

North South Ministerial Council
Joint Secretariat



An Chomhairle Aireachta
Thuaidh Theas
An Chomhrúnaíocht

PAPER NSMC TOU 1 (11) JC

NORTH SOUTH MINISTERIAL COUNCIL

TOURISM SECTORAL FORMAT

NSMC JOINT SECRETARIAT OFFICES, ARMAGH

3 FEBRUARY 2011

JOINT COMMUNIQUÉ

1. The eleventh North South Ministerial Council meeting in Tourism sectoral format was held in the NSMC Joint Secretariat Offices, Armagh on Thursday, 3 February 2011. The meeting was attended by Arlene Foster MLA, Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment, Junior Minister Gerry Kelly MLA and Mary Hanafin, Minister for Tourism, Culture and Sport and Minister for Enterprise, Trade and Innovation. Minister Foster chaired the meeting.
2. Ministers received a report from the Chairperson of Tourism Ireland, Mr Hugh Friel on the body's achievements against the five goals it had set for 2010 and on the continued difficult global conditions which had a negative impact on tourism performance in 2010.
3. The Council also received a presentation from the CEO of Tourism Ireland, Mr Niall Gibbons, on market performance in 2010 and prospects for 2011. The Council noted Tourism Ireland's Draft Corporate Plan for the 2011 – 2013 period. Amongst the key priorities for this period are:-
 - returning to growth in visitor numbers to the island of Ireland from all major overseas markets;

- growing revenue, visitors and promotable numbers to Northern Ireland;
 - a return to growth from the GB market following a 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 is strengthened in line with consumer trends.
4. The Council also noted Tourism Ireland's Business Plan for 2011. The Plan aims to return to growth in overseas visitors to the island from all markets with up to 4% in overseas visitor numbers and 7.4% in associated revenue being targeted. Particular focus will be placed on the GB market which remains the most important overseas tourist market for the island of Ireland.
 5. Ministers noted the resignation of Moira McNamara from the Board of Tourism Ireland Limited and approved the appointment of Maurice Pratt in place of Ms McNamara. Mr Pratt previously held senior positions in a number of Irish companies and is a past President of the Irish Business and Employers Confederation. In December 2008 he was appointed chair of the Tourism Renewal Group charged with reviewing and renewing Irish tourism strategy and in 2010 he chaired Tourism Ireland's "Great Britain Steering Group" which was established to develop a strategy to return this market to growth from 2011. Ministers expressed their thanks for the contribution that Ms McNamara made to the work of the Board.
 6. The Council agreed to meet again in Tourism sectoral format in Summer 2011.

Joint Secretariat
3 February 2011