



## **PAPER NSMC LAN 1 (09) JC**

### **NORTH SOUTH MINISTERIAL COUNCIL**

### **NORTH SOUTH LANGUAGE BODY SECTORAL FORMAT**

### **ENNISKILLEN**

**16 JANUARY 2009**

### **JOINT COMMUNIQUÉ**

1. The seventh North South Ministerial Council meeting in Language Body sectoral format was held in Enniskillen on 16 January 2009.
2. The Northern Ireland Executive was represented by Gregory Campbell MP MLA, Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure and Michelle Gildernew MP MLA, Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development. The Irish Government was represented by Éamon Ó Cuív TD, Minister for Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs. Minister Campbell chaired the meeting.
3. The meeting dealt with issues relating to the Language Body and its two constituent agencies, Tha Boord o Ulstèr Scotch (The Ulster Scots Agency) and Foras na Gaeilge (The Irish Language Agency).

#### **PROGRESS REPORTS**

4. The Council received progress reports from the Chief Executives of the Boord o Ulstèr Scotch (Mr George Patton) and Foras na Gaeilge (An tUas. Ferdie Mac an Fhailigh) on developments in 2008. The Council

welcomed the strong working relationship between the two Agencies who have collaborated on a range of projects including:

- production of a film in Irish about Ulster Scots language and culture which is scheduled for broadcast on TG4 during the first quarter of 2009;
- sponsorship of the Belfast International Horse Show;
- organisation of the Young Ambassadors scheme in Downpatrick in 2008 whereby young people from the USA engage with the agencies in language and culture research; and
- joint funding by the agencies with the Arts Council of Northern Ireland of 2 posts of "Arts Development Officer for Language Arts".

### **BUSINESS PLANS 2009**

5. The Council noted the draft 2009 Business Plans for the North South Language Body and its Agencies which are under consideration by both sponsor Departments and Finance Departments in line with budgetary processes in the two jurisdictions. The Council agreed that these plans will focus on key Ministerial priorities in respect of each of the Agencies. Both sponsor Departments will work together to finalise the Business Plans and bring them forward for approval at a future NSMC meeting.

### **FORAS NA GAELIGE STAFFING AND DECENTRALISATION**

6. The Council discussed staffing issues in Foras na Gaeilge and reviewed the decentralisation of Foras na Gaeilge staff to Gaoth Dobhair.

### **NORTH/SOUTH LANGUAGE BODY ANNUAL REPORTS AND ACCOUNTS**

7. The Council :
  - reviewed the position on outstanding consolidated Annual Reports and Accounts;
  - noted the complexities in compiling, auditing and consolidating these Reports and Accounts;
  - welcomed the assurances given to them by the Chief Executive Officers of the Agencies that this work will continue to be given the utmost priority; and
  - requested a report on progress to the next NSMC meeting in Language sectoral format.

## **REMIT OF THE THA BOORD O ULSTER SCOTCH**

8. Ministers noted and endorsed the Boord O Ulster Scotch Protocol, which governs funded activities and travel outside the island of Ireland by the Boord.

**Joint Secretariat  
16 January 2009**