



North South Ministerial Council
An Chomhairle Aireachta
Thuaidh Theas

North South Ministerial Council

2011 ANNUAL REPORT



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Front Cover: Artwork for the inner atrium wall of the NSMC Joint Secretariat offices by Cork born artist Declan O'Mahony. The artwork was jointly commissioned by Armagh City and District Council and the NSMC Joint Secretariat and was to relate to the cultural and historical fabric of Armagh City and to the NSMC.

The artwork typifies Declan O'Mahony's current 'acrylic- pouring' working methods. There are seven distinct sizes in the multi-coloured layering in the artwork. In mythological terms the number 'seven' was known to symbolize perfection and completeness and Armagh, geographically, is nestled among the Seven Hills. The oldest surviving manuscript in Ireland is the Book of Armagh. The twin columns of abstract, calligraphic symbols contributed yet another subtle element of inspiration to the overall design of the diptych. Finally thousands of fragments of coloured glass adorn the elongated windows in both cathedrals in Armagh. The architects of such great towering structures were fully aware of the power of colour to raise the human spirit to higher levels. Hence the compacted use of a myriad of transparent interlocking colours ascending and descending in the cool contemporary atrium of the NSMC Joint Secretariat building.

INTRODUCTION

2011 was a year of significant change for the North South Ministerial Council (NSMC) and a busy one for the Council's Joint Secretariat. There were a total of 24 meetings including three Plenary meetings and one Institutional meeting. The Plenary meeting held on 21 January 2011 was the first held in the new NSMC Joint Secretariat offices in Armagh.

Of particular note was the Plenary meeting held in Farmleigh, Dublin on 10 June at which the new Irish Government and the new Northern Ireland Executive met collectively for the first time to exchange views on a range of issues of mutual interest and concern. It was clear that all those present recognised the enormous challenges their respective jurisdictions face and the seriousness of the task which had been placed on them by their electorates.

A common theme at the three Plenary meetings was the economic and budgetary challenges facing both administrations. The advantages of practical co-operation and the need to identify potential cost savings through working together were recognised. Ministers welcomed increasing collaboration in the field of innovation within the European Union and noted that such collaboration can lead to tangible mutual benefits. They also welcomed the confirmation of support in both jurisdictions for the development of a satellite radiotherapy service at Altnagelvin.

The North South Implementation Bodies and Tourism Ireland also underwent significant change in 2011 as the terms of service of their Boards came to an end. In November, the NSMC approved the appointment of new Boards and expressed appreciation for the work of the outgoing Chairpersons, Vice Chairpersons, Board members and Directors and commended the significant contribution they had made to the work of the Bodies. We wish to join with Ministers in welcoming the new members of the Boards and thanking the outgoing members for their service.

CROSS BORDER MOBILITY

During the year, the NSMC Joint Secretariat, in consultation with relevant organisations, examined a number of cross-border mobility issues including delays in processing social welfare benefits claims with a cross-border element, the lack of an advisory service on welfare and taxation issues and lack of awareness of the value/equivalency of vocational qualifications obtained elsewhere. To address these issues, systems are now in place to deal with certain complex welfare benefits cases. The Centre for Cross Border Studies will apply for INTERREG IVA funding in 2012 for the Border People website which will incorporate training on provision of advice on certain cross-border matters. The Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment and the National Qualifications Authority of Ireland jointly published 'Qualifications can cross boundaries: a rough guide to comparing qualifications in the UK and Ireland.'

NSMC JOINT SECRETARIAT OFFICES

Our new offices were officially opened in January by the First Minister, deputy First Minister and the Taoiseach, following an NSMC Plenary meeting. In March, the then Armagh City and District Council Mayor, Jim Speers, joined us for an event to mark the opening of the offices.

In September, we were delighted that Arts Ministers, Carál Ní Chuilín and Jimmy Deenihan joined us to unveil new artwork for our internal atrium wall by Cork-based artist Declan O'Mahony. The artwork was jointly commissioned by Armagh City and District Council and ourselves.

During the year, we made good use of our new offices with 20 NSMC meetings held there and also a number of important events. These included a seminar as part of the re-entry programme for the Washington Ireland Program Class of 2011, and by the United States Ambassador to Ireland, the Ambassador of Belgium to Ireland, the Finnish Ambassadors to the United Kingdom and to Ireland and a delegation of officials from the Republic of Korea. We were also pleased to welcome students from the Southern Regional College who visited us as part of their Preparation for Work and Employability Course.



OTHER DEVELOPMENTS

We wish to pay tribute to Anne Barrington who was Joint Secretary until November 2011 when she took up a new post as Director General of the Europe Division of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade following her term as Joint Secretary (South) and also to Bill Nolan former Deputy Joint Secretary (South) who retired during the year. We thank both Anne and Bill for all their work with the North South Ministerial Council and wish them every success in the future. We would also like to thank officials in Northern Ireland Executive and Irish Government Departments, the North South Bodies, the Joint Secretariat and all our colleagues and friends for their valued help and co-operation in 2011.

Mary Bunting
Joint Secretary (North)

Margaret Stanley
Acting Joint Secretary
(South)



Armagh City and District Council Mayor Jim Speers with Joint Secretaries Mary Bunting, Anne Barrington and guests at the opening event for the new NSMC Joint Secretariat Offices in Armagh, 25 March 2011



Declan O'Mahony (artist), Jimmy Deenihan TD, Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, Freda Donnelly Mayor, Armagh City and District, Carál Ní Chuilín MLA, Minister of Culture Arts and Leisure, Mary Bunting Joint Secretary (North) and Margaret Stanley Acting Joint Secretary (South) at the launch of a special commissioned art work by Declan O'Mahony for the NSMC Joint Secretariat Offices in Armagh on the 28 September 2011

CHAPTER ONE: NSMC Plenary and Institutional Meetings



Ministers pictured at the NSMC Plenary meeting 10 June 2011, Farmleigh House, Dublin

NSMC PLENARY MEETINGS

1.1 There were three NSMC Plenary meetings in 2011 - on 21 January 2011 at the NSMC Joint Secretariat offices in Armagh, 10 June 2011 at Farmleigh House, Dublin and 18 November 2011 at the NSMC Joint Secretariat offices in Armagh. The Irish Government delegations were led at the January meeting by the then Taoiseach Brian Cowen TD, and at the June and November meetings by the Taoiseach Enda Kenny TD. The First Minister, the Rt Hon Peter Robinson MP, MLA and the deputy First Minister, Martin McGuinness MP, MLA led the Northern Ireland Executive at all three meetings. The Joint Communiqués issued after these meetings are available at www.northsouthministerialcouncil.org.

1.2 At the Plenary meetings, Ministers discussed a variety of common challenges and shared views on the economy, fiscal issues, the banks and NAMA

and the factors contributing to low economic growth, particularly the instability and fiscal contraction in other EU and global economies. With constraints on budgets in both jurisdictions the advantages of practical co-operation and the need to identify potential cost savings through working together were recognised. It was agreed that discussions on this would be taken forward by Finance Ministers.

JOINT SECRETARIES' PROGRESS REPORT

At the Plenary meetings, the Council discussed progress reports on work taken forward at NSMC meetings in sectoral format including the work of the North South Bodies. Key issues discussed included:

- progress on EU related matters raised at NSMC meetings, including collaboration to maximise

CHAPTER ONE: NSMC Plenary Meeting

drawdown of EU Funds from the FP7 Research and Development Programme;

- progress on current EU programmes and the potential for cooperation on future EU programmes;
- the official opening of the Peace Bridge over the River Foyle;
- cooperation on CAP reform and on the all island Animal Health and Welfare strategy;
- the agreement by the two Ambulance Services of a Memorandum of Understanding to provide for cross border assistance in the event of major incidents;
- a survey to review the sustainability of primary schools in the border region to be taken forward by the two Education Ministers.
- proposals concerning relocation of Foras na Gaeilge posts to Gweedore - it was noted that there would be a discussion at a future NSMC Language meeting; and
- progress on the re-opening of the Clones/Upper Lough Erne stretch of the Ulster Canal.

BOARDS OF NORTH SOUTH BODIES AND TOURISM IRELAND LIMITED

1.3 Ministers approved the appointment of Chairpersons, Vice Chairpersons and members to the Boards of the North South Implementation Bodies and Directors of Tourism Ireland Limited. They also noted that the nominations that had been brought forward would provide both continuity and fresh perspectives to the work of the Bodies. Details of the members are attached in Annex Three. Ministers expressed their appreciation for the work of the outgoing Chairpersons, Vice Chairpersons, Board members and Directors and commended the significant contribution they had made to the work of the Bodies.

TOURISM

1.4 Ministers discussed the significant contribution that tourism can make to the economy. The success of the MTV EMA awards and the associated tourism benefits for Belfast were highlighted. The Council explored opportunities to work together to boost the Tourism Industry and maximise the benefit of forthcoming initiatives in both jurisdictions such as ni 2012, including the Titanic Centenary, the Derry-Londonderry City of Culture in 2013 and 'The Gathering', a year long programme of events in 2013 driven by arts, sports, business and community groups.

NORTH WEST GATEWAY INITIATIVE

1.5 At the November meeting there was a discussion on progress on the North West Gateway Initiative and Ministers agreed that the NSMC Joint Secretariat would convene a meeting of officials from relevant Departments in both jurisdictions, who in turn would consult their Ministers, with a view to a further progress report being presented to the NSMC Institutional meeting in Spring 2012.

PROGRESS ON A5 AND A8 PROJECTS

1.6 The Council noted progress on the A5 (North West Gateway to Aghnacloy) and A8 (Belfast to Larne) projects and agreed that payment of £3m would be made by the Minister of Transport, Tourism and Sport to the NI Consolidated Fund, in accordance with the agreed procedure. At the November meeting, it was noted that the provision of further funding by the Irish Government was being deferred and that in this regard the Irish Government would provide £25m per annum in 2015 and 2016 towards the project. It was also noted that the relevant departments will prepare a new funding and implementation plan for the projects for agreement at the NSMC Transport meeting in 2012 with endorsement at an NSMC Plenary meeting in June 2012.

ST ANDREWS AGREEMENT REVIEW

1.7 Ministers agreed that a number of proposals to advance the first element of the St Andrews Agreement Review would be discussed at the next round of NSMC meetings in sectoral format with a view to decisions

being taken at the NSMC Plenary meeting in June 2012. A way forward on the other elements of the Review was also agreed. This would include consultation within the Executive and within the Irish Government, discussion at the NSMC Institutional meeting in Spring 2012 and final proposals being agreed at the NSMC Plenary meeting in June 2012.

NORTH SOUTH CONSULTATIVE FORUM

1.8 The background and recent developments on a North South Consultative Forum were noted and Ministers agreed to finalise deliberations on the issue at the Plenary meeting in June 2012.

NORTH SOUTH PARLIAMENTARY FORUM

1.9 Ministers welcomed the work of working groups of the Oireachtas and the Northern Ireland Assembly including joint meetings held in September in Parliament Buildings and in November in the Houses of the Oireachtas, Dublin and a further meeting planned for 15 December 2011.

NSMC INSTITUTIONAL MEETING

1.10 The NSMC met in Institutional format on 3 October 2011 in Stormont Castle, Belfast. The Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade, Eamon Gilmore TD, First Minister the Rt Hon Peter Robinson MLA, the deputy First Minister, John O'Dowd MLA and Danny Kennedy MLA, Minister for Regional Development attended the meeting. The Joint Communiqué issued after the meeting is available at www.northsouthministerialcouncil.org

NORTH SOUTH BODIES ISSUES

1.11 The Council noted progress made in respect of Bodies agreeing their Corporate and Business Plans and in making efficiency savings. It was reported that a review of Financial Memoranda of the Bodies was underway and a report on progress will be presented at the next Institutional Meeting.

1.12 It was agreed that reduced remuneration rates for Board members would apply when nominations

were brought forward for approval at the NSMC Plenary meeting in November 2011.

EU MATTERS RAISED WITHIN NSMC

1.13 There was a discussion on progress on EU matters raised at NSMC meetings including collaboration on research and development and progress on current EU programmes and the potential for co-operation on future EU programmes.

CROSS BORDER MOBILITY

1.14 It was noted that systems have been put in place to resolve delays in processing some Department of Social Protection welfare benefit claims with a cross-border element.

1.15 The continued popularity of the Border people website (www.borderpeople.info) was noted, as was the intention that the Centre for Cross Border Studies, in partnership with other organisations, to apply for EU funding for the website to incorporate specialist training for the provision of advice on cross-border matters.

1.16 Work that had been taken forward to facilitate the comparison of vocational qualifications obtained in other jurisdictions was also discussed. This work included the publication of a leaflet 'Qualifications can cross boundaries: a rough guide to comparing qualifications in the UK and Ireland'.

NORTH WEST GATEWAY INITIATIVE

1.17 The Council noted progress that had been made under the North West Gateway Initiative.



CHAPTER TWO: NSMC Meetings in Sectoral Format

This section includes a summary of NSMC meetings in sectoral format in 2011. The Joint Communiqués from these meetings are available at www.northsouthministerialcouncil.org



Agriculture



Left to right: Phil Hogan TD, Minister for Environment, Community and Local Government, Michelle O'Neill MLA Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, Simon Coveney TD, Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine and Edwin Poots MLA, Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, at the NSMC Agriculture meeting in Armagh on 26 October 2011.

2.1.1 NSMC Agriculture meetings took place on 26 July 2011 and 26 October 2011. Michelle O'Neill MLA, Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, Edwin Poots MLA, Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety and Simon Coveney TD, Minister for Agriculture Food and the Marine attended both meetings. Phil Hogan TD, Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government attended the October meeting.

CO-OPERATION ON ANIMAL HEALTH

2.1.2 Ministers received update reports on the delivery of the 2011/12 All-Island Animal Health and Welfare Strategy Action Plan, including:

- the launch of the first All-Island Animal Disease Surveillance Report and the agreement of a Memorandum of Understanding between official laboratories to foster enhanced co-operation and participation in collaborative research; and
- developments on animal disease contingency planning including the agreement of a Memorandum of Understanding to facilitate the

production of maps of disease control zones in the case of an outbreak on either side of the border; and the preparations for a further joint mapping exercise on this.

2.1.3 The Council welcomed a joint meeting between Chief Veterinary Officers (CVOs) from both jurisdictions and the EU Commission at which the CVOs set out the case for the All-Island Animal Health and Welfare Strategy. The Commission had acknowledged that the Strategy's aims formed part of the considerations of the new EU Animal Health Law.

2.1.4 Collaboration which has assisted towards proving Aujeszky's Disease free status was welcomed and it was agreed that Departments should continue to work closely to co-ordinate the timing of submission of applications for Aujeszky's Disease free status.

COMMON AGRICULTURE POLICY (CAP) AND INTERNATIONAL TRADE ISSUES

2.1.5 The Council noted the publication by the EU Commission of legislative proposals for the future of

CHAPTER TWO: NSMC Meetings in Sectoral Format

the Common Agricultural Policy, including alteration of national net ceilings for direct payments, changes to the single payment model, a green payment and a capping of large payments, changes to the details of rural development measures and on financial regulations. Developments on the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) reform process were also discussed, including publication by the EU Commission of its communication on the future of the CAP and its proposals for the next Multi-Annual Financial Framework.

2.1.6 Also noted were developments in international trade negotiations, particularly negotiations with the MERCOSUR group of South American countries, the central issues of tariff liberalisations and market access which were not expected to be addressed until mid 2012.

2.1.7 The two Agriculture departments briefed Ministers on Greenhouse Gas Research and Co-operation and other collaborative work on research.

CO-OPERATION ON PLANT HEALTH

2.1.8 The Council approved the work programme of the Plant Health and Pesticides Group which includes contingency plans, the continued development in the efficient use of laboratory facilities and resources, and joint campaigns on alerting and educating the industry. Ministers were also briefed on on-going co-operation in dealing with a number of outbreaks of phytophthora ramorum in Japanese larch forests and welcomed the action taken to control these outbreaks.

RURAL DEVELOPMENT

2.1.9 The Council reviewed ongoing co-operation on rural development, including support for cross-border engagement by local action groups. The approval of €10 million of INTERREG IVA funding for six strategic cross border rural development projects was welcomed. The work of one of these projects, 'Harnessing Natural Resources' was presented to Ministers. The project was led by Cavan County Enterprise Board in collaboration with Cavan County Council, Fermanagh District Council, Leitrim County Council, Swanlinbar Development Association, Coillte and Inland Fisheries Ireland Limited.

Education



Left to right: Ruairí Quinn TD, Minister for Education and Skills, John O'Dowd MLA, Minister of Education, Nelson McCausland MLA, Minister for Social Development attending the NSMC Education meeting in Armagh on 21 September 2011.

2.2.1 There were two NSMC Education meetings during 2011 on the 21 January and 21 September. Mary Coughlan TD, Tánaiste and Minister for Education and Skills, Caitríona Ruane MLA, Minister for Education and Danny Kennedy MLA, Minister for Employment and Learning attended the 21 January meeting. John O'Dowd MLA, Minister for Education, Ruairí Quinn TD, Minister for Education and Skills and Nelson McCausland MLA, Minister for Social Development attended the 21 September meeting.

EDUCATIONAL UNDER-ACHIEVEMENT

2.2.2 The Council welcomed the publication of literacy and numeracy strategies by the Education Departments and their commitment to tackling underachievement in literacy and numeracy, especially among those from the most disadvantaged backgrounds. Various initiatives included, continued Support for Maths Week Ireland, the Children's Book Programme, a Time to Read pilot project and a successful joint conference on 'Promoting Literacy within and beyond Schools'.

2.2.3 Ministers also welcomed a proposal for a Peer Learning Event on School Attendance, with a focus on post primary pupils and Department of Education commissioned research into good practice and partnership approaches between school and family in deprived areas in promoting regular school attendance of pupils of compulsory school age, which will be reported in March 2012.

2.2.4 The presentation of the report and recommendations of the work of the Taskforce on Traveller Education to the Department of Education was also noted. It was reported that the Department of Education is working on a draft action plan with a view to carrying out a consultation between January and March 2012. Collaborative work to develop a Toolkit for Diversity to support the professional development of middle management in schools was also discussed.

EDUCATION FOR CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL EDUCATION NEEDS

2.2.5 Ministers welcomed the continuing progress made by the Middletown Centre for Autism including the delivery of training to professionals and parents

CHAPTER TWO: NSMC Meetings in Sectoral Format

and the development of links with the Special Education Support Services and the Inter-Board Autistic Spectrum Disorder Group. They also welcomed the continuing programme of research including the recent publication documenting relevant research in the area of Autistic Spectrum Disorder in girls and continuing research in the areas of sensory based provision and working memory for those on the autism spectrum and work with the Department of Education for Capacity Building for Special Educational Needs.

2.2.6 Progress made by the Centre and the two Education Departments on the development of a multi annual plan for the future development of the Centre was also welcomed.

TEACHERS QUALIFICATIONS

2.2.7 Ministers received a presentation from the Professional Development Service for Teachers and the Curriculum, Advisory and Support Services on the North/South Irish Medium Work Programme in the area of teacher education.

2.2.8 They noted progress made by the joint Working Group on Teacher Qualifications including the special focus on Irish Medium Education and ongoing liaison between the two Teaching Councils about issues relating to teacher mobility in both jurisdictions and progress in the provision of information on pension issues for teachers who wished to transfer to work in the other jurisdiction.

2.2.9 Ministers also noted initiation of a North/South Community of Practice supporting Irish Medium teachers and that an action plan to support Irish medium schools for the 2011/2012 academic year.

2.2.10 The two Education inspectorates made a presentation to the Council on their cooperation in the professional development of inspectors, including the ongoing contribution of exchanges between the Inspectorates and the publication of a joint Inspectorate report on how best to promote and improve literacy and numeracy in schools.

2.2.11 There was discussion on collaborative work between the Regional Training Unit and the Professional Development Service for Teachers on issues of school leadership and it was noted that a report entitled 'Leadership Matters' was being examined by both Departments with a view to publication.

SCHOOL YOUTH AND TEACHER EXCHANGES

2.2.12 Ministers noted that a review of co-operation in the area of educational exchanges had been included in Part 1 of a comprehensive study on north south cooperation in the education sector had been agreed and finalised by the two Departments.

2.2.13 They also noted that the second year of the pilot enterprise strand of the Dissolving Boundaries programme has been successfully completed and looked forward to receiving a joint report from both inspectorates upon completion of their formal evaluation of the programme.

2.2.14 Ongoing discussions on future cooperation on the endorsement of youth work qualifications to ensure and support best practice and facilitate professional mobility and exchange both on a north/south and east/west basis were also noted.

2.2.15 Proposals for the 2011-2012 North South Student Teacher Exchange Project were also welcomed.

Environment



Left to right: Danny Kennedy MLA, Minister for Regional Development, Phil Hogan TD, Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government and Alex Attwood MLA, Minister of the Environment at the NSMC Environment meeting in Armagh on 1 July 2011.

2.3.1 There were two NSMC Environment meetings in 2011 on the 1 July and 21 October. The meetings were attended by Phil Hogan TD, Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government, Alex Attwood MLA, Minister of the Environment, and Danny Kennedy MLA, Minister for Regional Development.

WASTE MANAGEMENT

2.3.2 The Council welcomed ongoing developments in waste management and the closer working relationship between Departments to align policies, where appropriate, in areas of mutual benefit and arrangements for dealing with food waste including organic waste.

2.3.3 Ministers received presentations on the All-Island Recycled Plastic Waste Arisings Study. The work of the North South Market Development Steering Group was welcomed and Ministers noted both the publication of a tender for a bulky waste reuse management best practice study and that the first meeting of the quality protocols sub-group had taken place.

2.3.4 It was noted that the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government was willing to engage with Department of Environment and the Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs in considering the present restrictions in the UK Plan in relation to cross-border Transfrontier Shipment of Waste movements of mixed Municipal Solid Waste from Northern Ireland to Ireland.

2.3.5 In addition, the Council welcomed the ongoing co-operation and sharing of experience between the Department of Environment and the Office of the Revenue Commissioners in the development of DOE's Carrier Bag Levy project and progress towards implementing the EU Landfill Directive (1999/31/EC).

CROSS BORDER MOVEMENTS OF WASTE

2.3.6 It was reported that the removal of waste from sites at Slattinagh, Co Fermanagh, and near Trillick, Co Tyrone, was completed and that the removal of waste from a site at Ballymartin, Kilkeel, was nearing completion and that work was anticipated to commence on a further site north of Newry. The Northern Ireland

CHAPTER TWO: NSMC Meetings in Sectoral Format

Environment Agency was continuing to develop plans to deal with the remaining illegal waste sites and was working closely with its counterparts in Dublin City Council. Ministers discussed and commended joint enforcement actions being conducted by the competent authorities.

WATER QUALITY

2.3.7 Ministers noted that the North South Working Group on Water Quality was considering a range of water quality issues with a view to formulation of a work programme for agreement at a future meeting. These included abstraction and impoundment controls, nitrates, shellfish waters, bathing waters, the scope for all island Beach Awards and INTERREG IVA projects.

2.3.8 It was reported that the joint documents 'Working Together, Managing Our Shared Waters' for the North Western and Neagh Bann International River Basin Districts had been completed and published on the Departments' websites and that the North South

Working Group on Water Quality was continuing to drive and oversee co-ordinated implementation of River Basin Management Plans and associated measures under the EU Water Framework Directive.

ENVIRONMENTAL REPORTING AND RESEARCH

2.3.9 The Council welcomed ongoing work to develop a common set of environmental indicators including web-based presentation and the planned publication of 'Ireland North and South: A Statistical Profile'.

2.3.10 Progress by the Northern Ireland Environment Agency and Environmental Protection Agency in taking forward joint actions on research to support implementation of environmental policy and legislation were noted. Ministers also welcomed further co-operation in supporting researchers seeking European funding for priority environmental research under the EU FP7, INTERREG and LIFE+ programmes.

Health



Launching the Ireland-Northern Ireland-National Cancer Institute Consortium annual activities report for 2010, left to right: OFMDFM Junior Minister Martina Anderson MLA, James Reilly TD, Minister for Health, Edwin Poots MLA, Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety and Frances Fitzgerald TD Minister for Children and Youth Affairs at the NSMC Health and Food Safety meeting in Armagh on 20 July 2011.

2.4.1 The NSMC Health and Food Safety meeting was on the 20 July 2011. James Reilly TD, Minister for Health, Frances Fitzgerald TD, Minister for Children and Youth Affairs, Edwin Poots MLA, Minister for Health, Social Services and Public Safety, and Martina Anderson MLA, Junior Minister, OFMDFM attended the meeting.

CANCER AND HEALTH RESEARCH CO-OPERATION

2.4.2 The Council confirmed support for the development of the planned satellite radiotherapy facility at Altnagelvin Hospital. The Centre will serve cancer patients in both jurisdictions and the aim is for the facility to be fully operational by 2016.

2.4.3 The Ireland-Northern Ireland-National Cancer Institute Consortium annual activities report for 2010 was launched. The Report highlights continuing success and achievement in education and training, the combining of data to produce the first all-island atlas of cancer, the sharing of best practice facilitated by the TELESYNERGY multimedia conferencing facility and continuing joint research projects and clinical trials.

2.4.4 Ministers also welcomed the launch of the All-Ireland Institute for Hospice and Palliative Care to expand education, research policy and service development in palliative care.

HEALTH PROMOTION

2.4.5 Progress in both jurisdictions on tackling alcohol abuse, tobacco consumption and obesity and the scope for sharing information and evidence based material were noted. Plans for a North South conference and consideration of proposals for a joint initiative on alcohol misuse were welcomed.

CO-OPERATION ON EMERGENCY SERVICES

2.4.6 The Council welcomed co-operation between the Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service and firefighters from the six border Fire and Rescue Services on the Driving Change Project which aimed to improve the health and public safety of people living and travelling in the border area.

CHAPTER TWO: NSMC Meetings in Sectoral Format

2.4.7 Co-operation between the Northern Ireland Ambulance Service and the HSE National Ambulance Service through the development of Memoranda of Understanding which provide for cross-border assistance in the event of major incidents was also welcomed.

SUICIDE PREVENTION

2.4.8 The Council welcomed progress on the All-Island Action Plan on Suicide Prevention including the publication of the All-Island Evaluation of ASIST (Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training). By the end of 2011, over 25,000 people will have completed the ASIST training programme. Also discussed, were the operation of a media monitoring service in Northern Ireland for seven months, the sharing of a range of initiatives by the National Office for Suicide Prevention and the Public Health Agency under an area for action entitled 'Suicide and the Economic Downturn'. The commencement of the All-Island Men's Health Forum which helped males in crisis and emotional distress and plans for pilot initiatives was also noted.

CHILD PROTECTION

2.4.9 The Council welcomed continuing progress on advancing co-operation in the area of child welfare and protection including the uptake and usage of the Child Protection Hub by practitioners and action to be taken to raise further awareness of its existence. Developments in the Inter-Jurisdictional Protocol for the Transfer of Child Care cases were discussed. The protocol includes the development of a common set of operating procedures and continued co-operation by the two police services and Social Services on sharing information on a cross-border basis in relation to individuals who may pose a risk to children.

Tourism



Left to right: Leo Varadkar TD, Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport with Salman Khan and Katrina Kaif actors in a Bollywood film Ek Tha Tiger ('Once There Was A Tiger') which was filmed in Dublin in autumn 2011, with Niall Gibbons, Chief Executive of Tourism Ireland Ltd.

2.5.1 Tourism Ireland Ltd is responsible for marketing overseas the island of Ireland as a tourist destination. It has a Board of 12 members appointed by the NSMC. On 19 December 2011 Mr Brian Ambrose and Mr Jim Flannery succeeded Ms Ann Riordan and Ms Ciara Boyle as Chairperson and Vice Chairperson respectively. Mr Hugh Friel was Chairperson until 2 May 2011. 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.

2.5.2 The NSMC Tourism meeting was held on 3 February 2011. Mary Hanafin TD, Minister for Tourism, Culture and Sport and Minister for Enterprise Trade and Innovation, Arlene Foster MLA, Minister for Enterprise, Trade and Investment and Junior Minister Gerry Kelly MLA, attended this meeting.

2.5.3 The Council received updates from the Chairperson and Chief Executive on the work of Tourism Ireland. The Council discussed the difficult global conditions which had a negative impact on tourism performance.

2.5.4 Ministers also discussed Tourism Ireland's plans to return growth in visitor numbers by refocusing of marketing activities to reinforce the distinctive island of Ireland holiday experience and significant investment in e-business to ensure the island of Ireland's online presence was strengthened. Significant developments included:

- after reductions in overseas visitor numbers in each of the years since 2007, there was growth in overseas visitors of 10% in the period to the end of July 2011 compared to the same period of 2010. All major overseas markets including Great Britain, North America and Mainland Europe had shown positive growth figures in this period;
- the London Eye, the Moulin Rouge in Paris, Burj Al Arab in Dubai and Table Mountain in South Africa were just some of the iconic buildings and attractions which turned green on St Patrick's Day, kicking off a major €28 million spring promotional drive. Tourism Ireland launched a major marketing drive in Britain and the United

CHAPTER TWO: NSMC Meetings in Sectoral Format



Arlene Foster MLA, Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment met with Niall Gibbons, CEO of Tourism Ireland Ltd, and Ann Riordan, Chairperson of Tourism Ireland Ltd at the Tourism Ireland Ltd Board Meeting in October 2011

States to capitalise on the visits of Queen Elizabeth II and President Obama in May. A promotional campaign in autumn highlighted cultural festivals and events taking place including the Dublin Festival Season and the MTV Europe music awards in Belfast; and

- Tourism Ireland rolled out a golf tourism campaign worth £1.8m, inviting potential holidaymakers to come visit the 'Home of Champions' following the victories of Rory McIlroy and Darren Clarke at the US and British Opens which built on previous successes by Graeme McDowell and Padraig Harrington. Tourism Ireland was working hard to capitalise on this momentum in conjunction with NITB and Fáilte Ireland.

Transport



Left to right: Danny Kennedy MLA, Minister for Regional Development Leo Varadkar TD, Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport, Alex Attwood MLA, Minister of the Environment at the NSMC Transport meeting in Armagh on 20 October 2011.

2.6.1 There were NSMC Transport meetings on 9 February 2011 and on 20 October 2011. The 9 February meeting was attended by Edwin Poots MLA, Minister of the Environment, Conor Murphy MP MLA, Minister for Regional Development and Pat Carey TD, Minister for Community, Equality and Gaeltacht Affairs, Transport & Communications, Energy and Natural Resources. The 20 October meeting was attended by Minister Varadkar TD, and Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport, Minister Kennedy MLA, Minister for Regional Development and Minister Attwood MLA, Minister of the Environment.

2.6.2 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

2.6.3 The Council noted progress on the A5 (North West Gateway to Aughnacloy) and A8 (Belfast to Larne) projects and agreed that payment of £3m would be made by the Minister of Transport, Tourism and Sport to the NI Consolidated Fund, in accordance with the agreed procedure. At the November meeting, it was noted that

the provision of further funding by the Irish Government was being deferred and that in this regard the Irish Government would provide £25m per annum in 2015 and 2016 towards the project. It was also noted that the relevant departments will prepare a new funding and implementation plan for the projects for agreement at the NSMC Transport meeting in 2012 with endorsement at an NSMC Plenary meeting in June 2012.

ROAD SAFETY

2.6.4 The Council noted the publication of the Northern Ireland Road Safety Strategy to 2020. They discussed continuing co-operation on Road Safety ideas and initiatives including the delivery of Road Safety Strategies and Developments in harmonising Blood Level Concentration Levels. They noted ongoing work in both jurisdictions to assess the impact of the UK Government's proposed Heavy Goods Vehicle Charging Scheme and the continuation of Joint Intelligence Led Targeted Operations in Border Areas focusing on vehicle standards, licensing and drivers hours.

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MUTUAL RECOGNITION OF PENALTY POINTS

2.6.5 It was noted that officials would work together to bring forward proposals for the introduction of mutual recognition of penalty points between Northern Ireland and Ireland for four lesser road traffic infringements. It was reported that a timetable for delivery and implementation would be prepared with the aim of having the necessary legislation and supporting administrative arrangements in place by 2014.

SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT

2.6.6 Plans for an all-island Bike Week 2011, a cross-border schools' challenge event which was held during Walk to School Week 2011 and pilot Personalised Travel Plan initiatives in Adamstown and Galliagh were welcomed.

2.6.7 Ministers also welcomed the success of the Department for Regional Development and the Department of the Environment in securing Plugged in Places funding of approximately £850,000 from the Office for Low Emission Vehicles to support the installation of electric vehicle charging infrastructure and that that ESB would continue to play a role in ensuring the linking of plans throughout the island of Ireland.

FREIGHT FORUM

2.6.8 The Council discussed progress made on the five priority areas of the All-Ireland Freight Forum which included:

- meetings with the relevant regional and local authorities including Dublin City Council and Belfast City Council about more sustainable freight transport operations in Dublin and Belfast;
- an event involving 50 delegates from public bodies and industry, from which key issues relating to a safer more compliant and eco-efficient road freight industry were identified;

- a meeting of representatives of ports, railway companies, shipping lines and exporters to explore further the potential of rail freight and coastal trade and short sea shipping;
- establishment of a comprehensive baseline in relation to international connectivity on all regular scheduled ro/ro and lo/lo services and identification of key industry clusters; and
- a review of existing freight data for Northern Ireland and Ireland and a related user consultation and stakeholder workshop which was held in Dublin Castle on 5 October to identify potential information gaps.

2.6.9 The Freight Forum held a second plenary event on 7 November 2011 in Belfast to address a range of issues that are relevant to the freight sector.

RAIL

2.6.10 Ministers received a presentation from senior officials from Iarnród Éireann and Northern Ireland Railways addressing issues raised in the Enterprise Rail Seminar report. The two companies outlined plans for a number of measures, to be taken forward over the coming eighteen months, which align with suggestions made in the report, including provision of WiFi, a new PA system and improvements in reliability.

2.6.11 Progress on the Dublin/Belfast rail link was discussed. It was noted that since the reconstruction of the viaduct at Malahide, passenger numbers had increased and stabilised. Ministers welcomed an additional stop on the Enterprise Service at Lisburn and the commencement of a new Newry to Dublin early morning direct service arriving at approximately 08.35 in Dublin.

Aquaculture and Marine



Left to right: Loughs Agency CEO Derick Anderson, Nelson McCausland MLA, Minister for Social Development, Michelle O'Neill MLA, Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, Fergus O'Dowd TD, Minister of State, Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources and Tarlach O Crosain, Chairperson Loughs Agency at NSMC Loughs Agency meeting in Armagh on 14 October 2011.

The NSMC meets in Aquaculture and Marine sectoral format 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. The Board exercises the functions of the Body in relation to the Foyle and Carlingford areas through the Loughs Agency. On 13 December 2011, Mr Winston Patterson and Mr Alan McCulla succeeded Mr Tarlach O Crosain and Ms Jacqui McConville as Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson of the Board 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 Aquaculture and Marine meetings took place on 4 July 2011 and 14 October 2011. Michelle O'Neill MLA, Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, and Nelson McCausland MLA, Minister for Social Development, attended both meetings. Pat Rabbitte TD, Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources attended the July meeting and Fergus O'Dowd TD, Minister of State, Department of Communications,

Energy and Natural Resources attended the October meeting.

PROGRESS REPORTS

The Chairperson and the Chief Executive provided Ministers with progress reports on the work of the Loughs Agency. Key developments discussed included:

- continuing attacks on the Loughs Agency's enforcement staff and on volunteer River Watchers. Ministers acknowledged the dedication of enforcement staff and volunteers in seeking to detect and prevent illegal fishing activity and strongly condemned these attacks.
- the opening of an Agency office in Greencastle, County Donegal;
- completion of new aquaria in the Agency's visitor centre, Riverwatch ;

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- completion of amenity sites at Mill Bay and Narrow Water which are supported by NITB as part of the wider Mourne Coastal route;
- approval and progress of the INTERREG projects at Meadowbank and the importance of these facilities for the Clipper Round the World Challenge's visit to Lough Foyle;
- completion of the Strategic Environmental Assessment on the introduction of a licensing regime to the Foyle and Carlingford areas for aquaculture and wild shellfisheries in compliance with the relevant EU Directive;
- improvement in length frequency of the standing stock of oysters in Lough Foyle;
- 2011 salmon counts which indicated relatively healthy fish runs in some systems but concerns about others, specifically the River Mourne;
- agreement for the Loughs Agency to initiate a process for the appointment of its third Foyle and Carlingford Advisory Forum in line with best practice and ensuring best value for money; and
- the provision by the Loughs Agency of environmental education programmes which facilitate excellent stakeholder engagement, particularly with young people, which play an important role in changing the mindset of stakeholders about their role in managing the Foyle and Carlingford catchments and ensuring their sustainability.

Ministers approved the Loughs Agency Corporate Plan 2011-13 and the Business Plan for 2011 and recommended budget provision for 2011 of £4.5387m (€5.535m). They noted indicative budgets of £4.3957m (€5.3606m) for 2012 and £4.2527m (€5.1862m) for 2013.

The following regulations required for the conservation and protection of the fisheries in the Foyle and Carlingford areas were also approved:

- The Foyle Area and Carlingford Area (Angling Permits) Regulations 2011;
 - The Foyle Area and Carlingford Area (Prohibition of Unlicensed Fishing) (Prescribed Species) Regulations 2011; and
 - The Foyle Area and Carlingford Area (Tagging and Logbook) (Amendment) Regulations 2011.
- The Council also approved for a further year, to July 2012, a procedure to support the Loughs Agency in dealing, through regulations, with emergencies such as pollution incidents.

Food Safety



At the launch of *safefood*'s new Knowledge Exchange Networks left to right, Rob Hargrove, PepsiCo Europe, Andrew McCormick, DHSSPSNI and Campbell Tweedie, Vice Chairperson, *safefood* Advisory Board.

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. On 13 December 2011, Ms Lynn Ní Bhaoighealláin and Ms Darina Allen succeeded Mr John Dardis and Mr Campbell Tweedie as 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.

A NSMC Food Safety meeting was held on 20 July 2011. James Reilly TD, Minister for Health, Frances Fitzgerald TD, Minister for Children and Youth Affairs, Edwin Poots MLA, Minister for Health, Social Services and Public Safety, and Martina Anderson MLA, Junior Minister, OFMDFM attended the meeting.

Ministers received a progress report from the Chairperson and Chief Executive on the activities of *safefood*.

Key developments discussed included:

- the extension of the term of the *safefood* Obesity Action Forum which assisted in identifying common areas in obesity reduction policies;
- promotional activities including the success of a 'Stop the Spread' obesity and overweight campaign and a workplace campaign aimed at reducing salt intake in work canteens and restaurants; and
- research activities including the estimation of the dietary salt intake across a cross-section of the population and its association with lifestyle related risk factors.

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Left to Right: John McCallister MLA, Michelle Gildernew MLA, Jim Wells MLA and Judith Cochrane MLA at the launch of *safefood*'s two-year, all-island awareness campaign called 'Stop the Spread'.

The Council approved *safefood*'s Corporate Plan 2011-2013 and Business Plan 2011 and recommended the budget provision for 2011 of €8.5m (£6.97m). They noted indicative budgets of €8.5m (£6.97m) for each of the years 2012 and 2013.

Inland Waterways



Left to right: Denny McGinley TD, Minister of State with special responsibility for Gaeltacht Affairs, John Martin, CEO Waterways Ireland, Jimmy Deenihan TD, Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, Carál Ní Chuilín MLA, Minister of Culture Arts and Leisure and OFDFM Junior Minister Jonathan Bell at NSMC Waterways Ireland meeting on 12 October 2011.

2.9.1 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. It 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

2.9.2 The NSMC Inland Waterways meetings were held on 7 July and 12 October. Jimmy Deenihan TD, Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, Carál Ní Chuilín MLA, Minister of Culture Arts and Leisure and OFDFM Junior Minister Jonathan Bell MLA attended both meetings. Denny McGinley TD, Minister of State with

special responsibility for Gaeltacht Affairs attended the meeting on the 12 October.

2.9.3 The Council received progress reports from the Chief Executive on the work of Waterways Ireland. Key developments discussed included:

- the hosting by Waterways Ireland of a successful meeting of the EU Waterways Forward INTERREG IVC Project in Dublin and Enniskillen which was attended by representatives from 17 organisations from 11 EU countries as well as Norway and Serbia;
- the provision of additional moorings on the waterways and the continuation of the maintenance programme. This work was largely concentrated around grass and hedge cutting, weed cutting, towpath improvements, lock maintenance, painting, installation of bollards, trackway maintenance and litter collection. On the rural sections of the navigations specific

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- maintenance projects included repair works for leakage control purposes;
- progress on the restoration of the Clones to Upper Lough Erne section of the Ulster Canal. It was noted that the Strategic Environmental Assessment report and Plan documents were completed and published and the Environmental Impact Assessment was completed. The site investigation work was ongoing. Meetings were held by Waterways Ireland with all relevant statutory authorities to advise them on the project. Public meetings were also been held. Detailed drawings of the route and associated facilities were completed. Planning notices were forwarded to land owners in Northern Ireland in the week commencing 26 September 2011 and notices were placed on lands in Ireland in the week commencing 3 October 2011;
 - the continuation of Waterways Ireland's marketing activities with the provision of new publications and the sponsorship of over 70 events to promote the awareness of the waterways across all navigations. Events included the Waterways Ireland Riverfest, Waterways Ireland TriAthlone, Waterways Ireland Scarriff Harbour Festival, Waterways Ireland Phizzfest, Waterways Ireland Loughfest, Sport on the Royal Canal, Barrow 2011, Lough Allen Art and Water Festival, Family Fun Weekend on the Lower Bann, the Classic Fishing Festival, Enniskillen and the Inter-counties Sailing Competition in the Dublin Docklands Festival;
 - the Lakelands and Inland Waterways initiative joint project between Waterways Ireland, Fáilte Ireland, Northern Ireland Tourist Board, Fermanagh Tourism, Tourism Ireland and Shannon Development in relation to a marketing campaign for the Erne Shannon system from Belleek to Limerick. Distribution of associated brochures under the overarching title of 'Lakeland and Inland Waterways' was ongoing;
 - a presentation on the benefits of the waterways including economic benefits of the waterways to the local community, recreation industry, tourism industry and the economy;
 - the issuing by Waterways Ireland of regular Marine Notices informing users of the waterways; and
 - agreement of a number of property disposals in the context of a range of development proposals on the waterways.
- 2.9.4 The Council approved Waterways Ireland Corporate Plan 2011 – 2013 and Business Plan 2011 and recommended budget provision of €35.18m (£28.85m) for 2011.

Language



Left to right: Tom Scott, Chairperson, Tha Boord O Ulstèr-Scotch, Liam Ó Maoilmhichíl, Chairperson, Foras na Gaeilge, Dinny McGinley TD, Minister of State with special responsibility for Gaeltacht Affairs, Jimmy Deenihan TD, Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, Carál Ní Chuilín MLA, Minister of Culture Arts and Leisure, OFMDFM Junior Minister Jonathan Bell MLA, Ian Crozier, CEO, Tha Boord O Ulstèr-Scotch and Ferdie Mac an Fhailigh, CEO, Foras na Gaeilge at NSMC Language meeting in Armagh on 12 October 2011.

2.10.1 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. The Chairperson of Tha Boord O Ulstèr-Scotch is Mr Tom Scott. Mr Ó Maoilmhichíl and Mr Scott are joint Chairpersons of the Language Body.

2.10.2 There are 15 other members on the Board Foras na Gaeilge and 7 other members on the Tha Boord O Ulstèr-Scotch. These are listed in Annex Three. Mr Ferdie Mac an Fhailigh is the Chief Executive of Foras na Gaeilge. Ms Hazel Campbell was the Interim Chief Executive of Tha Boord O Ulstèr-Scotch until July 2011. Mr Ian Crozier took up the position in July 2011. Further details are available at www.forasnagaeilge.ie and www.ulsterscotsagency.com

2.10.3 There were two NSMC Language meetings in 2011 on 7 July and 12 October. The meetings were

attended by Jimmy Deenihan TD, Minister for Arts Heritage and the Gaeltacht, Carál Ní Chuilín MLA, Minister for Culture, Arts and Leisure, Dinny McGinley TD, Minister of State with special responsibility for Gaeltacht Affairs and OFMDFM Junior Minister Jonathan Bell MLA.

2.10.4 Ministers received progress reports from the Chairpersons and CEOs of both agencies. Key developments discussed included:

- ongoing collaboration between Foras na Gaeilge and the Ulster-Scots Agency on the lecture series “Aspects of our Shared Heritage’ including a new lecture on the history of the languages dealing with the Flight of the Earls, the Plantation of Ulster and their linguistic effects;
- provision of joint information stands at Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann, Castlewellan Agricultural Show, the Stormont Family Fun Day and the Boccia World Cup and preparations for a joint cultural showcase in Belfast supporting the

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- twinning of Listowel, Co Kerry and Downpatrick, Co Down;
- implementation by Foras na Gaeilge of the accreditation scheme for editors, including provision of specialised training and ongoing development by Foras na Gaeilge of the national database of terms (www.focal.ie);
 - delivery by the Ulster-Scots Agency of music/ dance tuition to over 8,000 participants through the peripatetic tutor programme and 31 Ulster-Scots community summer schemes;
 - the completion of the review of Áis, the book distribution service of Foras na Gaeilge. Ministers requested Foras na Gaeilge to agree a detailed implementation plan with the sponsor departments in regard to the recommendations in the review of Áis and report on progress to the NSMC;
 - the review of the Ulster-Scots Agency's financial assistance scheme; and
 - the Foras na Gaeilge review of its core-funded organisations. Progress was noted on the preparation of a portfolio of draft schemes
- for the new competitive funding model which would have the objective of achieving significant benefits in relation to value for money and the effective delivery of Foras na Gaeilge's statutory obligations. The Council requested Foras na Gaeilge to:
- a) take forward a further twelve week consultation about the portfolio of draft schemes, particularly with the core funded bodies;
 - b) ensure that relevant statutory bodies are given the opportunity to consider the impact of the draft schemes on their areas of operation;
 - c) amend the portfolio of draft schemes as necessary and appropriate, having regard to the extended consultation process;
 - d) prepare a detailed business case, if necessary with independent assistance, in support of the portfolio of draft schemes; and
 - e) prepare a revised project plan, in conjunction with the sponsor departments, that will have due regard to the completion of the review process as a matter of urgency.

Special EU Programmes



Left to right: Sammy Wilson MP, MLA, Minister of Finance and Personnel, OFMDFM Junior Minister Martina Anderson MLA, Brendan Howlin TD, Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform, Michael Noonan TD, Minister for Finance and Pat Colgan, CEO, Special EU Programmes Body (SEUPB) at the NSMC SEUPB meeting in Armagh on 18 July 2011.

2.11.1 The mission of the Special European Union Programmes Body (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. Further details are available at www.seupb.eu

2.11.2 NSMC Special European Programmes meetings took place in 2011 on the 13 January, 18 July and 21 November. Sammy Wilson MP, MLA, Minister for Finance and Personnel, Alex Attwood MLA, Minister for Social Development and Brian Lenihan TD, Minister for Finance attended the 13 January meeting, The 18 July meeting was attended by Michael Noonan TD, Minister of Finance, Brendan Howlin TD, Minister for Public Sector Expenditure and Reform Sammy Wilson MP, MLA, Minister for Finance and Personnel and Junior Minister Martina Anderson MLA. The 21 November meeting was attended by Sammy Wilson MP MLA, Minister for Finance and Personnel, Brendan Howlin TD, Minister for

Public Expenditure and Reform and Alex Attwood MLA, Minister of the Environment.

2.11.3 At each meeting the Council received a progress report from the Chief Executive on the activities of the Special EU Programmes Body. Key developments discussed included:

- the closure of the PEACE II and INTERREG IIIA Programmes;
- progress on the implementation of the PEACE III and INTERREG IVA Programmes in terms of the assessment of applications and approval of projects. By November 2011, SEUPB had approved 149 projects worth €262m under the PEACE III Programme and expenditure was €94m. In the same period, 64 projects worth €181m had also been approved under the INTERREG IVA Programme and expenditure was €55m. Local authority-based groups had 19 INTERREG IVA projects approved worth €24 million. It was

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Launch of the Peace Bridge over the River Foyle which received funding of €14 million from the SEUPB PEACE III Programme.

- noted that SEUPB would continue to work with the groups to develop further projects;
- a series of actions put in place by SEUPB involving transfers of funds within INTERREG IVA to measures that would allow funds to be utilised faster with the position to be reviewed in January 2012;
 - the work of the SEUPB to facilitate North South participation in the INTERREG IV transnational and interregional programmes. In 2011, SEUPB secured 55 project partners across the relevant programmes; and
 - communication by the SEUPB of the positive impacts of the EU Programmes with high profile events many with Ministerial involvement including the launch of the PEACE Bridge on 25 June 2011 and participation in the EU Open Days week in Brussels.

Trade and Business Development



Left to right: David Dobbin, Chairperson, InterTradelreland, Richard Bruton TD, Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation, Arlene Foster MLA, Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment, John O'Dowd MLA, Minister of Education and Liam Nellis, CEO, InterTradelreland at the NSMC Trade and Business Development meeting in Armagh on 25 July 2011.

2.12.1 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. On 13 December 2011 Mr Martin Cronin and Ms Joanne Spain succeeded Dr David Dobbin and Mr John Fitzgerald as Chairperson and Vice Chairperson respectively. The current Board members are listed in Annex Three. The Chief Executive of InterTradelreland is Mr Liam Nellis. Further details are available at www.intertradeireland.com

2.12.2 A NSMC Trade and Business Development meeting was held in Armagh on 25 July 2011. Richard Bruton TD, Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation, Arlene Foster MLA, Minister for Enterprise, Trade and Investment, and John O'Dowd MLA, Minister for Education attended this meeting.

Ministers received progress reports from the Chairperson and Chief Executive on the activities of InterTradelreland. These included:

- progress on Co-operation on Innovation. InterTradelreland had dedicated resources specifically to increase collaborative participation on the EU Research, Technological Development and Innovation Framework Programme and to develop an early alert system for potential proposals working closely with Invest NI, Ireland's National Support Network for FP7, business and academia. Initiatives included travel vouchers for those who are developing North South applications and online partner identification;
- InterTradelreland and the European Commission office in Belfast jointly hosted the 'Collaborate to Innovate' conference on 30 June 2011 in Belfast. The aim of this conference was to increase co-operative participation in current and forthcoming Framework programmes

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- by increasing the visibility of research and innovation, increasing North South collaboration and providing impetus for increased cooperation with regions across Europe. Over 200 participants were given advice on how to access and increase their success rate in securing funding and provided with valuable networking opportunities;
- at the 2011 wire (Week of Innovative Regions in Europe) conference in Hungary, InterTradelreland co-ordinated an exhibition area which proved very successful with many attendees from other regions expressing interest in becoming partners in Regions of Knowledge applications;
- InterTradelreland had initiated a study to determine the characteristics of an Innovation Ecosystem across Northern Ireland and Ireland which would put enterprise at its centre and which would ensure creative ideas could be commercialised;
- there had been 8 successful partnership projects under the US-Ireland Research and Development Partnership with a combined value of £13m/€15m;
- return on Investment across InterTradelreland's portfolio of Trade and Innovation Programmes for 2011 was 16.5:1; and
- generation in 2011 of £119.8m/€146.1m of Business Value from companies participating on InterTradelreland's Trade and Innovation Programmes.

ANNEX ONE: List of NSMC Meetings in 2011

The following table shows the NSMC meetings which were held during 2011:

NSMC Meeting	Date	Location
Plenary	21 January	Armagh
	10 June	Dublin
	18 November	Armagh
Institutional	3 October	Stormont Castle
Agriculture	26 July	Loughry Campus
	26 October	Armagh
Education	21 January	Armagh
	21 September	Armagh
Environment	1 July	Armagh
	21 October	Armagh
Health and Food Safety	20 July	Armagh
Tourism	3 February	Armagh
Transport	9 February	Armagh
	21 October	Armagh
Aquaculture & Marine	4 July	Armagh
	14 October	Armagh
Inland Waterways	7 July	Armagh
	12 October	Armagh
Language	7 July	Armagh
	12 October	Armagh
Special EU Programmes	13 January	Stormont
	18 July	Armagh
	21 November	Armagh
Trade & Business Development	25 July	Armagh

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 and Trade (DFAT) is the parent Department of the Irish civil servants.

Mary Bunting is the Joint Secretary (North) and Margaret Stanley Deputy Joint Secretary (South) Margaret is currently acting Joint Secretary replacing Anne Barrington who was Joint Secretary (South) to November 2011. The other Deputy Joint Secretary is Pat Donaghy (North).

FUNCTIONS

The functions of the Joint Secretariat include:

- arranging the schedule of Council meetings in different formats;
- securing prior political 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;
- liaising, where appropriate, through the designated Department or Office in either jurisdiction, with the Secretariat of the British-Irish Inter-governmental Conference, 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 DFAT. 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 2011 amounted to £1,668,625/€1,890,025.



Pictured with Mary Bunting Joint Secretary, Pat Donaghy Deputy Joint Secretary and John Boyd Joint Secretariat are students from Southern Regional College.

ANNEX THREE: Board Members of North South Bodies

FOOD SAFETY PROMOTION BOARD ADVISORY BOARD

Lynn Ní Bhaoighealláin (Chairperson)

Darina Allen (Vice Chairperson)

Julie Andrews

Thomas Burns

Brendan Kehoe

Alan McGrath

Helen O'Donnell

Edward Spellman

Hannah Su

Campbell Tweedie

Mary Upton

Jane Wells

NORTH SOUTH LANGUAGE BODY FORAS NA GAEILGE

Liam Ó Maoilmhichíl

(Chairperson of Foras na Gaelige/Joint Chairperson of An Foras Teanga)

Eoghain Mac Cormaic (Vice Chairperson)

Pól Callaghan

Colm Cavanagh

Áine Ní Chiaráin

Bríd Ní Chonghoile

Liam Kennedy

Seosamh Mac Donnchadha

Tomás Mac Eochagáin

Marcus Mac Ruairí

Seán Mícheal Ó Dómhnaill

Dónal Ó hAiniféin

Therese Ruane

Tomás Sharkey

Cáitríona Ní Shúilleabháin

THA BOORD O ULSTÈR SCOTCH

Tom Scott

(Chairperson of Tha Boord o Ulstèr-Scotch/Joint Chairperson of North South Language Body)

Tony Crooks (Vice Chairperson)

Ida Fisher

William Leathem

Val O'Kelly

Hilary Singleton

Sharon Treacy-Dunne

Trevor Wilson

THE FOYLE, CARLINGFORD AND IRISH LIGHTS COMMISSION

Winston Patterson (Chairperson)

Alan McCulla (Vice Chairperson)

Andrew Duncan

Phil Mahon

Joe Millar

Michael J McCormick

Theresa McLaverty

Tarlach O Crosain

Seamus Rogers

Thomas Sloan

Donal Tipping

Jim Wilson

ANNEX THREE: North South Bodies' Board Members

THE TRADE AND BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT BODY

Martin Cronin (Chairperson)

Joanne Spain (Vice Chairperson)

Brendan Butler

Jake Gallagher

Ray Hayden

Hubert Brown Kerr

Timothy Mayes

Bridget Meehan

Patricia McKeown

Kevin Norton

Mairead Sorensen

TOURISM IRELAND LIMITED

Brian Ambrose (Chairperson)

Jim Flannery (Vice-Chairperson)

Ciara Boyle

Denis Cregan

Shaun Quinn

Howard Hastings

John Healy

David Lyle

Christoph Mueller

Elaine Murphy

Derek Rainey

David Rodway

