



PAPER NSMC LAN 2 (09) JC

NORTH SOUTH MINISTERIAL COUNCIL LANGUAGE BODY SECTORAL FORMAT GAOTH DOBHAIR

9 JULY 2009

JOINT COMMUNIQUÉ

1. The eighth North South Ministerial Council meeting in Language Body sectoral format was held in Gaoth Dobhair on 9 July 2009.
2. The meeting was attended by Éamon Ó Cuív TD, Minister for Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs, Nelson McCausland, MLA, Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure and Caitríona Ruane MLA, Minister for Education. Minister O'Cuív chaired the meeting.
3. The meeting dealt with issues relating to the Language Body and its two constituent agencies, Foras na Gaeilge (The Irish Language Agency) and Tha Boord o Ulstèr Scotch (The Ulster Scots Agency).

Progress Reports

4. The Council received progress reports from the Chairpersons and the Chief Executives of Foras na Gaeilge (An tUas Liam Ó Maoilmhichíl and An tUas Ferdie Mac an Fhailigh) and tha Boord o Ulstèr Scotch (Mr Mark Thompson and Mr George Patton). The Council noted the ongoing collaboration between the Agencies on a range of projects.

North/South Language Body Annual Reports and Accounts

5. The Council noted progress on the Annual Reports and Accounts for the North South Language Body. Both Agencies, in conjunction with the Sponsor Departments, are continuing to address outstanding issues in relation to the Annual Reports and Accounts as a priority. The Council requested a further report on progress to the next NSMC meeting in Language sectoral format.

Foras na Gaeilge Staffing and Decentralisation

6. The Council discussed staffing issues in Foras na Gaeilge and the decentralisation of Foras na Gaeilge staff to Gaoth Dobhair. It asked the sponsor Departments to continue to examine the Foras na Gaeilge staffing submission in light of the 2009 financial allocation. Two posts for Belfast, which were approved by the NSMC in 2008, were filled in February 2009.

Ulster-Scots Agency Revised Financial Assistance Scheme

7. The Council discussed and approved the introduction of a revised Financial Assistance Scheme for use by the Ulster-Scots Agency. The amended Financial Assistance Scheme extends the scheme to consideration of applications relating to travel claims, community workers and "project start date payments" for events. These and other changes are designed to improve the practical operation of the Scheme

Board Members

8. The Council noted the resignation of Mark Thompson as Chairperson of the Boord o Ulstèr Scotch and acknowledged his contribution to the work tha Boord.
9. The Council approved the appointment of Peter Gallagher to the Board of the North South Language Body from 9 July 2009 to 12 December 2011. Mr Gallagher will have responsibility for the exercise of the functions of the Body through Foras na Gaeilge.

Date of next meeting

10. The Council agreed to hold its next meeting in Language sectoral format in November/December 2009.

**Joint Secretariat
9 July 2009**