt
Aquaculture & Marine	30 April	Carlingford
	20 July	Greenmount
	18 November	Dublin
Inland Waterways	16 January	Enniskillen
	9 July	Gaoth Dobhair
	2 December	Belfast
Language	16 January	Enniskillen
	9 July	Gaoth Dobhair
	2 December	Belfast
Special European Programmes	8 September	Dublin
Trade & Business Development	8 July	Dublin
	16 December	Clogher

ANNEX TWO

NORTH SOUTH MINISTERIAL COUNCIL JOINT SECRETARIAT



ANNEX TWO: North South Ministerial Council Joint Secretariat

The North South Ministerial Council (NSMC) is supported by a standing Joint Secretariat staffed by members of the Northern Ireland Civil Service and the Irish Civil Service. The Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister (OFMDFM) is the parent Department of the Northern Ireland civil servants and the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) is the parent Department of the Irish civil servants.

Mary Bunting is the Northern Joint Secretary and Tom Hanney is the Southern Joint Secretary. The Deputy Joint Secretaries are Pat Donaghy (Northern) and Bill Nolan (Southern). Bill replaced Niall Holohan in September 2009.

FUNCTIONS

The functions of the Joint Secretariat include:

- arranging the schedule of Council meetings in different formats;
- securing prior political/Ministerial agreement to agendas for meetings of the Council;
- preparing or commissioning papers for meetings of the Council, including in relation to its work programme;
- drafting joint communiqués and records of decisions of the Council;

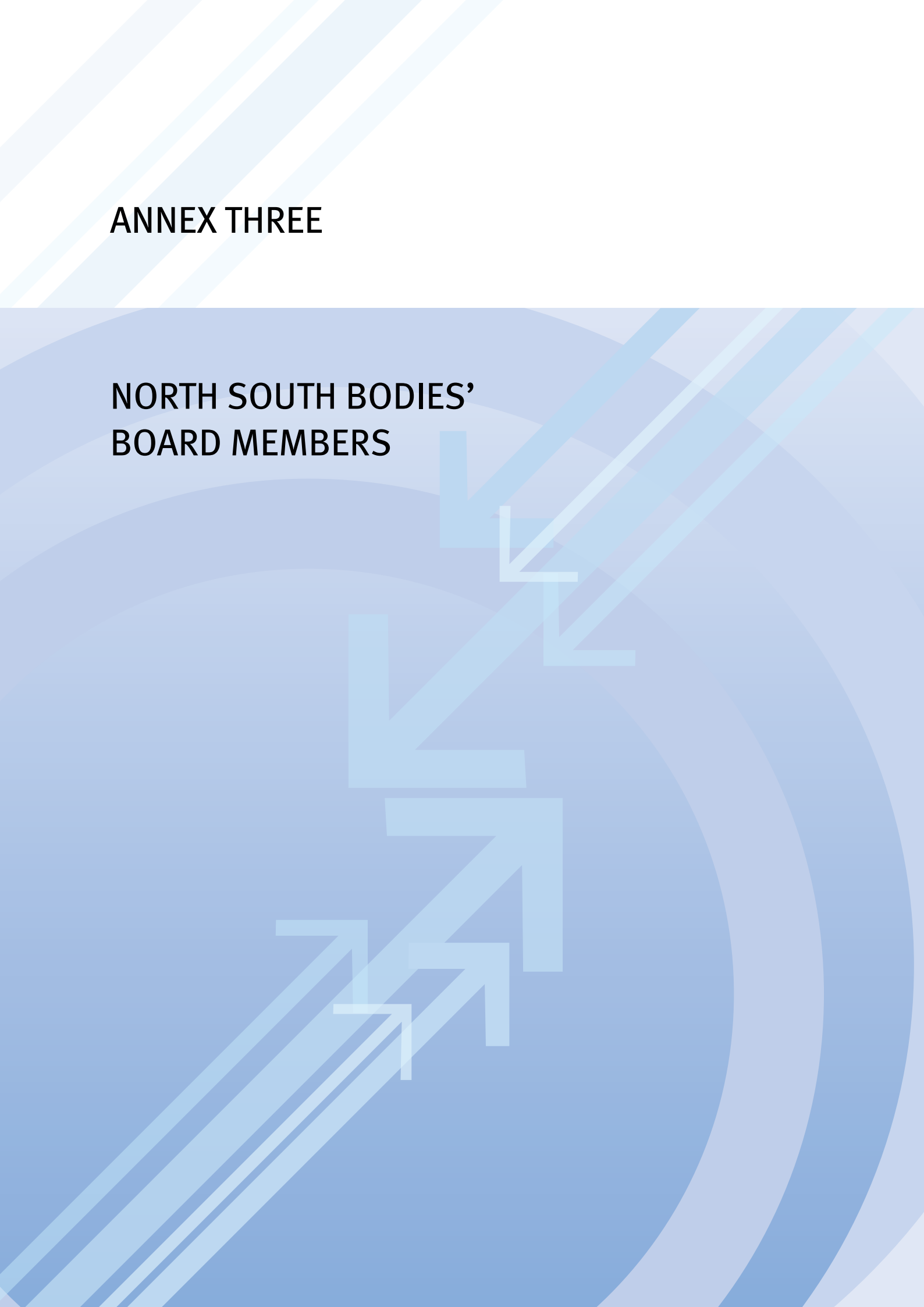
- communicating decisions of the Council and monitoring their implementation;
- drafting an annual report on the proceedings of the Council;
- acting as a channel of communication with Implementation Bodies and facilitating their development;
- liaising, where appropriate, through the designated Department or Office in either jurisdiction, with the Secretariat of the British-Irish Intergovernmental Conference, with the Secretariat of the British-Irish Council and with the North/South joint parliamentary forum and independent consultative forum when established; and
- carrying out such other tasks as the Council may direct.

FUNDING

Staff costs are met by OFMDFM and DFA. All other costs associated with the Joint Secretariat and the NSMC are shared between the two administrations. The cost of running the Joint Secretariat in 2009 amounted to £1,686,380/€1,883,508.

ANNEX THREE

NORTH SOUTH BODIES' BOARD MEMBERS



ANNEX THREE: North South Bodies' Board Members

FOOD SAFETY PROMOTION BOARD ADVISORY BOARD

John Dardis (Chairperson)
Campbell Tweedie (Vice Chairperson)
Ken Baird
Lynn Ní Bhaogheallain
Joe Byrne
Brian Cunningham
Aoife Healy
Susan Heraghty
Neven Maguire
Seamus Sheridan
Con Traas
Jane Wells

NORTH SOUTH LANGUAGE BODY FORAS NA GAELIGE

Liam Ó Maoilmhichíl
(Chairperson of Foras na Gaelige/
Joint Chairperson of An Foras Teanga)
Eoghan Mac Cormaic (Vice Chairperson)
Áine Andrews
Lucilíta Breathnach
Seanna Breathnach
Adelaide Nic Cárthaigh
Peter Gallagher Appointed July 2009
Máiréad Nic Giolla Mhichíl
Norman Henry
Liam Kennedy
Éamonn Kinch
Marcas Mac Ruairí
Dónal Ó Bearra
Pádraic Ó Biadha
Diarmuid Ó Murchú
Caoilfhionn Nic Pháidín

THA BOORD O ULSTÈR SCOTCH

Mark Thompson (Former Chairperson)
Resigned July 2009
John Hunter Appointed December 2009
(Chairperson of Tha Boord o Ulstèr-Scotch/
Joint Chairperson of North South Language Body)
Ian Adamson
Tony Crooks Appointed December 2009
Angela Graham
William Humphrey
William Leathem
Jacqui Reed
Aileen Douglas Resigned September 2009
William Roulston Resigned November 2009

THE FOYLE, CARLINGFORD AND IRISH LIGHTS COMMISSION

Tarlach O Crosain (Chairperson)
Jacqui McConville (Vice Chairperson)
Enda Bonner
Brendan Byrne
John Byrne
Denis Haughey
Alan McCulla
Joe Miller
John Mulcahy
Winston Patterson
Thomas Sloan
Jim Wilson

THE TRADE AND BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT BODY

David Dobbin (Chairperson)

John Fitzgerald (Vice Chairperson)

Brendan Butler

Ray Doherty

Sean Gallagher

Jack Gilmour

Hugh Logue

Padraig MacLochlainn

Patricia McKeown

Dr Gerard O'Hare

Vincent Parker Appointed December 2009

Tom Scott

Rosaleen Doherty Resigned November 2009

TOURISM IRELAND LIMITED

Hugh Friel (Chairperson)

Ciara Boyle (Vice-Chairperson)

Brian Ambrose

Howard Hastings Appointed 1 April 2009

David Lyle

Robert Manson

Mandy Martin

Bill McGinnis

Moira McNamara

John Power

Shaun Quinn

Ann Riordan

