

John Murphy

10/09/01 09:30

To: Rory.O'Boyle@drdni.gov.uk

cc:

Subject: TMP Visit

Rory

We spoke in July about your request for briefing for the visit by Top Management Programme delegates hosted by Linda Brown.

Attached is some draft material that you may wish to include covering:

The Good Friday Agreement, the various institutions and benefits arising from devolution

Socio-economic briefing

Departmental responsibilities

If you would like anything further please let me know and I will see what we can do.



NI Brief.do

John

Ext 22382

Chris

-Pl. open a new file entitled
'Briefing material'.

-Pl. make up an index sheet something
like

NO	Title/Subject
1	Briefing for Top Mgmt. Prog

DEPT
DRD

-Pl. ^{the} fix index sheet on the left hand side
of the file.

-Tab the attached papers as No 1
-+ update the file list. Thanks Elaine 19/9/01

Introduction

Northern Ireland consists of six of the nine counties of the old Irish province of Ulster. In terms of size it is 85 miles north to south and 110 miles east to west with an area of 5,500 square miles i.e. roughly equivalent to a large English county such as Yorkshire.

The population of around 1.7m people, [58% of whom have a Protestant religious background, and 42% Roman Catholic,] represents 2.8% of the UK population. The age structure of the Northern Ireland population differs significantly from that of any other UK region as it has a higher proportion of children aged under 16 (24.3% compared to 20.4% for UK) but a lower proportion of elderly people (15.2% of pensionable age compared to 18.1% for UK) than the other UK regions.

Devolution Arrangements

The Good Friday Agreement provided a multi-stranded framework document which focused on the establishment of new institutional, constitutional and other arrangements for taking forward the three sets of relationships:

within Northern Ireland;

between Northern Ireland and the Republic; and,

within the British Isles.

Much of the Agreement was given legal effect in the Northern Ireland Act 1998 with the North/South and East/West institutions being established by international Agreements between the British and Irish Governments.

With regard to institutional arrangements within Northern Ireland, the Agreement provides for an inclusive democratically elected Assembly which exercises full executive and legislative authority across a wide range of socio-economic issues devolved from Westminster. The Secretary of State for NI remains responsible for NIO matters not devolved to the Assembly i.e. "excepted" and "reserved" matters including, policing, law and order, prisons and criminal justice.

A North-South Ministerial Council (NSMC) has been established to develop consultation, co-operation and action on an all-island and cross border basis on matters of mutual interest. Six implementation bodies have been established to carry forward policies agreed in the NSMC. In addition the six other areas were identified by both the British and Irish Governments as being suitable for co-operation through existing bodies.

A British Irish Council has also been established to promote mutually beneficial relationships among the peoples of the United Kingdom and Ireland. The Council will exchange information, discuss, consult and use best endeavours to reach agreement on matters of mutual interest. The Council has decided as a priority to examine and develop policies for co-operation on drugs, social exclusion, knowledge economy, the environment and transport.

A standing British Irish Intergovernmental Conference will promote bilateral co-operation on matters of mutual interest between the British and Irish Governments.

The Agreement also provides for the development of a significant human rights and equality agenda in Northern Ireland with new institutions responsible for overseeing safeguards with regard to draft legislation and the adequacy and effectiveness of laws and practices and the promotion of human rights.

Strand One of the Belfast Agreement also provided for the establishment of a Civic Forum which acts as a formal consultative mechanism for civic society to input views on social, economic and cultural issues to the Assembly. The Forum comprises 60 members representing business, trade unions, the voluntary and community sectors and other interested groups in the Northern Ireland community.

The Executive

The First Minister and Deputy First Minister and the ten Departmental Ministers comprise the Executive. Each Minister has full executive authority in his or her respective area of responsibility, within any broad programme agreed by the Executive and endorsed by the Assembly. Ministers must act in accordance with the Pledge of Office. In practical terms the Executive provides a forum for:

- discussion and agreement on issues which cut across the responsibilities of two or more Ministers;
- prioritizing executive business and legislative proposals to be brought before the Assembly;
- recommending a common position where necessary, for example, in dealing with external relationships; and,
- seeking to agree annually, and review as necessary, a programme incorporating an agreed budget linked to policies and programmes.

Assembly Committees

The Assembly has established ten statutory Departmental Committees each with a scrutiny, policy development and consultation role in relation to its Department. They have the power to:

- consider and advise on Departmental budgets and annual plans within the overall budget allocation;
- approve relevant secondary legislation and take the Committee stage of relevant primary legislation;
- call for persons and papers to advise and assist Ministers in forming policy;
- initiate enquiries and make reports;
- consider and advise on matters brought to the Committee by its Minister

A Committee of the Centre has also been established to scrutinise certain functions undertaken by the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister. It has the same powers as the statutory committees.

Benefits of Devolution

Devolution brought about a step change in the politics and governance of Northern Ireland. For the first time in over 30 years the people have the opportunity to elect local representatives to a local Assembly with real powers. These representatives are discussing and making decisions across a broad range of socio-economic issues that affect the whole community.

The Programme for Government agreed by the Executive and Assembly provides a comprehensive blueprint covering the aims, priorities and intended actions of the Administration to address the real problems that NI faces in terms of the following key priorities:

- Growing as a community
- Working for a healthier people
- Investing in education and skills
- Securing a competitive economy
- Developing North/South, East/West and international relations.

	NI	UK
	+46.6%	+46.2%
Seasonally Adjusted Employee Jobs	+19.1%	+4.9%

The PfG links the work of Departments and agencies across over 230 actions in some 30 sections, creating a new sense of direction and priority for public services in a transparent manner thereby creating thereby creating more accountable Government. Spending plans supporting these actions were announced in the first locally determined Budget in almost 30 years which allocated £5.7bn across the 11 Departments.

Major policy reviews flowing from the PfG have already been taken forward on, for example, Post Primary Education, Acute Hospital Services and a Regional Transport Strategy. This is a significant achievement given a 108 member legislature (6 elected from each of the 18 Westminster constituencies) representing ten political parties, a system of Committees to closely scrutinize the work of the Departments, and an Executive comprising members from the four main political parties.

The successful handling of the Foot and Mouth Disease crisis is a further example of the effective operation of the devolved administration.

Socio-economic Briefing

Industries such as textiles and clothing, engineering and shipbuilding for which Northern Ireland has a distinguished tradition continue to play an important role in the economy. In recent years engineering operations in the automotive components sector and the information and communication technologies sector have developed increasing the diversity of the manufacturing base. Largely due to growth in business services, retailing, hotels and catering the services sector is showing the fastest growth.

Since the start of the 1990's the performance of the Northern Ireland economy has compared favourably with that of the UK.

Percentage Change in Key Economic Indicators Since 1990

	NI	UK
Manufacturing Output	+46.6%	+6.2%
ILO Unemployment	-44.8%	-23.0%
Seasonally Adjusted Employee Jobs	+19.0%	+4.9%

The main economic indicators suggest that the Northern Ireland economy continues to perform well - employment remains at or close to its all time high with unemployment continuing to generally fall. Manufacturing output growth over the year 2000 outperformed the UK.

Around 80% of the total land area is in agricultural use. The combined agri-food industry accounts for 5% of Gross Value Added and 9% of employment, generating approximately one fifth of the total external sales of the production sectors.

The birth rate in Northern Ireland is still higher than GB, although the difference in the respective rates has reduced significantly over the last twenty years. Over the same period infant mortality rates have also fallen significantly with the 1998 rate being lower than the UK average.

Northern Ireland has the second highest standardized death rate in the UK for all ages. Heart disease, cancer and respiratory disease continue to be the main causes of death in both sexes; other significant causes include stroke, accidents and suicide.

In the education sector the transfer of pupils from primary to secondary education at the age of 11 in most areas is on a selective basis to either a High School/College (similar to a comprehensive in England) or a Grammar School. All secondary level pupils follow a common curriculum based on 6 broad areas of study - English, mathematics, science and technology, the environment and society, creative and expressive studies, and language studies.

In 1999/2000 71% of 16-17 year olds remained in full-time education compared to 64% in England. The rate of entry of young people to higher education was 41% in 1998/99 compared to 31-32% in GB. These statistics may be linked, inter alia, to the high achievement at NI schools. School performance information shows that NI pupils perform better in GCSE and 'A' Level examinations than pupils in England and Wales. In 1999/2000 57% of pupils in NI gained 5 or more GCSE's at Grade C or better compared to 49% in England and 49% in Wales. This trend is repeated at 'A' Level with 92% of pupils gaining 2 or more 'A' Levels in 1998/99 compared to 81% in England and 91% in Wales.

Northern Ireland has two universities, The Queens University of Belfast and the University of Ulster. Both universities have international reputations in the fields on engineering, information technology and bioengineering. Approximately 42,000 students are enrolled in universities and teacher training colleges.

There are 17 Colleges of Further and Higher Education which focus on vocational education with a strong tradition of links with industry and business. There are currently circa 90,000 vocational students including 65,000 who are part-time, and a further 60,000 non-vocational students attending the colleges.

Economic policy; equality; liaison with the North/South Ministerial Council, British-Irish Council, British-Irish Intergovernmental Conference, Civic Forum and the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland; European affairs; international matters; liaison with the International Fund for Ireland; the Information Service; community relations; public appointments policy; honours; freedom of information; victims; Nolan standards; women's issues; policy innovation; public service improvement.

Department of Agriculture and Rural Development

Food; farming and environment policy; agri-food development; veterinary matters; Science Service; rural development; forestry; sea fisheries; rivers.

Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure

Arts and culture; sport and leisure; libraries and museums; Armagh Planetarium; Ulster Historical Foundation; inland waterways; inland fisheries; Ordnance Survey; Public records Office; language policy; lottery matters; millennium events and companies; visitor amenities.

Department of Education

Schools funding and administration; special education; school effectiveness; school planning and provision; Schools Inspectorate; pre-school education; Youth service; teachers (numbers and remuneration); Education and Library Boards appointments.

Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment

Economic development policy; industry, IDB and LEDU; research and development, IRFU; tourism; Health and Safety Executive; Employment Medical Advisory Service; company regulation; consumer affairs; energy policy; Minerals and Petroleum Unit; NICO; company training grants schemes; Company Development Programme and Explorers.

Department of the Environment

Departmental Responsibilities

Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister

Economic policy; equality; liaison with the North/South Ministerial Council, British-Irish Council, British-Irish Intergovernmental Conference, Civic Forum and the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland; European affairs; international matters; liaison with the International Fund for Ireland; the Information Service; community relations; public appointments policy; honours; freedom of information; victims; Nolan standards; women's issues; policy innovation; public service improvement.

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Department of the Environment

Planning control; environment and heritage; protection of the countryside; waste management; pollution control; wildlife protection; local government; sustainable development; mineral resources (planning aspects); Driver and Vehicle Testing agency; road safety; Driver and Vehicle Licensing agency; transport licensing and enforcement.

Department of Finance and Personnel

Finance; personnel; IT and common services; accommodation; legal services; NI Statistics and Research Agency; Land Registry; Rates Collection Agency; Valuation and Lands Agency; Construction Service; NI Construction Industry Advisory Council; Government Purchasing Agency; Office of Law Reform.

Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety

Health; social services; public health and safety; health promotion; Fire Authority.

Department of Higher and Further Education, Training and Employment

Higher education; further education; vocational training; employment services; employment law and labour relations; teacher training and teacher education; student support and postgraduate awards; training grants.

Department for Regional Development

Transport planning; public transport; roads; rail; ports and airports; city visioning; water; strategic planning.

Department for Social Development

Housing policy; Northern Ireland Housing Executive; voluntary activity; urban renewal; community sector; Laganside Corporation; Rent Assessment Panel; Housing Benefit Review Boards; Social Security Agency; Child Support Agency; Lands Division; Independent Tribunal Service; Office of the Social Fund Commissioner; social legislation.

 Tom Watson
16/07/2001 11:26

To: John Murphy/OFMDFM/DFP@DFP
cc:

Subject: TMP Visit

John

To see below

Perhaps you should have a word with Rory O'Boyle on this. I'm not sure that we can offer much on (1). I am not sure what is meant by (2) - but presumably we can do something on (3). Might also be useful to know when he wants this material - i.e. will there still be an Assembly?

Tom

----- Forwarded by Tom Watson/OFMDFM/DFP on 07/16/2001 11:27 AM -----

 Ken Stevenson
07/16/2001 09:48 AM

To: Tom Watson/OFMDFM/DFP@DFP
cc: Rory.O'Boyle@drdni.gov.uk

Subject: TMP Visit

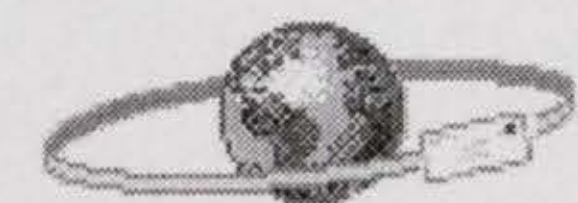
Tom

I've spoken to Jane McNeill about this request from Rory O'Boyle. It has been suggested that this is something that would fall to OFMDFM. Can you liaise with Rory and provide him with the necessary brief for Linda Brown's visit of Top Management Programme delegates (1-2 November).

Thanks.

Ken

----- Forwarded by Ken Stevenson/OFMDFM/DFP on 07/16/2001 09:44 AM -----



"O'Boyle, Rory" <Rory.O'Boyle@drdni.gov.uk> on 07/09/2001 03:19:30 PM

To: "'ken.stevenson@ofmdfmi.gov.uk'" <ken.stevenson@ofmdfmi.gov.uk>
cc:

Subject: TMP Visit

Ken, Linda Brown the Deputy Secretary of DRD is hosting a visit of Top Management Programme delegates to Northern Ireland between 1-2 November 2001. We require general briefing on a number of issues as all the other delegates are from outside the province. If you could help us with:

Northern Ireland in terms of Politics and Economically, its development and its key players.

province

Departments:
it would be greatly appreciated.

Note

Rory would prepare a brief on information to the delegates ahead of the visit - it would not be too late to prepare this by the end of Sept.

During the visit the delegates will meet the chief constable
Major Hamilton DSD from Sec 1
Peter Robinson
Martin McGuinness.

JH

With Thanks

RORY O BOYLE
TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT BRANCH
DRD

44227.