

new file

file: Committee of the Centre

**The Office of the First Minister
and Deputy First Minister**

Machinery of Government Division

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From: Deirdre Griffith
Date: 10 April 2001

Copy list: see below

To: OFMDFM Heads of Divisions

**COMMITTEE OF THE CENTRE FORWARD WORK
PROGRAMME**

Following a meeting with the Committee Clerks, the Clerks produced the attached list of items which may come forward to the Committee, based on information given to them in the Programme for Government and the draft Corporate Plan. They have asked for an update on each of the areas listed, as indicated in the Comments column. Please note that the comments are not prescriptive, the Clerks are simply looking for an idea of the current position on these topics.

I would be grateful if you could look at each of the items within your area of responsibility and provide a short update suitable for return to the Committee. There are some items on the list which you may wish to discuss before providing any comment. Please contact Linda McCausland (ext 20055) or myself to discuss.

The Clerks are finalising the work programme for the Committee for their next meeting after the recess and it would therefore be helpful to have comments as soon as possible.

Deirdre Griffith

Deirdre Griffith
Machinery of Government Division

Copy List:

For action –

Mr Stewart
Mrs McAuley
Ms Smith
Mr Vincent
Mr Rooney
Mr Cameron
Mr Canavan
Mrs Devlin
Mrs Flanagan
Mrs Angus
Dr Smyth
Mr McKervill
Mr Wheeler

For information –

Mr McCusker
Mr Haire
Mr Mackenzie
Mrs Bunting
Mr McCartney

**Items likely to come forward from OFMDFM to
Committee of the Centre the Centre**

June 2001	Implementing the Freedom of Information Act	C P – Page 12	Action Plan & any subordinate legislation?	Paper being prepared to seek views of Executive on way forward.
Oct 2001	Procedures in place to meet legislation requirements in relations to Freedom of Information	C P page 23	How does this link in with above?	This would follow decisions flowing from above.
April 2001	Develop, review and amend ... the relevant operational procedures to ensure effective interaction between the Exec Secret, the Civic Forum & NI Departments	C P page 12	When will these come to Committee for examination?	
April 2001	To agree with the Civic Forum a financial memorandum to set out lines of accountability between OFMDFM & Civic Forum Secretariat	C P Page 13	When will this come to Committee for examination? Budget?	
May 2001	Fully Operational Office to represent Admin interests in EU	C P Page 13	When will final cost be known?	Office planned to be completed by end May. Final costs should be available during June.
Sept 2001	Review role of NI Bureau in Washington	C P Page 13	Terms of Reference? Who is doing & when available	

2001	Regular Forum for NI organisation on EU Issues	PfG – page 69	How is this being done When What is aim of exercise	Not yet started. Aim is to ensure a coherent approach for NI to the EU.
July 2001	To develop a strategy for formulating co-ordinating and implementing policy priorities for promoting the Admin interests within the EU	C P Page 14	Terms of Reference? Who is doing When available	Terms of Reference attached. Led by Junior Ministers. Target date is July 2001.
Sept 2001	To obtain Exec agreement to the main principles of a communication strategy	C P Page 14	For what? Terms of Reference?	
Dec 2001	To develop a strategy related to inward visits and to establish a unit to co-ordinate the handling of such visits	C P Page 14	Terms of Reference?	
Dec 2001	Undertake initial programme studies to promote cross cutting policies	C P Page 15	Clarification on this particular item – what does it refer to?	

Initial discussions held with ^{NI} MEPs, ECOSOC + Co R reports.

May 2001	Complete review of independent economic advice	C P Page 15	On Time? When will it come to committee?	
Sept 2001	Obtain Exec Agreement to a local modernising government action plan	C P page 16	Any consultation? When will Action Plan come to Committee?	A Modernising Government Group drawn from Departments has been set up to consider the content of an action plan. This should be available in early September. There are no plans at present for consultation.
May 2001	Establish an E Government Action Plan for OFMDFM	C P page 23	Consultation exercise? When will Action Plan come to Committee?	
Sept 2001	Obtain Exec agreement of an E Government action plan	C P Page 16		
July 2001	Implement Burden of Proof Directive	C P Page 17	Any subordinate legislation?	
Sept 2001	Complete human rights audit of legislation, policies & procedures	C P page 18		
Nov 2001	Publish future PSI priorities	C P page 18	What is consultation process & timescale	

June 2001	Publish Corporate & business plan for 2001 - 04	C P page 20	On Time ?	
	Transfer of Function Order – Subordinate Legislation (SL1)			

EU POLICY GROUP

TERMS OF REFERENCE:

To identify the most effective strategy for Northern Ireland in the EU and co-ordinate its implementation across departments by:

- Exchanging information on EU aspects of departments' responsibilities;
- Keeping departments abreast of EU policy developments, and providing early identification of the likely impacts on Northern Ireland;
- Initiating policy developments in respect of Northern Ireland's overall approach to the EU and co-ordinating joint working where relevant across departments;
- Maximising the advantages to Northern Ireland from EU membership;
- Identifying opportunities for contributing as fully as possible to the development of the EU;
- Ensuring effective promotion and wider representation of Northern Ireland's interests in EU policy formulation in London and Brussels;
- Providing a check and early warning on compliance with EC Directives.