

FROM: ROSALIE FLANAGAN  
CENTRAL SECRETARIAT  
26 OCTOBER 1998



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*21/10/98*

MR JEFFREY - O

**PROPOSED DEPARTMENTAL PORTFOLIOS**

1. You asked for a note summarising the current proposals from the parties on Departmental portfolios for the new administration.
2. A paper from Paul Sweeney went to First and Deputy First Ministers at the end of August. It set out four possible options for Departmental structures ranging from seven to ten Departments. The ten Department option included a number of sub-options as to what the tenth Department should be. In early September the First and Deputy First Ministers met bilaterally with the parties to discuss this paper. A further meeting was held with a SDLP delegation on 9 September.

**SDLP Proposals**

3. The SDLP were proposing a ten Department model with a number of cross-cutting functions - Community Relations, Co-ordination of EU Matters, Equality-housed at the centre as part of an enhanced Central Secretariat under the Office of the First and Deputy First Minister. Their proposed Departments were:
  - Finance & Local Government
  - Environment Infrastructure
  - Social Support & Development
  - Health & Community Care
  - Education

- Enterprise, Training & Investment
- Agriculture & Natural Resources
- Environment & Personal Health and Safety
- Employment & Human Resource Development
- Tourism, Culture, Leisure.

I understand that Mr Semple has been speaking to Eddie McGrady of the SDLP recently and Mr McGrady had promised to forward a paper setting out the latest SDLP proposals. However, this has not yet emerged.

### **UUP Proposals**

4. Earlier this month Reg Empey (UUP) gave Mr Semple a paper setting out two possible options for New Departmental Structures. Northern Ireland Departments' comments on these options were given to the First Minister's office on 20 October 1998. Both options were for seven Departmental portfolios, with the second including a strengthened Central Secretariat as follows:-

#### **Option 1**

- Central Secretariat (under the First and Deputy First Minister)
- Development & Transport
- Environmental Protection
- Enterprise, Trade & Investment
- Finance & Personnel
- Education & Training
- Agriculture & Rural Development
- Health

#### **Option 2**

- Central Secretariat including DFP (under the First and Deputy First Minister)



- Health
- Arts, Culture & Tourism
- Development & Transport
- Environmental Protection
- Enterprise, Trade & Investment
- Education & Training
- Agriculture & Rural Development

5. The differences between these options are that in the first the Department of Finance & Personnel would exist separately, while in the second it would be part of Central Secretariat, and in the second the seventh Department would be Arts, Culture and Tourism taking functions from some of the Departments in the first option.

### **Sinn Fein Proposals**

6. Proposed Departmental structures were also received from Sinn Fein, and again ten Departments are envisaged by that party.

- Agriculture & Fisheries
- Economic Development
- Health & Social Services
- Education
- Environment & Public Services
- Infrastructure & Development
- Finance & Legal Services
- Equality & Social Inclusion
- Tourism, Arts, Culture & Heritage
- Training, Employment & Social Security

## Legislation requirements

7. There is a reluctance by the UUP to come to an agreement on Departmental structures, for political reasons. However, there is a major difficulty with any great delay in resolving the structures, since the timescale for putting through the necessary legislation to establish new Departments and transfer functions between them is severely restricted. The legislation will all have to be made before the Privy Council meeting of 16 December 1998.

*[Signed Rosalie Flanagan]*

**ROSALIE FLANAGAN**

**☎ 28420**

### **Copy Distribution:**

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