

22 February 1999

To: Mr McDonnell

cc Mr Gamble
File

From: D McLean
Strategy Review Unit

NI ASSEMBLY: FIRST DAY BRIEFING FOR SHADOW MINISTERS

1. Your minute to Mr Gamble, dated 17 February, seeking an input to the first day brief for Shadow Ministers refers.
2. Please find attached a suggested input in relation to strategy review.


D McLean

G/M Matthew 24/2
Please open a new
file

"Briefing for Shadow
Ministers"
Bernie

BRIEFING ON SPECIFIC DED POLICIES/PROGRAMMES FOR FIRST MINISTER/DEPUTY FIRST MINISTER/ SHADOW MINISTER (when appointed)

1. Economic Development Strategy Review

2. Background

The current economic development strategy was set out in "Competing in the 1990s" published in 1990 and reviewed in 1995 in the document entitled "Growing Competitively".

The Minister for the Economy, Mr Ingram, announced a fundamental review of the current strategy in January 1998 in light of:

- (i) The time elapsed since the current strategy was developed.
- (ii) Changes in the global economy and the pace of technological change.
- (iii) The prospect of a devolved administration in Northern Ireland

The aim of the review was to develop a new economic development strategy for Northern Ireland up to the year 2010 which would accelerate the rate of economic growth in the region. The review was to be carried out as a collaborative exercise involving both the private and public sectors.

To oversee the production of the new strategy, a Strategy Steering Group comprising representatives of the Northern Ireland business community, the trade union movement and officials of DED was established. To assist in the work a total of 18 industry led sector and cross sector working groups were established. A Consultation Panel was also established, representing a wide range of interests. In all over 300 people from the private, public, community and voluntary sectors have been participating in the review.

3. Current Position

The work on the strategy review is nearing completion. The Strategy Steering Group is in the process of finalising a draft strategy document, taking into consideration the analysis and suggestions from the working groups and other consultees. They intend to submit the draft document to the new administration for further consideration and decision on the way forward.