

**Northern Ireland Executive**

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**Draft Programme for Government**

**Reinvestment and Reform**

**23 September 2002**



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## SEEKING YOUR VIEWS

The Executive is presenting this draft Programme for Government to the Assembly alongside its Budget proposals. Both documents have been developed in the light of the responses from Assembly Committees and others to the Position Report published on 5 June.

In this second phase of our annual consultation, we also want to hear the views of as wide a range of interests as possible, including the social partners in business, the trades unions, the voluntary and community sector, local government and the wider public sector, as well as individuals. In the light of these and the Assembly's views, we will then submit final proposals to the Assembly later in the autumn.

We encourage all interested parties to respond before 15<sup>th</sup> November.

### **Copies of this document**

We can send you this draft Programme for Government in Word or in hard copy – or you can access it on the Internet at: [www.pfgni.gov.uk](http://www.pfgni.gov.uk). However, if the report is not in a format that suits your needs, please let us know and we will try to make alternative arrangements.

### **Contact Details**

Comments should be sent to arrive no later than 15<sup>th</sup> November 2002 to:

Kathryn Menary  
Economic Policy Unit  
Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister  
Room E5.20  
Castle Buildings  
Stormont  
BELFAST  
BT4 3SG

Telephone: (028) 9052 8204

Textphone: (028) 9052 2526

Email: [pfg@ofmdfmni.gov.uk](mailto:pfg@ofmdfmni.gov.uk)

You can also comment via our website: [www.pfgni.gov.uk](http://www.pfgni.gov.uk). We plan to make available further information on the development of the Programme for Government on our website as well as details of consultation responses. If you do not wish your response to be published in total or in part on the website, you should make this clear in your response to us.



## I. INTRODUCTION

- I.1 In the Executive's first Programme for Government, we identified "making a difference" as a guiding principle for our work. We wanted then to show through the Programme for Government how devolution could make a real and positive difference to economic and social life in Northern Ireland. We developed this theme further last year with a sharper focus on the policy context, and in our Public Service Agreements and Service Delivery Agreements, on what we as an administration intended to achieve.
- I.2 Since the institutions were established in December 1999, the Executive has demonstrated a continuing commitment to making a difference by tackling the key issues and problems facing Northern Ireland and to accounting for the progress we made, publishing in July 2002 our first detailed annual report on progress on our first Programme for Government.
- I.3 In the context of the Programme for Government, we have prioritised our work under a set of headings which have remained constant since the first programme. They are:
- Growing as a Community
  - Working for a Healthier People
  - Investing in Education and Skills
  - Securing a Competitive Economy
  - Developing Relations - North/South, East/West and Internationally
- I.4 These priorities remain as valid today as they were 3 years ago. Under each of them, we have delivered real progress through concerted, directed effort by the public sector and the wider community working in partnership.
- I.5 We have, for example, widened access to third level education through abolishing some further education fees and introduced free travel on public transport for older people. We have made clear our commitment to improve health, publishing a new cross-departmental strategy "Investing for Health". We have also invested significantly in our infrastructure, increasing spending on roads, rail and buses and agreeing grant aid to allow the construction of gas pipelines that will bring access to natural gas to thousands of new homes. But we are under no illusion as to the scale of the task which remains. This year, we are using this Programme for Government to place at the heart of the work of the administration the twin elements we believe must underpin our efforts to make a difference to Northern Ireland in the years ahead. They are **reinvestment** and **reform**.
- I.6 No-one doubts that the years of direct rule left a legacy of an investment deficit across many areas. From the inception of the Executive, we have made investment a priority. The fruits of that investment take time to emerge, and we recognise the frustration in areas like health at a time when the demand for services is increasing and the problems being faced on the ground are if anything becoming more pressing.

- 1.7 To tackle the legacy of under-investment we have to explore all avenues. We have shifted resources to focus on areas of greatest need as far as is possible from within our limited existing resources. We have also looked beyond the basic budget and sought imaginative solutions. As a result we have successfully negotiated with the Prime Minister and the Chancellor of the Exchequer a package of measures to meet our pressing needs. We announced on 2 July 2002 the first phase of strategic investment on infrastructure amounting to £270m. We have already outlined a number of projects which we can take forward including the new Cancer Centre.
- 1.8 Alongside the strategic investment in infrastructure, we need to reform the way that public services are delivered, sourced and managed. There is no single solution to this issue which concerns administrations world-wide, but rather the need for a series of complementary and targeted approaches. The Review of Public Administration is central to this area of work. It offers the opportunity to modernise the public service in a way which meets the needs of the devolved government, but it is only one part of the answer. We need to generate a willingness to take a creative approach to the way government operates, putting the needs of our citizens at the core. That must include innovative management and financing of the infrastructure programme. It must also include building on the successful partnership approach to government by drawing in local government, the social partners and the community itself.
- 1.9 The twin-track approach of reinvestment and reform provides a clear focus for the work of the Executive, building on the priorities that we have already identified for our Programme for Government. The Executive remains committed to the concept that sustainable economic and social improvement must go hand in hand if we are to create a society with which we can all feel comfortable and in which we can all take pride. The reinvestment and reform approach will reinforce our efforts to tackle poverty, promote social inclusion and regenerate communities. In establishing this new focus we are working innovatively to build on the strategic objectives pursued by the Executive since it came into being: objectives of equality, partnership, sustainability and prosperity.
- 1.10 We also face deep divisions in our society, however, we are committed to overcoming all intolerance, sectarianism and distrust. Building trust and promoting reconciliation will take time and requires concerted and long-term action not just by government but by all in our society working in partnership. The Executive has a vital contribution to make through promoting better relations. This is necessary not only to grow as a community, but also to maximise our potential for economic development, which demonstrates the cross-cutting nature of the challenges facing us.
- 1.11 In the following chapters we set out how these core themes are to be pursued and how they intertwine.



## 2. THE POLICY CONTEXT

### Introduction

- 2.1 This Programme for Government sets out the policies, programmes and actions the Executive proposes to pursue in the forthcoming years to bring about substantive improvements. These activities must be based on a clear appreciation of the context in which they are needed and should be implemented. This chapter summarises the overall economic, social and environmental context in which our policies operate.
- 2.2 The economic, social and environmental dimensions are closely inter-related. We have endorsed already the principles of sustainable development which seeks to integrate these three dimensions. We acknowledge in our approach to sustainable development that the lifestyle we choose impacts on others around us, both locally and in the wider world. Consequently we need to be alert to the effect our policies and programmes can have on the quality of the social, economic and environmental life of our people, both now and for the years to come. Improvements in the economy have the potential to bring about significant generation of wealth and benefits to society (for example through reductions in deprivation) whilst a downturn in economic fortunes can have serious social consequences. The relationship between the economic and environmental dimensions is rather more complex. Whilst the condition of the environment can impact positively on the economy, in particular tourism, if economic development is not carefully managed it may not be environmentally sustainable which could put economic progress for future generations at risk. The inter-relationships can be clearly seen in the work across Government where individual departmental actions may have an impact on priorities which are the responsibility of other departments.
- 2.3 The role of government varies significantly between programmes. For programmes such as education and health, government is the principal provider - ensuring that members of the community have access to a minimum acceptable standard of service. In respect of the economy, government's most effective role is as a facilitator to help promote the conditions for economic growth and development. It is also important to appreciate that government interventions are also heavily influenced by external considerations. In a small region such as Northern Ireland, policy interventions by the devolved administration are frequently constrained by external factors (UK, EU or international laws and conventions). The enlargement of the EU to encompass Eastern European states may also shift the focus of economic activity away from regions on the periphery. An enlarged EU will also raise issues in terms of the EU budget and the provision of Structural Fund support.
- 2.4 The following sections present a short assessment of the main recent economic, social and environmental trends in Northern Ireland. The analysis contained in this and subsequent chapters also draws on the recent work for the Needs and Effectiveness Evaluations (NEEs) which examined the needs and effectiveness of major spending programmes. Such an assessment defines the context for establishing policy priorities. Our approach therefore is to set out

the challenges facing Northern Ireland, the way they are being addressed and the priority issues upon which the Executive intends to focus efforts over the next three-year period. It also must be recognised that, of the many challenges that presently exist, not all are amenable to policy intervention by the Executive.

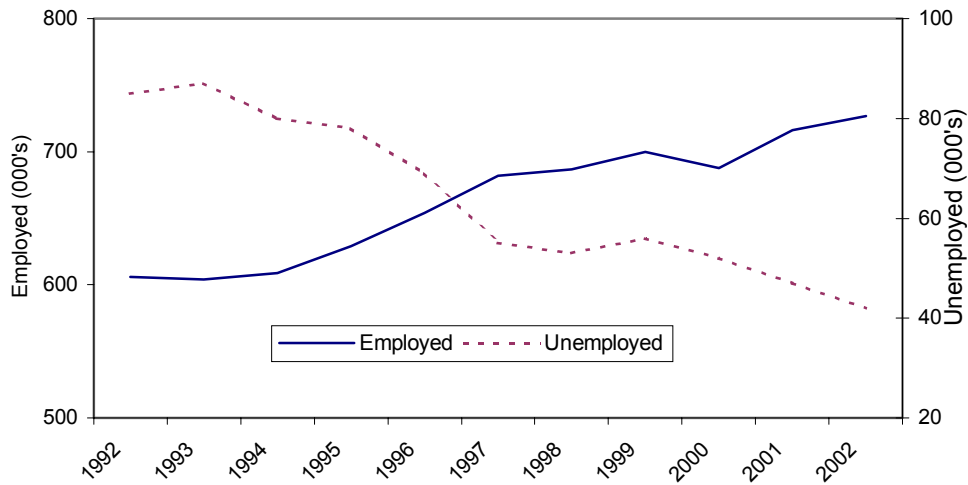
### **Demography**

- 2.5 There are currently 1.7 million people living in NI. The population is relatively young (with 22 % of the population aged under 15, compared to 19 % in GB and 22% in RoI) and our birth rate is the highest in the UK at 12.7 births per 1,000 population (England 11.5 per 1,000; Scotland 10.4 per 1,000 and Wales 10.6 per 1,000, while the RoI level is 14.4 per 1,000). The birth rate is falling however and the population level is expected to peak at 1.8m in the late 2020s. In the past, our fast growing population has been considered a constraint upon economic growth because of the pressures that this labour supply placed on the local labour market resulting in higher unemployment rates and greater inactivity rates. This influence is likely to change in the coming years. The population of many EU regions is expected to fall. The population here is expected to continue rising, until at least 2026, resulting in a population younger than most other industrialised countries.
- 2.6 Given that our life expectancy has increased significantly – with males now expected to live for 74 years and females for 79 years, there will be a growing number of older people to be cared for/supported in future years. This will have significant implications for a wide range of public services including health, personal social services, education and housing.

### **The Economic Context**

- 2.7 The Northern Ireland economy has experienced a general improvement in its main indicators over the last decade, particularly in the local labour market and indeed has outperformed the UK as a whole. Unemployment has fallen to its lowest level since 1975 with a corresponding growth in employment to a level never previously experienced, with 724,000 people now in employment (Chart 1).

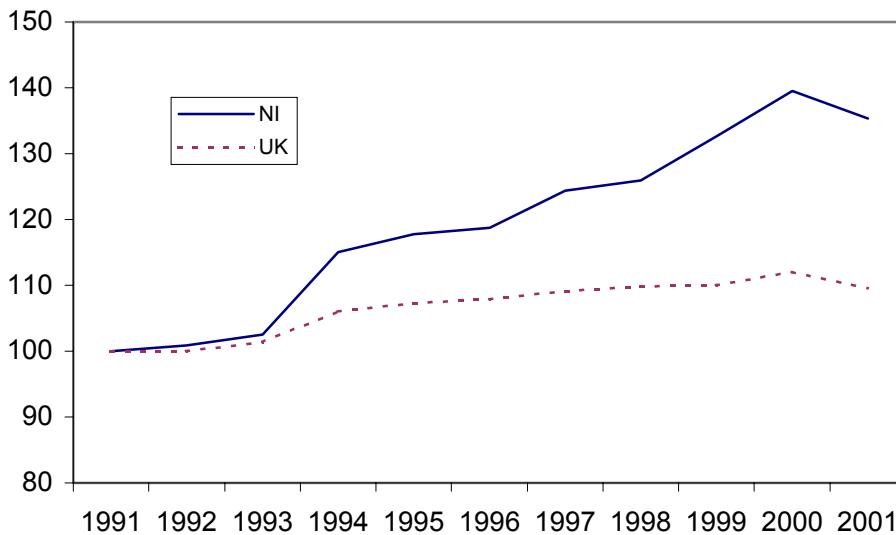
Chart 1: NI Employment and Unemployment, 1992 – 2002 (000's)



Source: Labour Force Survey Figures for spring of each year

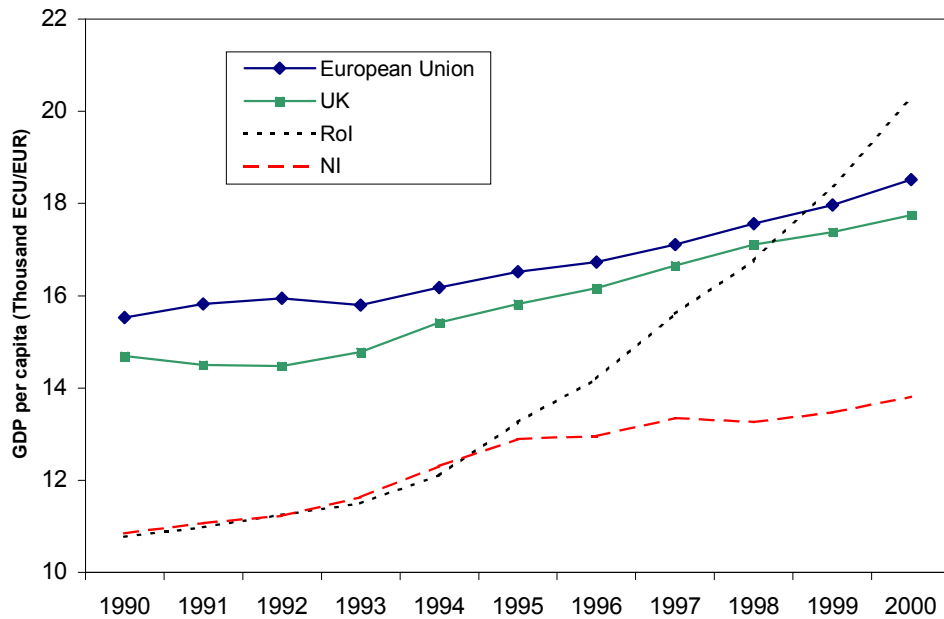
2.8 Over the same period industrial output has increased at a faster rate than achieved by the UK as a whole (chart 2). There has also been some limited convergence in Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capita rates with the UK average over the past decade although NI still lags considerably behind that average which is in turn, below the EU average. Chart 3 also presents the step-change in economic growth experienced in the RoI over the same period due to an optimal mix of policy instruments and favourable business conditions.

Chart 2: NI and UK Manufacturing Output, 1991 – 2001 (1991=100)



Source: DETI and National Statistics

Chart 3: EU, UK, Rol and NI GDP per capita 1990-2000



Source: Eurostat/OECD/National Statistics

- 2.9 In seeking to create an environment conducive to economic growth and expansion, there are a number of constraints. The industrial mix within our economy is reliant on more mature, ‘traditional’ industries and less on high-tech, innovative sectors with high value-added products and processes and high profit levels. Even so, there has been some improvement with the industrial structure gradually shifting towards higher value added activities, including knowledge based services, as these sectors expand. Problems remain as parts of the economy such as agriculture, textiles and clothing are vulnerable to external factors such as EU Structural Funds reform or low cost labour in emerging nations. These issues have to be dealt with. Looking into the future, the Executive has, with its endorsement of a Regional Innovation Strategy for NI, acknowledged the need to move the focus of economic activity in the local economy. To achieve this, action is required across a number of departments to overcome existing structural constraints.
- 2.10 While there have been significant improvements in the main labour market indicators, there remain structural problems that need to be addressed. Long-term unemployment (with 40.3% of those unemployed having been so for a period in excess of 12 months) continues to be well above the UK average. These individuals are in danger of becoming effectively removed from the labour force as their skills and suitability to employers diminishes. There is also an ongoing problem in terms of the skills base that exists in the local labour force. Local employers report that over 40 % of ‘difficult to fill’ vacancies are due to external skill shortages.
- 2.11 Educational attainment is a key factor for growth for a knowledge-based economy through both improved productivity and as an incentive to attract inward investment. One of the key strengths of the local economy is the

entrance of young and well-qualified school leavers where attainment rates have consistently been well ahead of those in England and Wales. Despite the relatively high achievement rates, our working population as a whole remains less qualified than the UK average with a large proportion lacking basic literacy skills. Some 24 % of the 16 – 65 age group have only the lowest level of literacy ability, compared to 22% in GB and 23% in RoI. There is emerging evidence, however, that the situation is improving as the impacts of historical underachievement are eroded. Enrolments in post-school vocational courses have increased by 28 % over the decade to 2000/01.

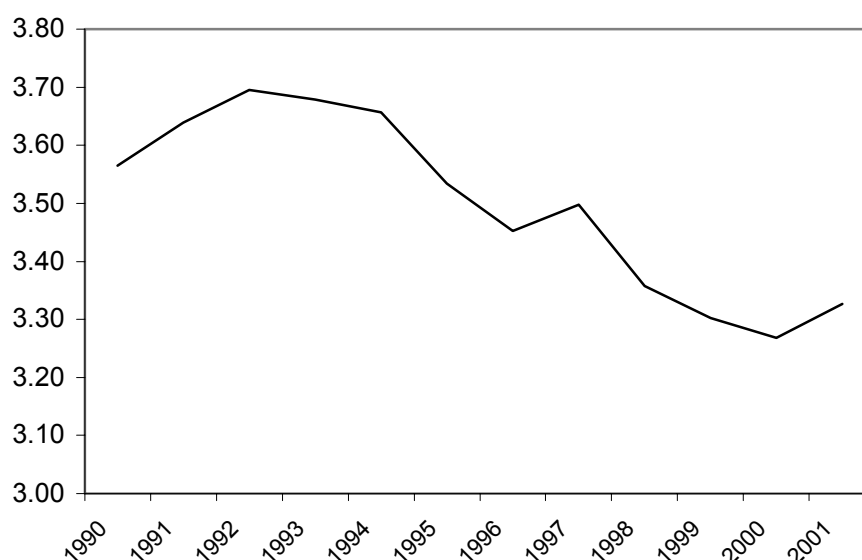
- 2.12 A constraint to economic development (that also impacts on the social and environmental dimensions) relates to shortfalls in infrastructure provision. The ability to communicate, trade and transport in an efficient manner is a primary factor in economic development. The recent PPP Working Group reported that the cost of addressing the backlog in infrastructure investment in Northern Ireland might be as much as £6bn over the next decade. The Executive has recognised the importance of high quality infrastructure to economic and social development through the Reinvestment and Reform Initiative. The Executive has also decided to support energy infrastructure, grant aiding the construction of gas pipelines to bring access to natural gas to local business, commerce and residents.
- 2.13 There is also a wider labour market concern – the high levels of economic inactivity. While female participation rates have been increasing over the last decade, there is a concern that overall economic activity rates are still below the UK and EU averages. The existence of high numbers of long term unemployed in the past has exerted an influence here, with movement from unemployment into inactivity as the eligibility criteria for unemployment assistance tightened.
- 2.14 The larger size of the public sector within Northern Ireland has been seen in the past as a barrier to increased economic growth though in time of recession has helped to buffer us from the worst effects. A stable and peaceful environment should provide the opportunity for accelerated private sector growth.

### **The Social Context**

- 2.15 Whilst there have generally been improvements in our health over time, the population here is regarded as being in relatively poor health. Our death rate, when adjusted for age structure, is higher than in England or Wales with the most common causes of death being circulatory/respiratory diseases and cancer. Northern Ireland now records the highest rate of new attendances at Accident and Emergency departments. The situation has deteriorated markedly since 1995 when the proportions of those awaiting inpatient treatment were below that recorded in England and Wales. By 2000, Northern Ireland had become the worst UK region in terms of waiting lists for inpatient treatment. This is despite the fact that we had more beds available per 1,000 population than the UK average.

- 2.16 The pressures facing the regional health and personal social services can be expected to increase as the local population becomes older. The health pressures in the region are also greatly influenced by the levels of deprivation experienced in both urban and rural areas. Recent research highlighted that deprivation is concentrated in particular areas in both inner-city urban and rural areas. The Executive's "Investing for Health" strategy is intended to improve the health of people and reduce the inequalities in health status that currently exist.
- 2.17 Inequality in society is closely correlated with deprivation. While progress has been made in reducing inequalities with the ratio of high to low incomes falling (chart 4) there remain significant problems within our society across a range of social groupings. There are significant inequalities such as unemployment rates and earnings across gender and religious groups and also in relation to race and disability. For example, the unemployment rate for Catholic men remains significantly higher than for others. We are committed to combating these inequalities which are frequently mutually reinforcing. For example, deprived children are over three times more likely to leave school without qualifications and the most deprived males have a life expectancy 6.6 years shorter than the most affluent males. The Executive's New Targeting Social Need aims to contribute over time to the reduction of these and other inequalities among different sections of society.

Chart 4: Ratio of Average Earnings of top 10% to bottom 10% in NI.



Source: New Earnings Survey

- 2.18 Inequality and the incidence of deprivation also directly impacts on the provision of education services within NI. Whilst educational attainment rates here are better than in England and Wales at every stage of the school system, too many of our children leave the education system with no qualifications.

2.19 Investment in education and skills should bring long term benefits in terms of economic and social development. However, these benefits are unlikely to be fully realised if there is continuing social unrest within our community. The recent upturn in violence reflects evidence of growing division and mistrust between the two communities. Recent research evidence suggests that while there has been a general improvement in community relations attitudes between Protestants and Roman Catholics since the 1980s, more recently there are indications of decreasing levels of tolerance and respect for diversity. There is also evidence to suggest that there is increasing residential segregation, with a majority of people living in polarised districts. Friction at interface areas has increased recently with criminal justice data indicating a rapidly increasing number of incidents. This segregation is reflected in many aspects of NI society with, for example, some 95 % of children of school age attending separate schools. Such friction also generates significant pressures on housing programmes, resulting in damaged and vacant properties and homelessness.

### **The Environmental Context**

- 2.20 The image of our environment is a green and clean one. The local environment has a rich inheritance incorporating diversity of plant and animal species; variety and quality of landscapes; and an inheritance of archaeological sites and monuments (which includes 8,500 listed buildings and 1,525 scheduled monuments). It is vital that we maintain and protect this inheritance. Directives issued by the EU and national/regional legislation are designed to reflect the imperative of protecting the natural and built environment. Designation of Special Areas of Conservation and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) are examples of policy instruments protecting the environment. These policies are widely used in Northern Ireland. At present, there are nine AONBs in Northern Ireland covering some 20 per cent of the region (compared to equivalent coverage of 16 per cent in England, 4 per cent in Wales and 13 per cent in Scotland). In the Giant's Causeway, we have one of only three natural World Heritage Sites in the UK.
- 2.21 The preservation of the built and natural environment is increasingly challenged by the consequences of economic growth and development. Examples of this can be seen in growing urban expansion, industrial and agricultural pollution. There is a need to harmonise the need for economic growth with our commitments to grow as a community and to maintain a viable environment for future generations in line with the objectives of sustainable development.
- 2.22 Other pressures upon the environment are increasing rapidly. One example of this is the continuing need for housing throughout the region. The Regional Development Strategy forecasts housing growth at a rate of 10,000 new units per annum until 2025. This will place considerable stress on existing transportation links and water and sewerage infrastructure (some of the sewerage system in Belfast is over 100 years old) and will have

implications for other public services. We also need to focus on water quality- our drinking water is of a lower quality when compared to other UK regions, a position that reflects, in particular, the effect of the large investment programme in drinking water infrastructure implemented in England and Wales in recent years.

## **Conclusions**

- 2.23 This analysis has highlighted the many substantial challenges that continue to face the Executive and the Assembly, across the three dimensions of sustainable development (economic, social and environmental). These challenges require action to be taken across all areas in a manner which produces a set of mutually reinforcing outcomes designed to improve the overall economic and social well-being of the population. They also require a need to consider what our priorities should be and how services should be delivered as efficiently and effectively as possible, given that resources are inevitably limited. For many years, the predominant focus in Northern Ireland was on tackling the problem of terrorism and community division. Under direct rule, social and economic issues did not have equal billing and the results of that are all too visible now. We are determined to tackle the challenges we have identified in a coherent and cohesive fashion, but to be successful, we need to work in partnership to produce substantial improvements and to avoid exacerbating our problems through further sectarian and communal disorder.
- 2.24 In the following chapters, we explain in greater detail for each of our priorities, the policy challenges and the sub-priorities we have identified and specific commitments we are making to tackle these challenges. Across all our priorities it is important that we are guided by the vision which we have for the future of Northern Ireland and by our commitment to investment and reform and the improvement of public services.



### **3. INVESTING IN THE FUTURE**

3.1 In the previous chapter we set out the challenges that need to be faced, providing both a context and an evidence base for the Executive's work over the coming years. In this Programme for Government, we identify our response to these challenges and the policies and programmes we will pursue in working to address them.

#### **Our Vision for the Future**

3.2 This context for our work can be set against the vision set out in the Agreement for the future in which Northern Ireland is a peaceful, cohesive, inclusive, prosperous, stable and fair society, firmly founded on the achievement of reconciliation, tolerance and mutual trust and the protection and vindication of the human rights of all. This vision is one based on partnership, equality and mutual respect as the basis of relationships within Northern Ireland, between North and South and between these islands.

3.3 As an Executive, we remain committed to working together, across parties, across departments and with our social partners, to achieve this vision. But we are conscious too of the need to translate it into meaningful actions that tackle real challenges, building on our strengths and addressing the problems that clearly exist.

3.4 Put simply, we see this vision as representing the following:

- A cohesive, inclusive and just society where people can live free from poverty, enjoy equality of opportunity and where there is tolerance of and respect for diversity;
- A society where we deliver real improvements in health and in the quality of treatment and care;
- A well educated society where we build on our strengths, ensuring that young people can reach their full potential, supporting those seeking work and promoting a culture of lifelong learning;
- A society where improvements to our infrastructure, and a strong focus on entrepreneurship and competitiveness, will bring sustainable economic and social benefits;
- A society that looks outward, not inward, ready to co-operate with and learn from the experiences of others.

3.5 To achieve that vision, we need to take collective action across the full range of policy areas, and to do so in a sustained way, whilst being flexible enough to adapt to specific needs and changing circumstances. We also recognise the potential value of setting high level outcome targets in the Programme for Government for the work of the Executive over the longer term. This is an issue which has been raised in consultation and which we want to explore further over the coming months. Identifying appropriate targets that reflect our vision and the key priorities of the administration and where progress can be influenced directly by our policies and programmes is a process that will require careful consideration.

- 3.6 In chapter 1 we highlight the twin focus of the administration on reinvestment and reform. We recognise the need to continue to improve our public services and to find new ways of investing to develop our infrastructure. That continuity is recognised by our ongoing commitment to the five priorities which we adopted in our first Programme for Government. Each subsequent chapter explains the specific actions proposed under those priorities. This chapter addresses the approach the Executive proposes to reinvestment and reform in greater detail.

### **Investing to improve our infrastructure**

- 3.7 The Executive is committed to delivering new and substantial investments in modernising and improving our infrastructure. The review of opportunities for Public Private Partnerships identified a £6 billion investment deficit in areas including roads and transport; schools and hospitals; and our water and sewerage systems. Achieving our goal of securing a competitive economy relies on having the right physical infrastructure in place – our roads and transport networks; our telecommunications network; and our energy infrastructure. Delivering the improvements we want to see in health and in education and training requires improvements to our hospitals and schools and further education estate. Maintaining our clean, green image needs a modern water and sewerage system capable of meeting the highest environmental standards. And, together, the improvements to many aspects of our infrastructure will help us tackle social exclusion and grow as a community.
- 3.8 To achieve this we must be innovative and prudent: innovative in finding new ways to deliver the improvements needed; and prudent in ensuring that we do so spending only what we can afford.

### **Reinvestment and Reform Initiative**

- 3.9 The Reinvestment and Reform Initiative announced on 2 May 2002 was developed to address the basic infrastructure problems we identified across our public services. It was the outcome of detailed discussions and representations with the Prime Minister and the Chancellor of the Exchequer. The Initiative contains several core elements:
- £200 million available for investment in 2002-03 and 2003-04;
  - a new borrowing power for the longer term;
  - the transfer of some strategic security assets to the Executive;
  - the creation of a new strategic investment body; and
  - a major programme of public sector reform to secure greater efficiency and effectiveness.
- 3.10 On 2 July 2002 we made a start in implementing the initiative by announcing the allocation of £270 million to improve key areas of our infrastructure. Funding is being made available for the Cancer Centre; strategic road improvement and structural maintenance, including the widening of the M1 approaching Belfast; and capital investment in water and sewerage

infrastructure. Investment will be made in line with our community's social needs, aimed at improving quality of life.

- 3.11 We also announced that we were beginning work to develop proposals for the use of the strategic security sites being transferred to the Executive. In doing so, we are determined to work in partnership with others, particularly local businesses and local communities, using their experience and expertise to help us develop ideas. We want to make sure that we make the best possible use of what are strategically important assets in a way that can support our priorities and provide real benefits for local communities.
- 3.12 These developments will deliver substantial economic and social benefits. They will not, however, solve the legacy of under-investment and we need to look at other options that will allow us to do this. We will need to decide how to make best use of a new borrowing power which, from 2004/05, will give the Executive and the Assembly the option of using additional revenue to lever low cost borrowing, which could accelerate dramatically the pace of infrastructure investment. This would allow a major investment programme over the coming decade and beyond to help overcome our most acute infrastructure needs and provide an infrastructure capable of sustaining the needs of future generations. It will also mean difficult choices about raising the revenue to pay for better services. But we will not make any such decisions until we have a fairer system than the present rates.

### **The Reform Agenda**

- 3.13 We recognise that it is not enough simply to provide additional resources to tackle the infrastructure deficit. This alone would not produce the scale of change necessary. We cannot simply allocate significant resources to infrastructure without at the same time ensuring that we improve public services as a result. That is why our focus in this Programme for Government is not just on reinvestment but also on reform.
- 3.14 Reform can and should take place at a number of levels and we have identified three main areas of focus: how we finance our work to improve our infrastructure and deliver public services; how we bring about those improvements to public services and public administration; and how the public sector operates, identifying new ways of working that will bring real benefits.

### **Reforming our financial structures**

- 3.15 We want to take an innovative approach to managing and financing our infrastructure programme so that resources are used wisely. The new Strategic Investment Board will ensure that strategic infrastructure is planned and delivered in a way that makes the most of all the means and resources available. It will ensure that the best available expertise in both the public and private sector can be used to take forward our programme of public service investment. We will ensure that strategic infrastructure is more

effectively planned and delivered, using all the available resources and means currently at our disposal.

- 3.16 The extent to which service provision has suffered as a result of under investment was examined in detail by the PPP Working Group during 2002. Furthermore, the Working Group's analysis identified the need for urgent action to prevent the situation from deteriorating further. The Working Group found that we would only have £8 billion of public funds available to fund £14 billion of investment which is needed over the next 10 years to get our public service infrastructure up to standard. This points up clearly the need for us to pursue opportunities for Public Private Partnerships where these offer value for money.
- 3.17 That said, we remain convinced that no single solution – be it borrowing, PPPs or more traditional public expenditure – can meet all our service provision needs. Rather, different funding and procurement approaches will provide solutions in different circumstances and this will be an area in which the strategic investment body will play a key role. Where a PPP solution is appropriate and provides good value for money, we consider that the people involved in delivering services are of paramount importance and we have put in place a number of strong safeguards to ensure that this is properly reflected.
- 3.18 Another area of innovation has been our creation of new Executive Programme Funds (EPFs). These are designed to assist in the implementation of our strategy for adjusting spending plans from previous patterns; to help target resources more accurately at the agreed Programme for Government strategic priorities; and to provide an effective means of promoting cross-cutting work. After two rounds of allocations we have undertaken a review of the EPFs, earlier this year, with a view to improving the existing arrangements. A number of procedural changes have now been introduced aimed at streamlining and refocusing the EPFs to better fulfil their function. Two key changes involve the reduction in the number of Funds from 5 to 4, with the introduction a new Innovation and Modernisation Fund in place of the previous New Directions and Service Modernisation Funds, and the provision of direct access by the community and voluntary sector to the Children's Fund (as outlined more fully at paragraph 4.30).

### **Rating Policy Review**

- 3.19 We want to ensure too, that local revenue is raised in ways that are fair, taking account of the objectives of targeting social need and promoting equality of opportunity. A range of options is set out as a basis for discussion in our consultation paper on Rating Policy and these will need proper consideration by the Executive and the Assembly from October onwards.
- 3.20 We recognise that there are important deficiencies and inequities in the existing domestic rating system, and we can confirm that there is no question of increases above the pattern of recent years unless and until a fair system is in place.

- 3.21 There is an important link with new power to borrow to finance infrastructure investment, which will be provided through the Reinvestment and Reform Initiative. Access to borrowing depends on raising more revenue locally. However, it will be for the Executive and the Assembly to decide whether to use this opportunity and if so to what extent.
- 3.22 The Review of Rating Policy is at the heart of this issue and until that is concluded we cannot address the question of what level of revenue to raise, or how much to borrow. We shall not make any final decisions on the options outlined in the Rating Policy consultation paper until responses have been considered, including the results of an equality impact assessment and a New TSN analysis. The consultation paper and further information on the rating system can be found on the Rating Policy website at [www.ratingpolicyni.gov.uk](http://www.ratingpolicyni.gov.uk).
- 3.23 The Barnett formula that gives Northern Ireland its population share of any change in expenditure on a comparable English programme was the principle means of allocating resources to the Executive in the UK Spending Review 2002, covering the period to 2005/06. We fully accept that a formula is desirable as the basis for allocating finance to the devolved administrations. However, we continue to have concerns about the fairness of the Barnett formula because of its focus on population as the only measure of need and its viability as a funding mechanism in the longer term. We have taken up these concerns with the Treasury and will continue to press the case for review and reform of the formula.

#### **Improving public services**

- 3.24 We want to put the delivery of public services at the core of our Programme for Government. In line with our belief that reinvestment and reform must go together, we need to make real gains in efficiency and effectiveness that will allow resources to be focused where they are most needed and ensure that services are fairly delivered in a way that meets the needs of the citizen.
- 3.25 We have already sought to bring a focus to service delivery in several ways. Last year, we launched six **needs and effectiveness evaluations** to help establish the objective level of need for key public services relative to England and to gather material on how effectively resources are being used to meet the needs of the public. Detailed evaluations have been completed on Health and Social Care; Education (schools); Housing; Vocational Education and Training; Financial Assistance to Industry. The evaluations have been provided to the Assembly Committees for consideration. They provide the core analysis on which the Executive will build the agenda for reform and improvement of public services. Key issues arising from each evaluation are included at relevant sections of this Programme.
- 3.26 We have introduced and published **Public Service Agreements (PSAs) and Service Delivery Agreements (SDAs)** for every department. By setting out clearly in these documents the main outcomes and improvements

sought from the resources provided, we have introduced transparency and clarity into the delivery of services at departmental level.

- 3.27 We are also committed to an agenda of modernising public services, paying particular attention to the **role of e-government** and its ability to improve how we deliver services. In developing our electronic services, we will align ourselves with the recommendations of the **e-Europe Action Plan**, with particular emphasis on targets which aim to connect public administrations and developing work on interactive services, accessible by all.
- 3.28 In July 2001, we set a target that all key public services should be capable of electronic delivery by 2005. The focus of our e-government initiative will be on the needs of the citizen – in future, people will only need to know the service they require rather than the specific department or agency involved in its delivery and will be able to access that service at a time and location that suits them. We have already made good progress in areas such as driver testing and vehicle licensing where appointments can be booked on line; and in the work of the General Register Office (GRO) which currently allows Internet applications for certified copies of entries of births, deaths and marriages. We will continue to develop and enhance the NI government portal planned for 2003. The development of the portal will help ensure that information and services are available electronically, and that information is convenient to find and presented in a way which is easy to read and understand.
- 3.29 To build upon the good progress which has been made to date, we will bring forward and implement a new **e-Government Strategy** which will further help shape public sector services around the needs of all citizens and businesses in Northern Ireland.
- 3.30 We will also take action to ensure that people have access to the skills and technology needed to benefit from e-government, setting targets that ensure that use of the internet within Northern Ireland is at a par with the *Information Elite* countries and taking action to support those groups which research indicates may be disadvantaged in having access to, or making use of, the internet. We will bring forward and implement a strategy on *Bridging the Digital Divide* that contains proposals in these areas.
- 3.31 We have already begun work across departments to **reform the way in which we do business and deliver public services**. An example of the way in which service delivery is being examined at departmental level is in the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development where a wide-ranging modernisation review is taking place. This is focusing on structures and their relevance to customer needs, e-government and the delivery of research, education and technology transfer in the agri-food sector.
- 3.32 Work is also taking place to modernise our health and social services, and to ensure that our education and training systems meet the needs of society and the economy. In line with Great Britain, we are also embarking on an ambitious programme of welfare reform that will provide a combined,

customer-focused jobs and benefits service. The driving force behind all of this work is our desire to bring about real and tangible improvements in how we deliver public services.

- 3.33 We also want to make information about how we plan, manage and deliver public services more accessible. From January 2005, people will be entitled to request access to any information held by our public authorities and, with a number of exemptions, be entitled to receive it provided that it is in the public interest to do so. In preparation for the introduction of this general right of access to information, we will improve systems and processes and the skills of our staff in all government departments and public authorities. All government departments and their public bodies have now adopted, and are maintaining, publication schemes in line with the requirements of the **Freedom of Information Act**. Under these schemes, which are approved by the Independent Information Commissioner, information held by departments and public bodies that is likely to be of public interest will now be published proactively.

#### **Reform Plans**

- 3.34 We have already underlined the importance we attach to modernising government and improving efficiency and effectiveness. Through the Reinvestment and Reform Initiative we have given a commitment to public sector reform, to improve delivery and provide value for money. It is important that people have confidence that public money is being used in the best possible way. Our approach to reform will therefore include a better and more open definition of how services will be delivered to the highest possible standard, through a better focus on the outcomes we want to deliver. Our PSAs provide the basis to demonstrate improvement and reform and we recognise the need to continue to address the quality of targets they contain, ensuring that these targets reflect the improvements we want to see. We also wish to develop departmental plans for reform of service delivery, including efficiency improvements and utilisation of assets. These plans will be completed in the coming weeks and will inform our thinking when we consider the Revised Budget proposals following consultation. Ultimately they will feed into departments' Service Delivery Agreements, which will be developed later in the year and which will include a specific focus on reform.

#### **Changing how the public sector works**

- 3.35 We recognise that reform and modernisation need to focus not just on service delivery but on the structures that support public services and the skills of the people who deliver them. We have therefore embarked on a reform of public administration.
- 3.36 The Northern Ireland community expects and deserves the highest standards of service from the many organisations that make up our current system of public administration. That system, and the people who work in it, have served us well in the face of the many challenges to civic life which have been

faced in recent years. We need now, however, to ensure that, within the new framework of political and financial accountability, public administration here is best organised and managed to ensure it delivers efficiently and effectively the services which the public requires.

- 3.37 We are therefore conducting a **Review of Public Administration** which is taking a fundamental look at who provides our public services, the way they are provided and how effectively they meet the needs of the citizen in a rapidly changing social and technological environment. Given the scope and scale of our public sector, and the different administrative arrangements that exist within it, this is a challenging task. We are confident however that, through the fullest consultation with the community and drawing on best practice and expert advice, we can develop a model for an improved system of public administration in Northern Ireland that will better meet people's entitlement to quality, responsive and accessible services.
- 3.38 We recognise that the Review will take some years to be fully implemented. In the meanwhile it is essential that existing structures and ways of working, including those in central government, can support our work to reinvest and reform.
- 3.39 We set out very clearly in our first Programme for Government our determination that a devolved administration should deliver **open and accountable government that represented real value for money**. Since then, we have been working to review key policy areas and identify more effective ways of investing public funds and delivering public services. We have introduced new accountability arrangements that make the process and progress of government much more open than at any time in the past – through the Public Service Agreements and Service Delivery Agreements for every department as well as the detailed annual report on our progress in taking forward the Programme for Government and the PSAs.
- 3.40 Working for a devolved administration has involved major adjustment for the public service. More than in the past, our civil and public servants are helping to develop policies designed especially to meet the needs of Northern Ireland, rather than taking their lead from Whitehall. They are also now working in a much more open and accountable system. We need to **improve the policy-making capacity of the public service**: to make it more outcome-focused, cross-cutting, outward-looking and evidence-based. The Civil Service has been developing guidance to help officials operate more effectively in the new environment and looking at innovative and practical ways of ensuring, for example, that policy impacts can be properly assessed without creating undue bureaucracy. We support this work and will wish to see it adopted across the administration.
- 3.41 We have been examining our **procurement procedures**. Departments and their associated bodies collectively spend in excess of £1.2 billion each year on buying goods, services and works from outside suppliers and contractors. Even modest savings could have a significant impact, releasing resources for key public services. A Procurement Board chaired by the



Minister of Finance and Personnel has been established and given responsibility for the development, dissemination and co-ordination of public procurement policy and practice for the Northern Ireland public sector. The goal is to ensure that our procurement activity achieves the best possible value for money and regularity while also fulfilling the requirement to promote equality of opportunity, help tackle unemployment, especially long-term unemployment, through integrating economic, social and environmental policies and providing leverage to improve our environmental performance. The **Review of Office Accommodation**, is also considering how we make best use of government buildings as well as at the scope for decentralisation of civil service jobs. We will also examine the scope for making better use of public land as a vehicle for delivering cross-cutting policies.

- 3.42 We recognise the need to **employ the best people** to deliver our public services and give them opportunities to develop their skills to meet the challenges that lie ahead. To do this, the NICS needs to be an inclusive employer that invests in its people. We have already taken forward important new initiatives including the development of a NICS corporate human resources strategy and will continue with the implementation of this strategy. We are also currently consulting on an independent review of Senior Civil Service (SCS) appointments and this process will inform how we recruit in future to fill posts at the highest levels in the NICS and help ensure a representative and inclusive Senior Civil Service.
- 3.43 If we are to succeed in delivering quality public services, we need to take steps to ensure that all public funds are used for the means intended, that value for money is secured and that the risk of **fraud and error** is minimised, accounting through the Assembly to the public for the use of public money. Fraud constitutes a particular threat to public funds – it takes resources away from much needed public services – and we are determined to do all that we can to prevent fraudulent claims and other dishonest conduct.
- 3.44 We also want to look at new ways of **promoting partnership** between the public sector and our social partners in business, the trades unions and the voluntary and community sector. We need to develop our relationships with local government and with the social partners and that we derive real benefit in doing so. We want to work with all these partners, providing opportunities for them to influence thinking on policy development at the earliest possible stage and working with them to help deliver our policies and programmes.
- 3.45 We have already built some effective working relationships across the social partners, participating in events designed to facilitate discussion and consultation on key policy developments. The work of the Economic Development Forum, which involved departments and social partners in identifying the economic challenges and developing some key economic targets and actions was a positive example of the value of early engagement and one that we want to build on. Similarly, the Rural Stakeholders Forum is

bringing together the full range of those with an interest in rural affairs, providing them with an opportunity to contribute to policy formulation.

- 3.46 To foster and build on the foundation of partnership working, we agreed, reflected in the Peace II Operational Programme, to create a Regional Partnership Board (RPB) and Local Strategy Partnerships (LSPs) in Northern Ireland. Within this we will ensure that partnership working endures beyond the time horizon of the Peace II programme and becomes a permanent, positive feature of our society. The functions of the RPB are to: assist different districts to work together on projects and actions which cross the boundaries of two or more districts; promote effective working between districts and Intermediary Funding Bodies; promote the principles of partnership working at the local level; and promote the sharing of best practice in the development and delivery of local area strategies. This role covers projects and actions funded by European Programmes, other public expenditure and by private finance. We envisage that, through time, the RPB will play a key role in informing and influencing decision-making across a wide range of local and central government activity.
- 3.47 The 26 Local Strategy Partnerships, built on the experience of the earlier District Partnerships, are providing a new opportunity for local communities to have a direct input to funding decisions and to influence both local strategies and wider policy development. The LSP membership base reflects a balance between the public sector and the social partners which will, we believe, enable them to become increasingly involved in influencing the delivery of local services in their area. As such LSPs will be a tangible and practical means of achieving our key objectives of strengthening partnership working and ensuring that local voices are heard and are able to influence priorities for spending at local level – not just for European funds but for other sources of public and private finance.
- 3.48 As we take forward the commitments in our Programme for Government, we know that we have the advantage of a vibrant and extensive **voluntary and community sector** which makes an important contribution to many aspects of social, economic and cultural life here. We rely on it both to deliver services and to provide a voice for local community and interest groups.
- 3.49 We acknowledge the concerns around the longer term sustainability of important elements of the voluntary and community sector and will set up a Task Force to bring forward solutions that will enable the sector to continue to make a substantial contribution to the achievement of government objectives and to the well being of civic society. This work will include addressing the impact of impending changes to funding programmes, in particular the EU Programmes, and the identification of action necessary to diversify support for the sector. We will also continue to strengthen our links with the sector within the framework of the *COMPACT* and *Partners for Change*, the Executive's strategy for supporting the voluntary and community sector. We want to strengthen the capacity (the skills, abilities and practices) of public sector organisations to work with and respond to local

communities, doing so through the Outreach programme, an initiative supported through Executive Programme Funds.

- 3.50 We also want to make sure that the reform agenda we pursue and the structures we put in place to support it are fully in line with our commitments to equality and **tackling poverty and social exclusion**. The analysis in chapter 2 points out that differences exist in health, education and employment status between the least and most affluent in Northern Ireland. Tackling poverty and other forms of social exclusion must remain a central challenge of this administration, one which has to be met if we are to make progress across our priorities and achieve our vision. Our priority of *Growing as a Community* includes a specific focus on our policies to tackle social need and social exclusion. Targeting social need has to be embedded into all our policies and, under each of our other four priorities, we have identified steps that we will take to make this happen. This will lead to a more integrated approach to tackling social need and social exclusion, using the whole range of government policies and programmes in a way that can effectively bring about real and positive change.

#### **Promoting Sustainable Living**

- 3.51 Last but not least, we want to restate in the Programme for Government our commitment to promoting **sustainable living**. We want to ensure that our society and economy develop in ways that meet our current needs, while ensuring that future generations too can meet their needs. We want to achieve effective protection of the environment and the prudent use of natural resources, and high and stable levels of economic growth. We need therefore to consider the environmental impact of all key policies. We will seek to do so in an increasingly integrated way, that will embed the principles of sustainable development in the rural and urban economy.
- 3.52 In support of our focus on reinvestment and reform, we will implement a number of cross-cutting actions designed to deliver improvement. These actions complement and build on the specific commitments we give under each of our Programme for Government priorities. They are:
- ❑ by 2005, ensure that all key public services are capable of electronic delivery;
  - ❑ by the end of 2003, have developed a government portal on the internet to provide citizens and businesses with a single, electronic point of access to government information and services;
  - ❑ by July 2003, set up a Census Access web site where users can easily identify and access the full range of results available from the Census;
  - ❑ by March 2004, to have set up a common address file that will re-unite townland names into a new standardised address format to be adopted for use by government departments and the private sector;
  - ❑ by June 2004, have adopted and maintained freedom of information publication schemes in all departments and public bodies;
  - ❑ by the end of 2003, have brought forward a new model for public administration in Northern Ireland;

- ❑ by March 2005, have fully implemented the new Public Procurement Policy adopted by the Executive in May 2002;
- ❑ by March 2005, have implemented an agreed action plan on Senior Civil Service (SCS) appointments and promotion procedures to ensure a representative and inclusive Senior Civil Service in the light of the independent SCS Review;
- ❑ by March 2004, have reduced the levels of official and customer fraud and error by 5% in our main vulnerable benefits (Income Support, Jobseeker's Allowance, Disability Living Allowance and Incapacity Benefit);
- ❑ by March 2004, have reduced the estimated patient exemption fraud in the Family Health Service to 50% of the 1999/2000 level;
- ❑ by March 2004, ensure that all LSPs are delivering the agreed targets identified in each Integrated Local Area Strategy document;
- ❑ by March 2004, have developed a central database of government funding to the Voluntary and Community sector;
- ❑ by mid 2004, have produced a report by the Task Force on Resourcing the Voluntary and Community sector; and
- ❑ by the end of 2004, have published the first independent evaluation of the impact of *Partners for Change*.

## 4. GROWING AS A COMMUNITY

### Introduction

- 4.1 We remain committed to developing a society in which everyone can freely and fully participate, realise their full potential and live free from poverty. We want to embed equality of opportunity, human rights, mutual trust and respect as core values. Our analysis has demonstrated the problems of poverty, the impact it has on particular communities and the divisions between communities. It shows that sectarianism, racism and conflict at interface areas require urgent action. It also reveals the stark differences in life expectancy and educational attainment between the most and least affluent in our society.
- 4.2 We want the Executive to be a driving and unifying force for the whole community, working to address divisions and to promote good relations. We will work to foster mutual understanding of, and respect for, diversity and facilitate people to live and work together in a climate of tolerance. We will also continue to pay special attention to the needs of victims of the conflict.
- 4.3 To make progress under this priority we will focus on:
- tackling social need and social exclusion;
  - improving community relations and tackling divisions;
  - supporting victims;
  - promoting equality of opportunity and human rights;
  - safeguarding the rights and interests of children;
  - giving everyone the opportunity to access decent, affordable housing;
  - renewing our disadvantaged neighbourhoods, building community participation; and
  - developing a greater understanding of, and respect for, our shared culture, history and heritage.

### Sub-priority 1: **We will tackle social need and social exclusion**

- 4.4 Tackling poverty and social disadvantage is one of our most important challenges. People face major inequalities in terms of poverty, health, housing, educational and economic opportunity, and it is essential that we work together, and with our social partners, to reduce need and exclusion.
- 4.5 Our New Targeting Social Need (New TSN) policy is specifically designed to achieve this, requiring departments to redirect their efforts and resources towards those in most need. The publication of the results of the 2001 Census of Population and Housing will provide a wealth of information on which to inform policy on addressing social need and the provision of services more widely. In the Noble Measures of Multiple Deprivation (published in July 2001) we now have a new, objective means of identifying social need. These measures are used, in conjunction with other indicators, to help target resources. New TSN is also an integral part of all our financial decision-making and is specifically at the heart of two of our Executive

Programme Funds, the Social Inclusion Fund and the Children's Fund. New TSN aims to contribute to the reduction of inequalities among different sections of society and, alongside other initiatives, help to combat unemployment and differentials in unemployment rates.

- 4.6 New TSN is still however a developing policy. During 2002, we evaluated current policy and practice, especially in relation to spending and the way programmes are delivered across all departments. We will consider the future of new TSN in light of the interim evaluation findings. This will inform future thinking on our policy on tackling poverty and social exclusion. In addition it is important that the Executive contributes to joint or co-ordinated action by the UK Government and other devolved administrations. For this reason we have agreed to work with the other Administrations to remove the barriers that exist to enable comparative analysis of poverty and social exclusion. This will facilitate a better exchange of information and best practice in tackling poverty and social exclusion across the UK.
- 4.7 We are also committed to looking at how particular policies and programmes can best support those most in need and we welcome the Civic Forum's work on this issue. Our social security system is central to this too, and we remain committed to providing a fair system of financial help to those in need, built around work and security. Benefit levels and eligibility are, of course, agreed at UK level but devolution allows us to articulate clearly Northern Ireland's needs, ensuring that the right balance is struck between providing financial support and encouraging work. Through our Welfare Reform & Modernisation Programme, we are providing an integrated, efficient and secure social welfare system that assists and encourages work for those who can and provides security for those who cannot.
- 4.8 To achieve this and avoid the "benefits trap", the tax and benefit systems need to work together more effectively and we are working with our counterparts across the UK to make this happen. Two new Tax Credits – (Child Tax Credit and Working Tax Credit) – to be introduced from April 2003 – will help make work pay and will help families with children. We are also preparing for the introduction of the Child Support reforms to make child maintenance easier to understand, transparent, responsive and accessible, while contributing to the eradication of child poverty.
- 4.9 We recognise the need to build the best service for older people and help combat pensioner poverty, promoting security in retirement. Our Promoting Social Inclusion working group on Older People will consider the factors that lead to social exclusion among this group. By March 2004, the working group will develop a co-ordinated strategy through which relevant agencies will work together. Promoting the uptake of benefit, the improvement of social security services tailored to the individual needs of older people and the introduction of the State Pension Credit should provide important support.
- 4.10 In 2002, as part of our PSI work on Better Services, we consulted on guidelines for departments on making information accessible. In the coming

year we will work across departments to ensure the effective implementation of these guidelines. One area where it is particularly important to have accessible and understandable information is the welfare system and we are committed to building on initiatives like the series of “A-Z Guides” covering older people, people with disabilities and the farming community to ensure that all those eligible for support can receive that support.

4.11 Social exclusion is of course brought about by reasons other than poverty. Through our Promoting Social Inclusion initiative we will continue to tackle the exclusion of groups including minority ethnic groups, travellers and teenage parents. We are also embarking on new programmes focusing on the homeless, the disabled, older people, those suffering from mental health problems and carers. Other initiatives, including the the Concessionary Fares Scheme, and the work of the Employability Task Force will also contribute to our work to counter social exclusion.

4.12 In support of this sub-priority we will:

- by October 2003, introduce the State Pension Credit which will provide more help for pensioners on low and modest incomes and ensure that people are rewarded, not penalised, for their savings;
- by March 2004, extend the new joint jobs and benefits service to 20 of the 35 Social Security Offices combined with Job Centres, incorporating procedures to put work at the forefront of the benefit claiming process for appropriate working age customers;
- by March 2004, complete a rolling programme of customer service and service delivery improvements for all Social Security customers;
- by March 2004, complete the assessment of take-up of selected benefits and produce an enhanced strategy to further encourage benefit take-up;
- from April 2003, encourage greater financial and social inclusion for many people by converting social security benefit payments from order books and giro to payment directly into bank accounts; and
- by March 2004, develop, through a PSI working group on Older People, a cross-departmental strategy to tackle the factors that cause older people to be at risk of exclusion.

**Sub-priority 2: We will improve community relations and tackle the divisions in our society**

4.13 We recognise that we have to deal with the very deep and painful divisions in our society after decades of conflict and that we must tackle the scourge of sectarianism, racism and intimidation. Our experience in North Belfast and other areas has shown us that improved relations across communities in Northern Ireland can only develop when elected and community representatives work together, especially at local level in those areas which have experienced the most serious effects of conflict.

4.14 Of particular importance is the need to support the capacity of local communities to deal with matters of dispute or division, including the proliferation of sectarian graffiti, unauthorised flag flying and the erection of memorials, that can lead to community tensions.

- 4.15 During the past year we have carefully examined existing policy on community relations and will issue a consultation paper on the key principles upon which a new strategy to promote good relations will be based. We will strive for an increased understanding of, and for, the communities of Northern Ireland as a means of moderating attitudes relating to the difference and division; challenging stereotyping; and encouraging positive attitudes towards the diverse range of cultures here. By supporting opportunities for expression, education, exploration, exchange and debate we will ensure that our cultural diversity is preserved, expressed, valued and celebrated.
- 4.16 In support of this sub-priority we will:
- by December 2003, taking account of a consultation process, have in place a new policy and strategy on good relations which will include:
    - an over-arching Executive strategic plan with associated actions and targets;
    - targeted action at local areas with particularly acute community difficulties;
    - support to District Councils, working in partnership to facilitate the development of co-ordinated local plans to promote good relations;
    - action to support the capacity of local communities to deal with matters of dispute or division, including the proliferation of sectarian graffiti, unauthorised flag flying, the erection of memorials that can lead to community tensions; and
  - by September 2003, develop a cultural diversity policy framework and timetable around the themes set out in the *Face to Face* document.

**Sub-priority 3: We will support victims**

- 4.17 We will develop our support for those most directly affected by the conflict. Our aims are to: further meet victims' day to day needs; support the work of victims' groups; and address recognition and reconciliation for victims.
- 4.18 Key to meeting victims' practical needs are the actions contained in the victims' strategy, *Reshape, Rebuild, Achieve*. We have already appointed a co-ordinator for each of the four Trauma Advisory Panels; set in place initiatives to improve housing, health and education services for victims; and sought to build better relationships between Government and victims through meetings with Ministers and officials. The Victims' Unit also has a key role in the management of the European Peace II Programme measure for victims, and has taken on responsibility for the management of core funding for victims groups.
- 4.19 We intend to commission a project to ensure lasting recognition by society of the suffering and loss experienced by victims, and to contribute to the process of reconciliation. This project will bring together the broadest possible range of archive material about the conflict in printed, broadcast, recorded or other formats. It will also provide a means for any victim who



wishes to record his or her experiences for addition to the archive. Once assembled, the archive material will be placed in a location that is accessible to all, to provide recognition for individual victims and groups; an educational resource for the future; and a contribution to reconciliation. Individual victims and victims groups will be given an opportunity to contribute to the design of the project.

- 4.20 In support of this sub-priority we will:
- during 2003-04, work in conjunction with the Northern Ireland Office to ensure a smooth transfer of its responsibilities for victims to the devolved administration;
  - from 2004, put in place a new strategy for victims building on the progress already made; and
  - during 2003-04 commission a recognition and reconciliation project.

**Sub-priority 4: We will promote equality of opportunity and human rights**

- 4.21 Equality of opportunity and human rights are fundamental to our work. We are committed to promoting them through strong legislation and effective public policies.
- 4.22 We will build on the work we began in our first Programme for Government, developing draft legislation to extend and harmonise, as far as practicable, anti-discrimination legislation, to implement EC directives and to take account of important developments in anti-discrimination law.
- 4.23 As part of our work to implement a Race Equality strategy we plan to establish a Race Equality Forum during 2003. In line with our focus on working in partnership, it will embrace representatives from both the statutory sector and the voluntary and community sector. A key area of work for the Forum will be to monitor the Executive's response to the PSI report on Travellers. In addition, we plan to evaluate the funding scheme for minority ethnic voluntary organisations. This evaluation will inform our review of the future scope and remit of the funding scheme from April 2004 onwards.
- 4.24 We will continue to promote a culture of rights and responsibilities. We will further mainstream the consideration of local and international human rights standards into our policy development and legislative processes, including any future Bill of Rights for Northern Ireland, the European Convention on Human Rights and other international instruments that have been ratified by the UK Government. In doing so, we will work closely with the Human Rights Commission under the terms of our agreed protocol.
- 4.25 We will also work to implement departmental equality schemes effectively and in line with the current best practice available from the Equality Commission and to ensure that equality considerations lie at the centre of our policy-making process.

- 4.26 In support of these commitments we will:
- ❑ during 2003/04, develop our draft legislation to extend and harmonise, as far as practicable, anti-discrimination legislation;
  - ❑ during 2003, implement new cross-departmental strategies to tackle race and gender inequalities;
  - ❑ during 2003, fully implement our new Research and Information Strategy on Equality and Social Need;
  - ❑ by October 2003, complete a review of the funding scheme for minority ethnic voluntary organisations; and
  - ❑ by March 2004, bring forward draft legislation to provide a fast track mechanism to remedy any human rights deficiencies in existing legislation;

**Sub-priority 5: We will safeguard the rights and interests of children**

4.27 In Northern Ireland, children and young people under 18 make up almost a third of our population and yet their rights and interests are not always given the priority they deserve. We are determined to change this. Our goal is to promote a culture of respect for children's rights that permeates every aspect of society, and a system of governance in which consideration of the rights, interests and views of children and young people is second nature, not second choice.

4.28 We have already taken major steps forward. In June 2002, we introduced legislation into the Assembly to establish the office of Commissioner for Children and Young People for Northern Ireland which will place us at the leading edge of best practice in this area. The Commissioner will be an independent watchdog whose aim is to safeguard and promote the rights and best interests of children. We want to build on this by putting in place internal mechanisms and policies to ensure that children's interests are fully recognised in government. We also intend to work with the social partners, as we did in developing the legislation, to develop an overarching strategy for children and young people. This will recognise the central and fundamental importance of the role of parents and family life.

4.29 We want also to maintain a focus on tackling child poverty and on the welfare and protection of children, placing a high emphasis on the provision of services for children, particularly those who are vulnerable or in need. We will keep under careful review the arrangements for vetting individuals who apply for positions involving substantial access to children, to ensure that our children are as fully protected as possible.

4.30 We have also developed new arrangements, through the Executive Programme Fund for Children, to fund projects that will support children in need and young people at risk. Recognising the important role of the voluntary and community sector in providing services and support for some of our most vulnerable children, we have opened this Fund to the sector and made partnership working across the statutory and voluntary and community sectors a key theme.

- 4.31 In support of this sub-priority we will:
- ❑ by spring 2003, appoint a Commissioner for Children and Young People;
  - ❑ by March 2004, publish a cross-departmental strategy for children and young people and commence implementation;
  - ❑ by summer 2003, bring forward proposals relating to the law on physical punishment of children in the home;
  - ❑ by 2004/05, have reviewed the operation of the Children's Fund to assess its effectiveness and ensure that it supports the new cross-departmental strategy for children and young people;
  - ❑ by March 2004, improve our child care residential services by providing for an additional 40 new places over current levels and the replacement of a further 51 existing places;
  - ❑ by November 2003, develop a detailed strategy for children in need, which will complement the overarching strategy for children and young people, and which will take account of the full range of services including fostering, residential care, family support and child protection;
  - ❑ by March 2004, establish a voluntary Regional Register of Children with a Disability which will help improve the planning of children's services and provide an information support network for parents and carers; and
  - ❑ by March 2004, have improved our family and child care support services strengthening our response to the needs of children and their families by, for example, recruiting additional foster carers and increasing targeted support for deprived children and their families.

**Sub-priority 6: We will ensure that everyone has the opportunity to access decent, affordable housing**

- 4.32 Poor housing conditions are a major contributory factor to social exclusion, while there is clear evidence that good quality housing improves health and social and economic wellbeing and encourages community development and regeneration.
- 4.33 We have completed work on a major Needs and Effectiveness Evaluation which looks at housing need and the effectiveness of housing policy and this work will provide a sound evidence base for future housing policy. The conclusions from the evaluation show that overall public spending on housing here has been effective in addressing policy objectives. There are, however, some areas of concern including the net cost of the social housing programme; the recent rise in unit costs of social housing provision; the adequacy of the housing new build programme; and the Northern Ireland Housing Executive's investment programme. The challenge therefore will be to ensure that these issues are addressed in our work to deliver decent, affordable housing.
- 4.34 We want to make appropriate, accessible and high quality housing available to all, especially those in greatest social need. Our Regional Development Strategy estimates that growth in demand for housing will grow across all tenures and we need to be able to respond to this, facilitating the provision of social housing and improving standards in the private rented sector. We also want to look at how we plan for new housing to ensure that the effects

of new developments on the wider infrastructure of roads, water and sewerage, on the environment and on the provision of public services including health and education are taken into account. We also want to respond to opportunities to develop mixed housing for those who wish it and to ensure that housing development promotes rather than precludes a sense of community. It is important also that we maintain the drive to reduce housing unfit levels across both private and social housing.

- 4.35 A further priority is to respond to the housing requirements of disadvantaged groups and those on low incomes. We will continue our work to undertake adaptations that allow the disabled, the old and the frail to continue living in their own homes, to provide suitable accommodation for Travellers, and to tackle fuel poverty, which is a factor in deaths due to cold related illnesses. We will continue to work with the Housing Executive, housing associations and other agencies to improve services and the quality of accommodation generally.
- 4.36 As we take forward this work, we will pay particular attention to the needs of the homeless. Recent reviews by the Housing Executive and the Assembly's Social Development Committee have shown that improvements are needed in accommodation-related services for homeless people. In response, the Housing Executive has produced an implementation plan to address the issue. The prevention of homelessness and the provision of a more comprehensive service will be key aims. The plan will focus on education, advice and advocacy services to prevent homelessness and on post-tenancy support to help those who find homes to sustain them. Additional units of hostel and privately let accommodation are also planned to meet increased demand and reduce reliance on less suitable B&B accommodation. We realise, however, that those who are homeless often have needs far wider than the provision of housing. Under our Promoting Social Inclusion initiative, we will undertake a cross-departmental and cross-sectoral review of the problems encountered by the homeless in accessing non-housing services. The aim of the review will be to identify how the needs of homeless people can be addressed in a more holistic way.
- 4.37 In support of this sub-priority we will:
- by March 2004, have implemented a programme to provide homes suitable for those on low incomes;
  - by December 2003, draw up a draft Policy and Strategy document from the PSI review of the needs of homeless people.

**Sub-priority 7: We will renew our most disadvantaged urban and rural neighbourhoods, building community participation**

- 4.38 We want to regenerate and sustain our cities, towns and rural areas, building strong communities in line with New TSN. We know that the differences in the standard and quality of life experienced in the most deprived neighbourhoods and the rest of Northern Ireland are wide. We will objectively identify the areas in greatest need, developing and delivering co-

ordinated programmes to bring about real improvements, not only in physical infrastructure, but also in the lives and economic opportunities of communities and individuals.

- 4.39 The most significant concentrations of deprivation are found in our cities and larger towns and we will take action to improve economic and social conditions as signalled in our New TSN Action Plan. We will also implement our new strategies for the regeneration of the most disadvantaged urban areas and for town and city centres and we will use EU funding programmes, including Peace II and Urban II, to strengthen our approach. We will also look at how transport policy might better support community regeneration and development.
- 4.40 The new Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy aims to put the tackling of the most acute deprivation and disadvantage at the heart of all regeneration activity and by focusing it at the neighbourhood level, to empower communities to shape and then drive urban renewal initiatives in their own areas. Detailed strategies for Town Centre Re-invigoration, Belfast and Londonderry are also being drawn up. The Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy will use local partnership structures, and where appropriate the Local Strategy Partnerships. We will work in partnership across government departments and other public agencies to place regeneration at the very centre of their programmes of work.
- 4.41 Under Measure 11 of the European Peace II Programme (area based regeneration), 12 communities across Northern Ireland will receive funding to tackle the legacy of conflict, reconciliation difficulties and high levels of deprivation. Communities in Belfast, Londonderry, Strabane, Downpatrick, Coleraine, Craigavon and Ballymena will receive around £1m for innovative urban regeneration projects. The money will be delivered through local partnership structures and projects will be based on community-led assessments of the needs of each area. This measure will be the first phase of the Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy which will be rolling out over the next 7-10 years.
- 4.42 We recognise too the distinctive needs of our rural areas. We will continue to identify and address the impact policies might have on rural areas or communities. Rural proofing is a process which ensures that all our significant policies, particularly those flowing from this Programme, are examined carefully and objectively to determine whether they have an unjustified different impact in rural areas. Where necessary we will consider what policy adjustments might be made to reflect rural needs and in particular ensure that, as far as possible, public services are accessible on a fair basis to both rural and urban communities.
- 4.43 Long-term unemployment tends to be higher and there is evidence that the population in rural areas is growing faster and is younger so the demand for jobs will increase more quickly. The contribution of agriculture has declined and many farms no longer provide a viable income from agriculture alone. Rural development has been playing a major role in helping rural areas adapt to the changes which they have been facing over the last decade. A multi-faceted approach to rural development, with a strong focus on tackling social exclusions, will continue to be offered through the economic, environmental,

social and cultural development of rural areas, under the Rural Development and other Programmes.

- 4.44 Through the Reinvestment and Reform Initiative, we will also bring about new opportunities for development and regeneration. The transfer to the Executive of security sites in Belfast, Ebrington, Magherafelt and Maze including the Crumlin Road Gaol provides us with a valuable resource which we will develop in a way that will benefit local communities. In line with our commitment to developing stronger partnerships, we will involve others in our decisions, ensuring that the voices of those communities that stand to benefit are heard. We are currently taking legislation through the Assembly to make provision for the development of these sites.
- 4.45 We also recognise the particular problems in North Belfast which contains some of the most deprived wards in Northern Ireland. We are committed to working with all the communities in North Belfast to develop an effective and sustained response to local problems. The North Belfast Community Action Unit, officially launched on 15 August 2002, will actively address issues around the interfaces, develop a long-term strategy for North Belfast, have a key responsibility for building community capacity and initiate and facilitate the development of partnerships within and between communities and statutory agencies.
- 4.46 Through Urban II we will work to tackle the long-term economic and social issues of the area, working to regenerate North Belfast into a vibrant, safe and viable urban community. The money will be used to reconstruct land and property blighted by violence and economic decline and provide local people with the necessary training and skills to access lasting employment.
- 4.47 We are committed also to working with the voluntary and community sector to develop the community infrastructure necessary in disadvantaged areas, focusing on areas where it is weakest and will encourage and support people to take responsibility for their own communities. To support the sector in this work, we will take forward the outstanding recommendations of the Consultation Document on “Funding for the Voluntary and Community Sector” and will encourage local people to become more involved in voluntary and community work.
- 4.48 It is important that the role of local councils in community development is recognised and supported. The Community Support Programme, delivered by local councils, provides support for local communities. Through our continued support for this programme, we will facilitate the work of local councils to strengthen local communities, increase community participation and promote social inclusion and the development of our sporting and cultural infrastructure.

- 4.49 In support of this sub-priority we will:
- ❑ during 2003, implement strategies for renewal in the most disadvantaged neighbourhoods in urban areas and for the re-invigoration of city and town centres;
  - ❑ during 2003, implement the Urban II Programme in North Belfast and the Community Led Peace II Programme in 12 selected neighbourhoods;
  - ❑ by mid-2003, have in place strategy frameworks and agreed delivery mechanisms for the delivery of the Neighbourhood Renewal Programme;
  - ❑ by December 2003, have in place new, customer-focused rural development structures;
  - ❑ during 2003, promote a partnership approach to the development of rural areas with local people through support for Rural Support Networks, Leader+ Local Action Groups and Natural Resources Rural Tourism Partnerships;
  - ❑ by March 2004, have reviewed district council community support plans, identified best practice and advised councils on future requirements for production of plans;
  - ❑ by March 2004, work with the Social Partners, to develop and implement a strategy to encourage and support employer led volunteering; and
  - ❑ from April 2003, support the implementation of a Soccer Strategy for the development of local football from grassroots to senior and international level.

**Sub-priority 8: We will develop a greater understanding of, and respect for, our culture, history and heritage**

- 4.50 Northern Ireland is rightly famed for the richness of its cultural diversity and this richness is something of which we can be rightly proud. People value their creativity, identity and their cultural and linguistic diversity. The potential for arts, leisure and cultural activities to be linked to the development of good citizenship and the embedding of peace is also significant.
- 4.51 We will work through Museums and Galleries of Northern Ireland (MAGNI) to help the community understand its past in the context of the present. A social history museum telling the story of the people of Belfast and Northern Ireland through their maritime and industrial past will complement the other developments at Titanic Quarter. Through the implementation of a Local Museums and Heritage Review, we will highlight the importance of helping communities understand their local history. We will continue to work in partnership with others to improve access to our most historic buildings, both publicly and privately owned, supporting measures including European Heritage Open Days to encourage people to visit and value our built heritage. We will also examine the scope to improve public access to assets in public ownership including forests in particular.
- 4.52 We believe that the key to interpretation of both the past and the present lies in our rich archival heritage. Exploring evidence from the past encourages understanding of a wide range of views, aspirations and

experiences. It can help counter prejudice and promote tolerance, good citizenship and a recognition of the value of diversity. The public records archives cover every aspect of our past and we are determined to make them more accessible to current and future generations.

4.53 In support of this sub-priority we will:

- by March 2006, have introduced arrangements to improve public access to assets in public ownership;
- by December 2005, develop and implement an Archives Policy for Northern Ireland to ensure the relevancy of archival heritage to present and future generations and accessibility to the widest possible audience;
- by June 2003, agree an implementation plan for the development of heritage at the “Titanic Quarter”; and
- by December 2003, develop a strategy that will optimise the use of resources within the Museums and Heritage sector.



## 5. WORKING FOR A HEALTHIER PEOPLE

### Introduction

- 5.1 The Executive is committed to raising health standards to those of the best regions in Europe, and to eradicating inequalities in health. This calls for a co-ordinated, long-term drive to tackle the factors that cause ill-health, including poverty and social exclusion, and to ensure that our environment supports healthy living. We also need to reform our health and personal social services.
- 5.2 Over recent years, there have been major developments across the full range of our health and social services. The announcement that work is to start on a regional Cancer Centre, for example, shows the Executive's determination to tackle one of the main causes of untimely adult death. And we shall soon be taking decisions on modernising our hospital services, to ensure that patients are treated in the most appropriate and accessible setting by skilled staff. Significant improvement is also required in primary and community care, where the creation of new local Health and Social Care Groups should improve how people's health and social care needs are identified and met. The Needs and Effectiveness Evaluation for health and social care concluded that many of the major problems facing the HPSS here reflect funding levels which compare unfavourably with England when the main drivers of need are taken into account. Although we have a younger population, which reduces need, this is more than offset by the high levels of social deprivation, disability and sparsely populated rural areas, all of which increase the need for resources. The aftermath of the conflict continues to add significantly to pressures on the system not only for emergency treatment but also for prescriptions relating to stress and other mental problems and long-term care. In addition, the population profile is changing, with an increasing older population placing particular pressure on services. Overall, the Evaluation provides a strong evidence base for future policy development on health and social care.
- 5.3 Building on this work, we will focus on:
- Investing to improve the health of all;
  - Ensuring an environment that supports healthy living and the safe production of food;
  - Promoting public safety and reducing accidents;
  - Raising the quality of health and personal social services and tackling poor performance;
  - Modernising and improving our hospital services to deliver better treatment and care;
  - Improving our primary care and community care services; and
  - Supporting those with disabilities, mental health difficulties, chronic or terminal illness and their carers.

**Sub-priority 1: We will improve health and tackle health inequalities**

- 5.4 While the provision of health and social services is vitally important, action to promote good health and to prevent illness also must be taken. This is a point highlighted in the Needs and Effectiveness Evaluation of health and social care, reminding us that we need to act now to improve the health of future generations. In doing so we shall raise the general quality of life and reduce future demand for treatment and care. Evidence is accumulating to support the view that, if we improve matters now, we will need to spend less later on diseases that are preventable. The factors that impact on health – for example living and working conditions, education, cultural and employment opportunities – are the concern of a number of departments and therefore must be tackled through a programme of cross-departmental action. These issues were also emphasised in the Civic Forum’s response to the Executive’s consultation on the Programme for Government and Budget earlier this year.
- 5.5 We recognised this in our *Investing for Health* strategy, published in March 2002. It is based on partnership working amongst departments, public bodies and with local communities, district councils and our social partners. It sets our strategic goals and objectives, together with the actions departments will take to address those critical influences on health and well-being. It also recognises that success in improving health requires individuals to take steps to improve their own health and that they need the support of both government and their communities to do this. In this context, we will take effective action on the determinants of ill health to improve the life expectancy towards the levels of the best EU countries by increasing life expectancy by at least 3 years for men and two years for women between 2000 and 2010. We will also work to halve the gap in life expectancy between those living in the fifth most deprived electoral wards and the average life expectancy here for both men and women between 2000 and 2010 and to reduce the gap in the proportion of people with a long standing illness between those in the lowest and highest socio-economic groups by a fifth between 2000 and 2010.
- 5.6 The rationale for action is clear: many conditions – such as heart disease, stroke, some cancers, dental decay – are linked to our environment and the way we live. How people live their lives is central to improving the long-term state of our health, and help must be readily available for those who want to make healthier choices but who, for a variety of reasons, find it hard to do so. Under *Investing for Health*, we are producing cross-departmental strategies and action plans in the areas of alcohol and drugs misuse, food and nutrition, home accident prevention, mental health promotion, oral health, physical activity, sexual health, tobacco and teenage parenthood. The strategies will include targets to improve health.
- 5.7 Recognising public concerns, we are determined to take increased action to tackle drugs and alcohol misuse. We have decided that the Alcohol and Drugs strategies should be implemented together in a new, concerted approach in partnership with the community, voluntary, and business sectors. Six Working Groups have been formed to cover the areas of Treatment,

Education & Prevention, Communities, Information & Research, Social Legislation and Criminal Justice. A Regional Action Plan has also been developed.

- 5.8 In support of this sub-priority we will:
- from April 2003, take forward actions in relation to drugs, alcohol, smoking and the promotion of sexual health;
  - from April 2003, through the Investing for Health Partnerships, have begun to implement local, inter-agency health improvement plans to improve health and wellbeing;
  - ensure that, from September 2004, the revised school curriculum will provide our young people with a sound understanding of how to enjoy a healthy lifestyle; and
  - by the end of 2004, develop an agreed action plan to promote the use of public open space for health-enhancing physical activity.

**Sub-priority 2: We will ensure an environment that supports healthy living and the safe production of food**

- 5.9 We want to ensure that our environment supports healthy living and to maintain a focus on food production and food safety. While Northern Ireland has a positive environmental image, we need to ensure that this image is maintained and enhanced and that our policies and programmes, particularly those that impact on our environment, are rooted in the principles of sustainable development.
- 5.10 Our health depends on the availability of clean, wholesome drinking water. During tests in 2001, 98.38% of samples taken at customers' water taps complied with current standards. While this was encouraging, there is clearly room for improvement and we are committed to investing to improve our water infrastructure, working to ensure that we comply with EU requirements on drinking water so that, by 2010, the quality of drinking water meets currently specified EU standards. We will also maintain a focus on the quality of our waterways, working to prevent pollution. We are bringing forward new legislation on industrial pollution controls and new regulations, backed by enhanced advice and education programmes, to tackle the particular problem of farm pollution. Under the EC Water Framework Directive, we will develop integrated management plans to ensure sustainable use of our water resources. Development of effective waste management systems and controls will also be a key focus.
- 5.11 Our air quality is generally good but there are occasions when a combination of weather conditions and local topography can lead to high concentration of pollutants in natural basins such as that created by the Belfast hills. We have already brought forward an Air Quality Bill to introduce a mechanism for the assessment and management of local air quality and this will come into effect in the spring. It will provide a framework to enable us to meet the health-based air quality standards in the Air Quality Strategy for England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

- 5.12 Recent food scares have highlighted the importance of building confidence in the safety of local food products. We want to work in partnership with others through education, advice and enforcement to ensure that all involved in the supply chain are strongly focused on the production, processing and marketing of safe food and that sound science, where available, underpins our decisions. We also need to ensure that animal diseases that have human health implications are dealt with effectively. As part of ongoing work to ensure that meat from Northern Ireland is of the highest food safety standard, we have introduced a new surveillance programme for BSE. We are also working to develop a programme to eradicate scrapie from our sheep flock. We will also continue to support the work of the Food Standards Agency in Northern Ireland in protecting public health and the interests of consumers in relation to food.
- 5.13 In support of this sub-priority we will:
- by March 2004, achieve a 10% improvement in compliance with the standards set for trade effluent discharges to waterways, based on the 2000 baseline;
  - by March 2004, introduce new advisory and lifelong learning programmes for farmers on pollution prevention;
  - during 2003, enact legislation to meet our EC obligations on waste water, landfill and industrial pollution; and
  - during 2003/04, to target action on those flocks that have a notified history of scrapie (i.e. notified within the last three years).

**Sub-priority 3: We will promote public safety and reduce the number of serious injuries and deaths caused by accidents at home, at work and on the road**

- 5.14 The number of people who die or are injured as a result of accidents in the home, on the roads and in the workplace is unacceptable. We are determined to reduce the risk of harm by making the environment safer. Our *Investing for Health* strategy provides the context for this work and sets a challenging target to reduce the death rate from accidents in people of all ages by at least a fifth and the rate of serious injuries by a tenth between 2000 and 2010.
- 5.15 Home accidents are a major cause of death and disability, particularly among children and older people and we are committed to developing a Home Accident Prevention Strategy focusing particularly on those most at risk and on the key causes - fires and poisoning. Accidents at work cost employers and the economy in the region of £500m each year. We will work in partnership with employers, trades unions and other stakeholders to bring about a reduction in the incidence of workplace ill-health and thereby make workplaces safer and healthier for all through a new, cross-cutting and long-term workplace health strategy. The strategy will, for the first time, establish specific targets aimed at reducing the overall incidence of work-related ill health in NI and minimising the associated cost to the local economy.

- 5.16 Every year around 150 people are killed on our roads and on average another 1,600 are seriously injured. While these figures have been reducing steadily over the years, they remain unacceptably high. We are determined to bring about a downward trend but cannot do so by working in isolation – we need the support of the whole community. In our new road safety strategy, we have a new challenging target of a one third reduction in the number of people killed or seriously injured, from the current average of 1,750 each year. The strategy details how we plan to do this, ensuring a focus on the key factors associated with traffic accidents (including speed and drink-driving) and on vulnerable road users, particularly children. We will also introduce accident remedial measures, traffic calming schemes and other initiatives in areas where there is a particular risk of accidents and will consider how best to extend the Safe Routes to School initiative.
- 5.17 The Fire Service is crucial to the general safety of our people. In 2001, the Brigade received over 63,000 emergency calls and attended almost 40,000 incidents. These ranged from accidental fires in the home and at the workplace, road traffic accidents and attempted suicides. We will continue with modernisation of the Fire Service, building new stations and re-fitting existing ones. This will help to ensure that our fire cover targets are met.
- 5.18 Following the events of 11 September 2001, we need to ensure that arrangements are in place to cope with global terrorist threats such as a deliberate release of biological or chemical agents. We will do this by ensuring that we build up a sufficient stock of antibiotics and vaccines, decontamination units, breathing apparatus and other items so that our emergency services can protect the wider population.
- 5.19 In support of this sub-priority we will:
- by March 2004, start to implement new initiatives to reduce accidents in the home through a new home accident prevention strategy;
  - from April 2003, start to implement a new workplace health strategy to improve health and wellbeing in the workplace;
  - from April 2003, take forward the actions set out in the Northern Ireland Road Safety Strategy to reduce the number of deaths and serious injuries on our roads by a third from the current average of 1,750; and
  - from April 2003, begin to implement the agreed recommendations from the Fire Cover Review, redeploying the Brigade's resources to improve services.

**Sub-priority 4: We will raise the quality of health and personal social services and tackle poor performance**

- 5.20 The consultation document “Best Practice – Best Care” set out proposals for a framework to improve the quality of services delivered by our Health and Personal Social Services. We recently announced our decisions on what that framework should be, highlighting a number of areas where we planned to take action to make sure that health and social care in Northern Ireland is of the highest possible standard. Legislation is currently being brought forward covering the introduction of a new system of clinical and social care

governance for the HPSS; the introduction of a statutory duty of quality; an improved system for developing new and updating existing standards and guidelines; and arrangements for extending regulation to cover a much wider range of services.

- 5.21 In introducing new standards of clinical and social care governance we will ensure that HPSS organisations take corporate responsibility for performance and providing the highest possible standard of clinical and social care and ensuring that where things do go wrong, they are quickly put right and lessons are learnt to help prevent recurrence. This system of clinical and social care governance will also be supported by continuous professional development and strengthened professional regulation and we will work in partnership with others in delivering this. In particular, we will support the General Medical Council in introducing revalidation for doctors, a process that will allow doctors to demonstrate that their knowledge and skills are up to date in a changing clinical environment. A pivotal part of this work will be introducing local appraisal processes for all doctors working in Northern Ireland. We will also establish a Clinical and Social Care Governance Support Team (CSCGST) whose function will be to develop implementation guidance and training material tailored to individual organisation's needs and to train and support HPSS staff.
- 5.22 We want also to ensure that we set the proper standards for treatment and social care and that these are applied in a consistent manner to reduce unacceptable variations in care. We will therefore establish by the end of this year a Standards and Guidelines Unit (SGU) charged with setting and issuing standards and guidance to the HPSS. In formulating these, the unit will work in partnership with others, seeking the views of users, carers, health and social care professionals, independent and voluntary health and social care providers (including GPs and voluntary and community sector organisations) and the wider HPSS.
- 5.23 We intend to set up a new independent body, the Health and Social Services Regulation and Improvement Authority (HSSRIA), to regulate, register and inspect a wide range of services and to review the effectiveness of HPSS governance arrangements. It will also have the power to investigate incidents where things do go wrong. We intend, subject to the passing of the legislation, that HSSRIA will exist in shadow form before the end of 2003, with a further one to two years being needed to complete the process of extending regulation to all of the proposed services. We will also begin negotiations with the National Institute for Clinical Excellence and the Social Care Institute for Excellence to agree a formal link with both bodies that should allow us to benefit from their expertise and arrangements for developing standards and guidance.
- 5.24 In support of this sub-priority we will:
- from April 2003, have legislation in place to underpin the new regulatory framework and introduce a statutory duty of quality;
  - by September 2003, have established the new Health and Social Services Regulation and Improvement Authority in shadow form;

- by September 2003, have consulted on minimum care standards and introduce these as the minimum care standards for regulated services; and
- by December 2003, have established formal reporting arrangement for clinical and social care governance.

**Sub-priority 5: We will modernise our hospital services**

- 5.25 Over the last three years, much has been done to improve the management of the health and social services through fundamental reviews of key services, stronger planning and accountability arrangements, and closer monitoring and financial and other performance measures. However, it is clear that more needs to be done to bring about the improvements in treatment and care that we all want to see. In particular, we recognise that the improvements needed in the hospital sector cannot be achieved within the present organisation of services. There is now a real need for substantial investment and significant reform and we are committed to taking action to modernise our hospitals and ensure an adequate supply of well-trained professionals.
- 5.26 The Minister for Health, Social Services and Public Safety has set out in a consultation paper *Developing Better Services: Modernising Hospitals and Reforming Structures* her proposals for modernising hospital services and the reform of organisational structures and consultation on the proposals it contains will continue until October. The paper includes proposals for a network of nine acute hospitals and a number of Local Hospitals and Enhanced Local Hospitals. The proposals also cover the development of maternity services and protected elective centres for planned surgery east and west of the Bann.
- 5.27 We expect to make final decisions on the future of hospitals services by the end of 2002 and will do so in the context of the responses received to the consultation paper and the findings of the Needs and Effectiveness Evaluation we have recently completed on the area of health and social care. In the meantime, we will continue to work to provide high quality treatment and care within the existing hospital structures, and through the potential offered by Reinvestment and Reform Initiative further expand our hospital capacity.
- 5.28 To underpin whatever developments take place and, indeed, to support improvements across the whole of the HPSS, we need to ensure that we have enough high quality staff, that their skills are kept up-to-date, and that their working arrangements enable them to provide the most effective care and treatment to all.
- 5.29 If the Service is to give of its best, it must also have the most modern equipment. This applies not just to hospital or surgical equipment but to the information and communication technology (ICT) on which modern and accessible standards of care depend. With the publication of the HPSS ICT Strategy, we can now draw up a programme of projects that will lead to the creation of a fully ICT-supported service embracing the hospital, community and primary care settings. The outcome of these projects will include the use

of technology to increase the percentage of care professionals' time spent in direct care, with less committed to administrative tasks. The focus will be on ensuring that ICT is an enabler for service development and a catalyst for beneficial organisational change in the HPSS.

- 5.30 In support of this sub-priority we will
- by June 2003, develop proposals for new HSS organisational structures taking account of the emerging principles/criteria of the Review of Public Administration;
  - by March 2004, have completed a review of the HPSS workforce and developed a strategy to ensure that we have a flexible, tailored and competent workforce, able to deliver high quality services;
  - by March 2005, through the Reinvestment and Reform Initiative, have increased hospital ward capacity by 100 beds to help ease the worst pressure points; and
  - by March 2006, have achieved significant improvements in cancer, renal and cardiac and cardiology services including the commissioning of the new cancer centre in Belfast and additional renal dialysis capacity.

**Sub-priority 6: We will improve our primary care and community care services**

- 5.31 The economy of the health and personal social services, as represented by today's complex network of hospital, community and primary care services, is increasingly interdependent. Most people have their health and social care needs met in a community and primary care context. But people will continue to require timely access to specialist hospital treatment, the efficient and effective use of which largely depends on properly functioning community and primary care sectors. If the latter services are not properly funded, this leads to unnecessary admissions to hospital and unnecessarily lengthy occupation of hospital beds which, in turn, reduces the acute hospital sector's capacity to cope with emergency and elective work. Innovation and expansion in primary care, and to promotion of independent living through the development of community services, supported by effective hospital services, will provide people with the care they need, in the way they want, and in the most cost-effective way.
- 5.32 The reforms already taking root in the primary care sector, with the establishment of Local Health and Social Care Groups, present an exceptional opportunity for the varied skills and talents of that sector to be deployed to the greater benefit of patients. The basic principles behind this reform are close partnership with all other parts of the health and personal social services, and the provision of convenient, accessible and high quality care to people in their own localities. We want to keep bureaucracy and administration costs to a minimum and have clear, simple lines of responsibility. The HPSS ICT Strategy recognises that in primary and community care there are particular opportunities to improve the quality and monitoring of care through establishing and supporting more effective information sharing between care professionals and across services and disciplines. We intend to strengthen the role of the Local Health and Social



Care Groups by progressively devolving to them the budgets currently held by Boards, so that they may directly commission services for local people. We want to see more service delivered at the primary care level, for example, a strengthened and refocused approach to illnesses such as diabetes, which can be appropriately managed at the primary care level.

- 5.33 In community services, we need to build on the work that has been done in supporting an additional 1,000 people in an appropriate community setting, developing new ways of promoting independence, reducing admissions to long-term institutional or hospital care and in contributing to the costs of nursing care in nursing homes. The first report of the Community Care Review focused on the needs of older people: it has highlighted the need and scope for reducing their dependency, together with the associated requirement to meet the demand for respite for carers. Progress is being made: from 7 October 2002, we will be contributing £100 per week towards the cost of nursing home care for those who were meeting the full cost of their care. We will also be introducing more flexible and innovative packages of care, reflecting best practice as identified in the first report. The overall aim of the Review is to examine the implementation of community care policy to ensure that general level of service is adequate. The second stage of the review will seek to recognise the new possibilities for the provision of community care in light of advances in health and social care treatment. Advances in this area will also be complemented by the work of the cross-departmental PSI working group on older people.
- 5.34 In support of this sub-priority we will:
- by March 2004, improve communications services between GP's surgeries (and hence to patients) of pathology and radiology results;
  - by March 2005, ensure that Local Health and Social Care Groups commission at least 30% of all health and social services in their area;
  - by March 2005, report on the implementation of the second stage of the community care review; and
  - by March 2004, further enhance community care and intermediate provision to better meet needs in the community and ease pressure on hospital provision.

**Sub-priority 7: We will support those with disabilities, mental health difficulties, chronic or terminal illness and their carers**

- 5.35 In Northern Ireland, people with disabilities account for over 17% of the population, a higher percentage than in Great Britain, while the prevalence of mental health problems is estimated to be 25% higher here than in England. We want to enable those with a physical, sensory or learning disability, those living with terminal or chronic illness and those with mental health problems to achieve the highest possible standards of living and to be fully integrated within our society. We also want to support their carers. We recognise the need to build on the improvements we have made in services in these areas. We need also to ensure that those with chronic conditions have access to appropriate drug treatments and other interventions that offer improved quality of life.

- 5.36 For people with mental health problems, or physical and sensory disabilities, we will continue to develop community and specialist services to improve their independence and quality of life. In line with our commitment to tackling social exclusion, we will also look at other needs, including through a new cross-departmental PSI working group on disability. One area we want to focus on is the transport needs of people with disabilities and, as part of our Regional Transportation Strategy, are preparing an Accessible Transport Strategy which will focus on meeting the needs of those with disabilities and their carers, raising quality of life and enabling them to access public services, shops and recreation opportunities much more easily.
- 5.37 For people with a learning disability we will continue to develop specialist community services with the aim of resettling long-stay hospital patients, focusing hospital services on assessment and acute treatment. We will also look at ways of promoting an awareness and understanding of people with learning disabilities and our involvement in hosting the Special Olympics World Summer Games in 2003 will help increase participation in sports programmes by people with a learning disability and promote greater awareness and understanding among the wider community.
- 5.38 A fundamental review of mental health policy and legislation is also being undertaken to ensure that we have the best foundations in place for caring for people with mental health problems.
- 5.39 We will also build on our “Partnerships in Caring” initiative, to ensure that those with life-threatening conditions and the terminally ill receive a uniformly high quality of palliative care. Our aim is, over time, to enhance the out-of-hours care service and move towards the provision of 24 hour care for those who need it.
- 5.40 In support of this sub-priority we will:
- ❑ by March 2005, modernise our learning disability hospitals under the Reinvestment and Reform Initiative by completing significant capital development at Muckamore and Stradreagh hospitals;
  - ❑ by March 2004, have completed a major upgrading of acute admission facilities and ward refurbishment at Holywell hospital, also under the Reinvestment and Reform Initiative;
  - ❑ by March 2004, have completed work on the regional Acquired Brain Injury Unit and developed a plan for community brain injury services to complement inpatient care;
  - ❑ during 2003/04, provide for the resettlement in the community of more people from learning disability and mental health hospitals;
  - ❑ by September 2003, through support for the Special Olympics World Summer Games, have achieved a 20% increase over 2001/02 levels of 35% in participation in sports programmes by people with a learning disability; and
  - ❑ by March 2004, begin to implement the recommendations of the Valuing Carers report, providing a full range of support services to those who provide informal care.

## 6. INVESTING IN EDUCATION & SKILLS

### Introduction

- 6.1 Giving our children the best possible education and encouraging people to learn and develop through their lives has a fundamental place in our Programme for Government. As well as helping every individual to achieve his or her own potential, the provision of education and skills is at the heart of our policies to tackle social need and social exclusion and to secure a competitive economy. Investment in education and skills also is an important factor in improving employability and in promoting tolerance, unlocking creativity and developing civic responsibility. It also contributes directly to promoting sustainable development: in handing on accumulated knowledge; in teaching young people to be responsible consumers, aware of the implications of their actions and lifestyle for the wider environment; and in taking action to improve employability and tackle unemployment.
- 6.2 The Needs and Effectiveness Evaluation on the Schools programme substantiated the need for a proportionately higher level of expenditure per head here than in England because we have a proportionately larger school-age population and higher staying-on rates beyond age 16. Other factors such as social deprivation and rural sparsity also contribute to relative need. The evaluation highlighted the high level of academic achievement in our schools compared to other regions and the existence of a stable and well-motivated teaching force. However, the evaluation also drew attention to the high proportion of pupils who did not meet the expected standards and the disparities between the attainment of pupils in general and those who are socially disadvantaged. We need, too, to address the condition of the schools estate, including continuing to address the number of surplus places. We also recognise the need to modernise school and further education buildings and to provide pupils, students and teachers with access to modern equipment, especially ICT.
- 6.3 We want to make the curriculum relevant to today's needs, providing not only the fundamentals of literacy and numeracy but fostering creativity and a love of learning. It must also be sufficiently flexible to meet the interests and aptitudes of the individual learner. While unemployment has been falling, it is still a fact of life for far too many people and we need to take steps to help them find work. We are also conscious of the need for reform in many areas, including how we distribute delegated budgets to schools and, crucially, how we determine new structures for post-primary education.
- 6.4 In addressing these challenges, we will focus on:
- giving all our children the best start in life;
  - developing post-primary education to meet the needs of all our young people;
  - providing a high quality education and training system that unlocks creativity, promotes a culture of tolerance and ensures equality of provision for all;

- ❑ equipping people with the skills and qualifications to gain employment in a modern economy;
- ❑ assisting and supporting the unemployed and those looking to enter or return to the workforce;
- ❑ providing lifelong learning opportunities for people to update their knowledge, skills and qualifications; and
- ❑ preserving and developing our cultural and information resources, making them more open and accessible.

**Sub-priority 1: We will give all our children the best start in life**

- 6.5 To ensure the highest standards of achievement, we need to give our young people the best start in life. We recognise the longer-term benefits associated with early years education and are providing additional support through the Sure Start programme, targeting children under 4 and their families in areas of need through a drive to help raise educational standards and ensure that children can thrive when they get to school. We are also expanding our pre-school education provision. By the end of March 2003, we will have ensured that one year of free pre-school education will be available for every child in their immediate pre-school year whose parents wish it. The earliest years of learning are the most important of all and, subject to consultation on the present proposals from the Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment, we propose to put in place a new Foundation Stage curriculum that will encompass the pre-school year and P1 and P2 in primary school. This will contribute further to ensuring that we provide high quality education and play opportunities in those vital early years.
- 6.6 We need also to sustain the improvements we have seen at primary school level. We will build on the success of our *Making a Good Start* initiative, extending it from P1 into P2 to provide the right foundation for learning. We also want to place a continuing emphasis on literacy and numeracy, ultimately extending the availability of programmes such as Reading Recovery across all primary schools. By 2003, all primary schools will be linked to the Classroom 2000 network and educational resources. This will enable pupils to gain experience and competence in the use of ICT, laying the foundations for further development at post-primary level and beyond. In addition, we will continue to provide help for under-achieving primary schools, small primary schools and increased out-of-hours learning opportunities. We will also pay particular attention to the needs of primary schools serving areas of deprivation, ensuring that their pupils receive the support needed to reach their potential and reducing the differential in performance between these and other schools.
- 6.7 We recognise the need for continuing investment to make primary schools safe, comfortable and well equipped learning environments. We will take forward a major capital programme, investing to improve school buildings and reduce the number of mobile classrooms and identifying opportunities to rationalise the primary schools estate. Whilst the Needs and Effectiveness Evaluation showed that we have a high proportion of small primary schools,

this was not out of line with other jurisdictions. Nevertheless, the need for appropriate rationalisation is recognised, in the educational interests of pupils and the effective use of resources through reducing surplus places. We will ensure, however, that any rationalisation of schools is sensitive to the needs of the communities they serve, particularly in rural areas.

6.8 We believe that pupils with special educational needs should share equally in these planned improvements and that we must enhance the specialist provision available for them. Rather than being set apart, wherever possible, pupils with special educational needs should be educated alongside their peers in mainstream schools.

6.9 In support of this sub-priority we will:

- by September 2004, begin the process of implementing a new primary school curriculum which will include a new approach to early years education, place greater emphasis on skills that can be transferred from one curriculum area to another, and include personal development of pupils as a formal part of the curriculum;
- implement a programme of replacing 10% of mobile classrooms at 2003 over the period to 2006;
- by 2006, start primary major work schemes representing 15% of the high priority backlog at 2003 (subject to priority in relation to post-primary schemes);
- by 2006, reduce the proportion of pupils in primary schools serving the most disadvantaged areas who are not achieving level 4 in Key Stage 2 assessments;
- by 2006, reduce by 30% the number of primary pupils identified as persistent non-attenders.

**Sub-priority 2: We will develop post-primary education to meet the needs of young people**

6.10 We are committed to developing a post-primary education system that meets the needs of all of our young people. There has been an extensive response to the various strands of the consultation on the findings of the Report of the Review Group on Post-Primary Education (the Burns Report) and all the responses have been carefully analysed. The predominant view is that change is necessary as the present selection arrangements are stressful, inaccurate, label children as failures and distort the primary curriculum. There is strong support for the high standards achieved by many pupils but also widespread concern that too many young people leave school with poor qualifications, particularly those from socially disadvantaged backgrounds. Consultation responses have urged that these weaknesses and inequalities are addressed seriously and in a way that does not damage our current high levels of educational achievement. We must therefore develop a way forward that overcomes the present problems and provide pupils with access to a suitable range of educational opportunities that will raise standards and enable every child to fulfil their potential.

- 6.11 Regardless of the structures we finally agree, there is a need to maintain a focus now on maintaining and improving standards in post-primary schools. The Schools NEE showed the continuing upward trend in pupils' achievement in public examinations, and the fact that the numbers leaving with no qualifications has substantially reduced. Nevertheless, too many are still under-achieving. We will therefore continue to support pupils, parents and teachers in a way that allows all our young people to reach their full potential, ensuring that they leave school with the highest possible standards of literacy and numeracy. We will do this through investing in the quality of our teachers and principals, offering them relevant initial and in-service training opportunities and ensuring that teaching standards are maintained through the new General Teaching Council. We have been reviewing our post-primary curriculum to ensure that it meets the needs of our society. Subject to the outcome of the present CCEA consultation, we will be implementing a new curriculum for Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 that will give schools greater flexibility to tailor provision to the needs of their pupils and provide greater opportunities for work-related learning. We will also continue to invest in ICT in further and higher education and complete the major investment in computer networks under Classroom 2000, giving teachers and pupils access to a wealth of on-line educational resources.
- 6.12 Specifically for those pupils who are still missing out on the benefits of a good initial education, it is important that we should build on and extend the measures we have put in place to support disaffected pupils, providing new opportunities for education other than at school, introducing new discipline strategies and ensuring that, through the curriculum, we offer young people the opportunity to develop their creative potential and the self-esteem and coping skills needed to understand the dangers of drug and alcohol abuse and to resist peer pressure. The Youth Service has an important contribution to make in these areas and we will work to increase the proportion of young people engaged with youth clubs, by making the provision creative, attractive and relevant to their needs.
- 6.13 As with primary schools, major capital investment is required in the post-primary sector to tackle the backlog of urgent priority projects and provide teachers and pupils with modern facilities that support a modern curriculum. We will take forward that capital programme, taking account of any changes that may emerge from decisions on the Post-Primary Review. We also recognise that we have proportionately more post-primary schools than some other regions. In part that reflects our present selective system but, irrespective of future structures, there is also potential to reduce the number of surplus places in this sector in a way that provides an up-to-date learning environment which will better meet the needs of pupils and their teachers.
- 6.14 In support of this sub-priority we will:
- by September 2004, begin the process of implementing a new curriculum for Key Stages 3 and 4 in all post-primary schools that is designed to be more relevant to pupils' and employers' needs and geared towards learning outcomes that promote key transferable skills, personal development and an understanding of Citizenship;

- ❑ by 2006, start post-primary major work schemes representing 20% of the high priority backlog at 2003 (subject to priority in relation to primary schemes);
- ❑ implement a programme of replacing 10% of the mobile classrooms at 2003 over the period to 2006;
- ❑ by 2006, reduce the proportion of pupils in post-primary schools serving the most disadvantaged communities who achieve no GCSEs or equivalent qualifications; and
- ❑ by 2006, reduce by 15% the number of post-primary pupils identified as poor attenders; and the number of pupils subject to multiple suspensions.

**Sub-priority 3: We will provide a high quality education and training system that promotes a culture of tolerance and ensures equality of provision for all**

- 6.15 Our education and training service, from pre-school through to further and higher education, can and should play an important role in helping us develop a cohesive, inclusive and just society. Through the new citizenship curriculum and the work of the youth service, we will work to instil in children and young people a recognition of their rights and responsibilities as citizens and an appreciation and respect for their shared culture and heritage and for the environment.
- 6.16 We are determined to deliver equality of provision of high quality education and training and to ensure that opportunities for learning are available for all. We will develop long-term education strategies, complemented by local action, to support schools serving the most disadvantaged catchments and to integrate those children and young people with special educational needs into mainstream schools. In response to the Disability Rights Taskforce, we are consulting on a Special Educational Needs and Disability Bill which will promote disability rights in schools and in further and higher education. Following consultation, we will introduce legislation. Many very capable young people from low income families leave education as soon as possible without developing their full potential.
- 6.17 We recognise the importance of promoting a culture of tolerance through our education and training system. The continuing demand from parents to have their children educated in an integrated setting is heartening and we will work to meet this demand, helping new schools to set up and transforming existing schools in response to the wishes of parents. Our further and higher education systems, including the DARD colleges are, of course, already integrated and we will look at how we build on the potential this offers to promote tolerance, understanding and respect. Irish-medium education is also expanding and again provides opportunities to develop a greater understanding of our cultural and linguistic diversity. We will continue to support greater diversity in education where it is in the educational interest of the child and cost-effective to do so.
- 6.18 Our Youth Service plays an important role in cross-community work, including in deploying outreach workers in difficult interface areas and we will

continue to support this work. The Youth Service also works in partnership with a wide range of voluntary, community and church-based organisations to deliver programmes for children and young people designed to support the school curriculum and promote self-esteem, good health, tolerance, creativity and an understanding of, and respect for, our environment, heritage and culture. We are committed to widening access to Youth Service activities, giving more young people an opportunity to participate in a wide range of meaningful activities.

- 6.19 In support of this sub-priority we will:
- during 2003/04, take forward the phased implementation (begun Sept 2002) of the new Citizenship programme in all post-primary schools;
  - during 2003/04, introduce a Special Educational Needs and Disability Bill for Northern Ireland;
  - support the expected average annual 10% growth in enrolments in integrated schools, and 5% annual growth in schools and units providing Irish-medium education, in response to parental demand; and
  - by 2006, increase participation in youth organisations to 34% of youth population.

**Sub-priority 4: We will equip our young people with the skills and qualifications to gain employment in a modern economy**

- 6.20 Far too many people in the existing workforce have no or few formal qualifications and far too many are leaving formal education without appropriate qualifications or preparation for work. If we are to compete economically and ensure that prosperity is fairly shared, we need to ensure that our young people have the skills and qualifications needed to find work in a modern economy.
- 6.21 We will therefore continue to identify employers' skills and qualifications requirements, and ensure that young people and the adult workforce have access to high quality education and training opportunities to enable them to meet the needs of the economy, including those of the agri-food sector.
- 6.22 In addition to proposed changes to make the school curriculum more relevant, we will embark upon a wide-ranging review of the overall strategy for further education to maximise its contribution to regional economic and social development, and will ensure that the curriculum offered to students on technician programmes addresses the economy's priority skill areas. We will also complete a review of planning, management and funding of further education and training programmes for 16-19 year olds, and we will review education and R&D in Agriculture and Food Science to inform decisions on the future delivery of these services in the agri-food industry. We are also refocusing our management development support and reviewing Modern Apprenticeships, actions which, when linked to developments in further and higher education, will enhance our skills base.



- 6.23 We are determined to widen access to education and training opportunities. For example, we will improve assistance given to students from lower socio-economic backgrounds by enhancing the financial arrangements for student support. This is designed specifically to promote access to higher education for those on low incomes and will build on the changes introduced following the 2000/01 Student Support Review. We will also review and evaluate our strategy and current funding initiatives to widen access to, and participation in, higher education. In further education, through “compacts” with non-statutory providers, we will encourage greater diversity and provide an access route into more formal education for those without qualifications.
- 6.24 We are committed to providing education and training that is of the highest quality, and to achieve this we will maintain rigorous quality assurance procedures, will progress our programme of investment in the further education sector estate and will continually develop the curriculum and lecturers understanding of industry to ensure that the needs of students and industry are met.
- 6.25 In support of this sub-priority we will:
- during 2003/04, commence implementation of the proposed strategy and way forward for further education;
  - during 2003/04, begin implementation of the key findings of our review of the planning, funding and management of education and training programmes for 16-19 year olds;
  - by September 2004, improve standards and student achievement of full or unit passes at NVQ levels 2 to 4 (or equivalents) by 5% over 2002/03 through a range of quality improvement initiatives;
  - by March 2004, take forward the actions that arise from the DARD review of education and R&D;
  - during 2003/04, fund 330 additional full-time equivalent higher education student places; and
  - by March 2004, agree an Estates Strategy for the Further Education Sector that delivers a programme of investment in infrastructure.

**Sub-priority 5: We will assist and support the unemployed and those looking to enter or return to the workforce**

- 6.26 While we have seen significant falls in unemployment over recent years, there are still too many people out of work and addressing unemployment and the difficulties it brings continues to be a key priority for the Executive and an important focus of our New TSN policy. While it is important that, through the benefits system, we support those who cannot find work to have a decent standard of life our priority remains to help those who can work find work. We want to take measures to improve individual employability but we recognise also the importance of addressing the barriers to employment that exist and that can discourage people from entering the labour market.
- 6.27 We will address this complex issue in a number of ways. First, we want to ensure that people have access to advice, guidance and accurate information on the options available to them. The Welfare Reform and Modernisation

Programme will put work at the forefront of the benefit-claiming process for those of working age, delivering a service which is focused on the needs of the individual. It will be complemented by the careers advice and guidance services available in JobCentres, schools, colleges and universities and through the New Deal and other programmes. Through this range of programmes, we will ensure that those seeking to enter the labour market are given the personal support they need.

6.28 A particular challenge will be to tackle the poor levels of literacy and numeracy in adults. We have already launched a new Essential Skills strategy which will put in place a framework that ensures a high quality provision of education in basic skills in a way that is accessible to all. As part of this strategy, we will also support tutors, enabling them to develop their skills within a professional framework. We will also look at the role of public transport in assisting and supporting people to gain access to education and training opportunities or attend job interviews.

6.29 In support of this sub-priority we will:

- by March 2004, have supported an additional 2,500 learners to update their essential skills including literacy and numeracy skills;
- during 2003/04, help 10,000 unemployed people move from welfare into work;
- during 2003/04, help 1,500 participants in New Deal 18 to 24 into work;
- during 2003/04, help 1,500 participants in New Deal 25+ into work; and
- by March 2004, extend the opportunity for FE lecturers to return to industry for up to three months to update their skills.

**Sub-priority 6: We will provide lifelong learning opportunities for people to update their knowledge, skills and qualifications**

6.30 Modern economies are increasingly subject to change and it is important that our workforce is sufficiently flexible to meet the changing skills, knowledge and qualifications needs of employers. One of the challenges facing the Executive is the creation and sustaining of a culture of lifelong learning that will maintain and enhance the employability of those in work and those seeking work. The benefits of lifelong learning are, however, not solely confined to those in or seeking to enter the labour market – we recognise too the value of learning opportunities in facilitating social inclusion and improving quality of life and the need for lifelong learning to be embedded across a wide range of departmental policies and programmes. We will promote lifelong learning through widening learner choice and the provision of financial incentives to encourage and assist more people to re-engage in learning activity.

6.31 As well as ensuring the availability of appropriate and relevant learning experiences, we recognise the need to make learning available in ways that are as flexible and accessible as possible. The continuing development of support for adult learning; a Metropolitan IT network for further and higher

education in NI (providing on-line learning for students and access to an extensive range of curriculum materials); and the introduction of electronic learning through increased internet and e-business activity will all make a significant contribution in this area. However, to ensure effective use of available resources we will initiate a review of adult learner support with the aim of ensuring that individuals can make relevant choices on learning providers and delivery mechanisms that best match their aspirations and lifestyles.

- 6.32 In taking forward these programmes, we will maintain a focus on areas or sectors where there are particular challenges, including areas of current or likely future skills shortages. We will aim in particular to work with small businesses, including in tourism and the creative industries, to enable them to develop their workforce and management in a way that will help them compete successfully. In our work to attract new inward investment, we also will maintain a focus on support for training and development. With the current low level of agricultural incomes, and the low levels of formal qualifications among farmers, we will work to support farmers and farm workers to develop their business and management skills and to increase the employability of those who want to pursue full or part-time off-farm employment. Learning access for farmers and growers will be enhanced through our development of the Rural NI Portal while the new Peace II measure “Obtaining Alternative Employment” will help farmers and farm families identify and meet the training needs required to secure alternative employment. We will also work to pilot a number of innovative challenge and benchmarking programmes that allow farmers to apply learning directly in their own business.
- 6.33 We will also develop a learning strategy that will draw together a diverse group of service providers with the aim of pooling resources and exchanging ideas in a way that will allow us to make the most of all our information, cultural, educational and sporting resources in promoting the concept of lifelong learning. We will also make particular use of the Public Library Service: through its Tomorrow’s Library Review, it will contribute to lifelong learning by providing access to quality materials that support the established educational network and maximise the potential of distance learning. This will emphasise the role of improvements to the library structure, including access to ICT, in underpinning lifelong learning through a service that is accessible to, and much valued by, local communities.
- 6.34 In support of this sub-priority we will:
- ❑ during 2003/04, provide and fill 15,000 places through an initiative to support adult learning;
  - ❑ by March 2006, 2,200 farmers or members of farm families will have secured alternative income or business benefits from Peace II measures;
  - ❑ by March 2006, 2,300 people to have completed or be participating in Challenge or Benchmarking programmes in the agri-food industry;
  - ❑ during 2003/04, we will continue to work with the FE and HE sectors to help them to develop and implement proposals for a NI

Metropolitan network to improve electronic links between tertiary level education establishments in NI and throughout the UK, to improve broadband connectivity and to facilitate greater exploitation of e-learning;

- during 2003/04, initiate a review of Adult Learner Support;
- by March 2004, encourage investment in activities to improve qualifications and skills in local companies by assisting 120 projects under Invest NI's Company Development Programme;
- by June 2004, develop a learning strategy to encourage the educational potential of our information, cultural and sporting resources; and
- by March 2006, establish 3 new (IT supported) Electronic Library Facilities which will enable the Public Library Service to promote and deliver lifelong learning through access to e-information services.

## 7. SECURING A COMPETITIVE ECONOMY

### Introduction

- 7.1 In working to achieve a cohesive, inclusive and just society, we must create the conditions for economic development that can produce employment and wealth, fairly shared, for the future. We want to achieve high and stable levels of economic growth while at the same time protecting our environment. We will use natural resources prudently and develop our region in order to promote a balanced and equitable pattern of sustainable development and to help us, we are currently examining the responses to the consultation carried out in 2002 on proposals for a Northern Ireland Sustainable Development Strategy.
- 7.2 Infrastructure is the backbone of a vibrant and competitive economy and, over the lifetime of this Programme for Government, we want to deliver real improvements to our economic infrastructure, in line with our focus on reinvestment and reform. We must ensure that our roads are of a standard capable of producing reduced and reliable journey times and that our public transport networks are safe, reliable and accessible to help business and to minimise social exclusion. We also need urgently to address our ageing water and sewerage infrastructure. We want to promote our air and sea ports as regional gateways for economic development. Our telecommunications, technological and energy infrastructure too must be of a standard capable of supporting a competitive economy. We will promote innovation and encourage openness to new thinking and new technology.
- 7.3 We need also to focus on tackling structural weaknesses in our economy, ensuring that we can compete in a changing, increasingly knowledge-based global marketplace. We will particularly focus on promoting research & development and innovation in business, working closely with universities and other key stakeholders, including those involved in public sector research. The Research & Development and Innovation (RDI) strategy will provide the framework for this work. In addition the Northern Ireland Science Park, working closely with the universities and business, will provide a technologically advanced environment for the commercialisation of the research base.
- 7.4 We want to sustain the growth in employment that we have seen in recent years and will work to support those looking to enter the workplace and ensure that those in work have the necessary skills. The skills and adaptability of our workforce, including the competence and leadership skills of managers, are critical factors if we are to succeed in growing our indigenous businesses and attracting inward investment. We recognise that no single organisation, or group of organisations, can bring about these changes. The key to success lies in working in close partnership across all sectors. The value of this way of working has already been demonstrated through the work of the cross-sectoral Economic Development Forum which launched its first publication *Working Together for a Stronger Economy* in June 2002. We will continue to work closely with the Forum, and sectors it

represents, to ensure a consistent and complementary approach to economic development.

- 7.5 Our work to evaluate the need for, and effectiveness of, spending on assistance to industry will inform the steps we take to create the conditions for economic growth. An evaluation of the impact of financial assistance provided in the 1980s and 1990s to encourage growth, inward investment and R&D and innovation, found that assistance had a positive impact on employment and manufacturing output. However, it was less successful in helping to restructure the NI industrial base and in improving job quality. In looking to the future, we will use this study in reassessing the role of selective financial assistance to industry and the contribution it can make in the current economic climate to securing a competitive, knowledge-based economy.
- 7.6 We need to take action to regenerate our rural economy and to ensure that our tourism sector can compete to attract more, higher-spending visitors to enjoy the natural and manmade assets that Northern Ireland has to offer. We also want to make sure that our regulatory functions support the needs and rights of workers and consumers in a way that is consistent with our desire to improve competitiveness and achieve growth.
- 7.7 In working to secure a competitive economy we will therefore focus on:
- ❑ developing our physical, communications and information infrastructure to meet the needs of a modern economy;
  - ❑ developing a modern, co-ordinated and efficient planning process that integrates economic, social and environmental need;
  - ❑ promoting creativity, entrepreneurship, innovation and competitiveness;
  - ❑ developing our tourism potential, increasing Northern Ireland's attractiveness to visitors;
  - ❑ ensuring that businesses and consumers benefit from effective regulation;
  - ❑ working together to regenerate our rural and fisheries economy; and
  - ❑ protecting, enhancing and promoting our natural and built environment in a sustainable way.

**Sub-priority I: We will develop our physical, communications and information infrastructure to meet the needs of a modern economy**

- 7.8 Investing in our economic infrastructure will be a particular priority over the course of this Programme for Government. We need to make sure that our roads and public transport systems are capable of transporting people and goods safely and effectively, and promote a more sustainable travel culture. Through the 10-year Regional Transportation Strategy (RTS) we are beginning to address the effect of years of under investment in transportation infrastructure, tackling the deficiencies in the current transportation system and seeking to enhance and make best use of our existing assets.
- 7.9 Under the RTS we will bring forward a number of strategic transportation initiatives. We will upgrade the rail network and provide new, modern trains

and increase rail capacity. We will provide new, modern, accessible buses across the region and progress the introduction of Quality Bus Corridors (QBCs) on all main Belfast commuter routes. A dedicated project team will take forward detailed preparatory work on a rapid transit network within the Belfast Metropolitan Area. We will provide local improvements in towns across Northern Ireland to assist pedestrians and cyclists and introduce innovative demand responsive transport services in rural areas. We will work towards eliminating 75% of the road maintenance backlog and implement highway measures such as accident remedial and traffic calming schemes. We will also advance a number of strategic highway improvements to upgrade routes on the Regional Strategic Transportation Network (RSTN). In particular we will build on our commitment to upgrade the Trans European Network from Larne to the border south of Newry by investing in further improvements to this key route. The increased structural maintenance will offer significant economic benefits resulting from journey time reductions and large savings in road reconstruction costs. All of these measures will offer benefits in terms of facilitating the movement of people and goods, attracting inward investment and increasing Northern Ireland's attractiveness to visitors, including business travellers and tourists. They will also prove key to our work to tackle social exclusion.

- 7.10 A key theme of the Regional Development Strategy is to maintain and improve the quality of our water resources. Our water and sewerage infrastructure is now suffering acutely from years of chronic under investment. The consequences of an old and under funded water and sewerage infrastructure are many. First, there is the risk to public health and the threat to the environment. Second, there is the inability to keep up with increased demand for public services to meet growth and a failure to optimise water supply and wastewater treatment and a consequent risk that physical development will be slowed down. Third, there is the likelihood of fines for failing to comply with EU legislation. Northern Ireland's drinking water quality is below the UK average. Compliance with wastewater effluent discharge standards falls further behind as the regulations become tighter. Substantial additional capital investment is required to comply with current and predicted legislation. Over the last five years, £280 million has been invested to improve the water supply and distribution systems and £180 million to improve wastewater collection and treatment. The second Asset Management Plan for Water Service is expected to identify capital investment needs higher than at present for the next 20 years in order to meet statutory requirements, which will become progressively more stringent over the coming years. Current indications are that £150m per year needs to be spent on capital investment. There will also be increased operating costs of more modern plant, such as electricity, chemicals and employee skills enhancement, to be taken into account. The capital investment programme in our water and sewerage infrastructure needs to be accelerated significantly. The Reinvestment and Reform Initiative and, in particular, the new Strategic Investment Body which we are establishing will help us to achieve this, making the most of all the available investment channels. The Water Resource Strategy (WRS) sets the context for water supply planning by forecasting the gap between the supply of and demand for drinking water

over the next 30 years. A Water Efficiency Plan (WEP), to support environmental sustainability is also being developed which will improve water supply through better leakage management and increasing public awareness about the importance of conserving supplies.

- 7.11 Given the scale of the investment required in these areas, we must explore the scope for alternative funding sources that will supplement Public Expenditure provision. Work is underway on the development of a policy on developers' contributions toward the enhancement and upgrading of infrastructure to respond to the increased demand arising from housing growth.
- 7.12 Public Private Partnerships (PPP) offer the potential to accelerate our infrastructure investment programme. Packages of "bundled" roads and wastewater treatment schemes have been identified which may prove suitable for a PPP approach. The ultimate determinant of the suitability of PPP will be overall value for money considerations.
- 7.13 Continuing to strengthen the energy infrastructure is also vital for a modern economy and society. The high cost of energy remains a feature of our economy that needs to be addressed but we are committed to stimulating effectiveness by creating an open market in the context of the full opening of all energy markets across Europe and by securing greater convergence with the energy market in the Republic of Ireland. We will also reform and strengthen our regulatory framework, introduce greater competition in electricity generation and, with the extension of the gas industry, extend fuel choice. Our decision last year to make funding available to support the construction of gas pipelines to the North West and from Antrim to Gormanstown, north of Dublin reflects this determination to extend choice. In line with our commitment to sustainable development, we will also place an increased emphasis on the use of renewable energy sources and on encouraging energy efficiency. We will establish and publish indicative targets for increasing the proportion of electricity from renewable sources in Northern Ireland.
- 7.14 We will encourage the development of a world-class telecommunications infrastructure, which is essential if Northern Ireland is to compete effectively with other regions. We will continue to work closely with the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) and the Regulator as well as with the other devolved administrations. We will also work with the Department of Communications, Marine and Natural Resources in the South and liaise with InterTradeIreland and cross border groups, to examine the feasibility of closer North/South integration in encouraging the development of telecommunications infrastructure within the island of Ireland. We will also look at new ways to maximise the role of geographic information in supporting the needs of a modern economy.



- 7.15 In support of this priority we will:
- seek to increase the level of capital investment in the water and sewerage infrastructure over the period to March 2006 having regard to identified need;
  - progress the RTS, completing the Belfast Metropolitan Transportation Plan and the Regional Strategic Transportation Network Plan by end 2003;
  - by end 2004, complete a sub-Regional Transport Plan for the rest of Northern Ireland;
  - by March 2005, have agreed and published a new energy strategy, supported by legislation, to create the right conditions for a fully open energy market;
  - by March 2006, support at least 1 major project that assists local access to broadband telecommunications infrastructure, and 2 flagship projects which develop leading-edge broadband applications, content or services; and
  - by March 2004, complete the implementation of the geographic information strategy for Northern Ireland.

**Sub-priority 2: We will develop a modern, co-ordinated and efficient planning process that integrates economic, social and environmental need**

- 7.16 We need to give careful consideration to where people live and work and other key social, environmental and community factors so that we can plan our public infrastructure more effectively. The Regional Development Strategy provides an overarching framework that will help achieve a strong, spatially balanced economy, a healthy environment and inclusive society. It takes account of local, national and international forces which are collectively driving change and sets out a challenging agenda which will shape the development of the region over the next 25 years. The strategy provides a context for major investment decisions and for our work to create the infrastructure and conditions for competitive and sustainable regional development.
- 7.17 In implementing our Regional Development Strategy, we recognise the importance of effective partnership between regional and local government and between the public, private, voluntary and community sectors. We will work with local councils and other key groups, particularly at sub-regional level to ensure a co-ordinated approach to development.
- 7.18 Our planning processes are key to the future development of Northern Ireland. We will pursue the modernisation of planning processes by implementing the actions that flow from the consultation on the *Modernising Planning Processes* document, in the context of the framework provided by the Regional Development Strategy. This will involve changes in the way in which we make individual planning decisions, in how local Development Plans are produced, and in the way in which planning policy is prepared. It will also require consideration of other changes, such as the introduction of third party appeal rights, which could make the planning process more complex

and time-consuming. Our aim, however, is to produce simpler, faster and more accessible planning processes that serve both business and the community; that promote partnership working within government and between government and the social partners; and that are in line with our commitment to sustainable development.

- 7.19 We will continue to deliver our Development Plan Programme, with the aim of providing Development Plan coverage for all 26 local council areas by 2006, subject to the capacity of the Planning Appeals Commission and other statutory bodies. This will provide, for the first time, an up-to-date, relevant basis at local level for the effective planning and management of development. We will also ensure that there is a comprehensive statement of operational planning policy in the form of Planning Policy Statements that, together with Development Plans, can inform individual planning decisions in a consistent and coherent way.
- 7.20 In support of this sub-priority we will:
- by the end of 2004, implement the agreed administrative actions flowing from the consultation on the *Modernising Planning Processes* document;
  - by the end of 2005, put in place any necessary legislative changes necessary to modernise planning processes, subject to the agreement of the Assembly;
  - by the end of 2005, complete the current programme of Planning Policy Statement preparation;
  - by the end of 2006, complete the current programme of Development Plan preparation, ensuring the coverage of all 26 local council areas; and
  - seek to issue decisions equivalent to at least 90% of the number of valid applications received each year 2003/04 to 2005/06.

**Sub-priority 3: We will promote creativity, entrepreneurship, innovation and competitiveness**

- 7.21 If Northern Ireland is to compete successfully in the modern global, knowledge-based economy we need to engage in a highly pro-active approach to economic development. We believe the establishment of a single economic development organisation – Invest Northern Ireland – provides the stimulus for a fresh new dynamic with a strong focus on innovation and enterprise. The approach of the new organisation will involve building on the synergies between inward investment, a strong, innovative and entrepreneurial indigenous business sector and greater levels of business start-ups.
- 7.22 Innovation continues to be a key competitiveness driver and we will maintain a focus on improving our performance on all aspects of innovation, in the private sector, and throughout the educational and public systems. The Research, Development and Innovation (RDI) Strategy will provide the framework for making further advances in this important area. In particular, we will continue to maximise the research and technological capacities of our universities and Further Education colleges and fund the development of new research facilities to support the RDI strategy. Central to our efforts is the

recognition that the dissemination and use of knowledge are critical success factors. Through our *Unlocking Creativity* initiative, we will also take steps to facilitate the development of the creative industries sector, enabling it to grow and contribute to promoting innovation and sustaining the knowledge economy.

- 7.23 Increasing the competitiveness of the Northern Ireland business base is another priority and, through Invest NI's advisory and investment programmes, we will help our local companies grow. We will place particular emphasis on encouraging them to export their products and services, ensuring that more companies, particularly the smaller companies, recognise the importance of selling globally and we will encourage and support non-exporters to enter into external markets. More generally, our commitment to developing the local business base will lead us to shift from support for building capacity to that for building capability and Invest NI will target its resources on that priority.
- 7.24 We also need to raise the overall level and quality of business starts, in particular those with growth potential. This is a major challenge and, in this context, there are deep-rooted educational, social and cultural biases which must be overcome. If we are to succeed we need to engage in a strategic, long-term programme of action which will promote, support and celebrate entrepreneurship. We will also continue to work hard to attract new inward investment with a renewed focus on the quality of projects and of jobs. In doing so we will target sectors such as ICT, creative industries, health technologies and electronics. The establishment of Invest NI provides for a more integrated approach to marketing our region as an attractive investment location.
- 7.25 It is vital that we work closely with all economic stakeholders across the private and voluntary sectors and in our educational establishments to maximise the positive involvement of all in the drive for a vibrant, competitive and inclusive economy. As part of a balanced incentive package we will, in partnership with key stakeholders, initially use public sector leverage to promote new and innovative financial products to a wide spectrum of businesses. The longer-term goal is to achieve greater private sector capacity as part of the process pioneered through the Venture and Challenge funds in the context of the ongoing development of financial support for industry and the role of public support within it.
- 7.26 We will also pursue an integrated approach to the Social Economy, through partnership between the Social Economy Network, government departments, local government and the community and voluntary sectors through the establishment of a Social Economy Forum.
- 7.27 We will assess the role of public sector leverage in the financing of community enterprises and in developing the related policy framework. In this regard we will explore a mix of potential initiatives ranging from micro finance to venture capital and loan funds to stimulate investment, growth and high quality sustainable employment. We will seek to develop the role of

Credit Unions and Industrial and Provident Societies in Northern Ireland with a view to maximising the contribution such organisations can make to the development of the Social Economy.

- 7.28 In support of this sub-priority we will:
- by June 2003, have begun implementation of a further programme of investment in the university research infrastructure (SPUR II);
  - by March 2004, establish and promote new financial products with a view to increasing the number of venture capital funds promoted and also to increase the proportion of repayable finance in relation to total selective financial assistance;
  - having established a Social Economy Forum by December 2002, by March 2004, develop and implement agreed priorities to maximise the contribution of the Social Economy;
  - by March 2006, implement actions emerging from 17 sector strategies across the range of manufacturing and international traded service sectors;
  - by March 2004, through Invest NI, provide strategic advice and tailored financing to help 100 companies enter external markets for the first time;
  - by January 2004, ensure the implementation of the interdepartmental action plan to maximise the potential of the creative industries sector; and
  - by March 2006, have packaged and promoted in overseas markets five persuasive regional profiles indicating the business benefits of these regions for potential Foreign Direct Investment.

**Sub-priority 4: We will develop our tourism potential, increasing Northern Ireland's attractiveness to visitors**

- 7.29 Our aim is to ensure that the huge potential of tourism is fully exploited in a sustainable way. We will encourage an innovative and positive approach to putting Northern Ireland on the world tourism map with the aim of promoting substantial and sustainable growth in the sector and worthwhile opportunities for entrepreneurship and employment. It is also important to recognise the contribution that tourism can make to rural development and the promotion of the diverse and unique nature of the cultural tourism product we have to offer visitors. We will benchmark ourselves against the best international standards of quality and hospitality and use the results to ensure continuous improvement. Particular emphasis will be placed on close working between bodies such as NITB, Tourism Ireland Limited (TIL), the British Tourist Authority (BTA), along with relevant trade associations and the tourism industry at large to ensure a joined-up approach by government departments and the industry.
- 7.30 Following the completion of a review of tourism, developed in partnership between government departments and agencies, local government and the private sector, we will propose a strategic framework of coherent co-ordinated policies - including vision, aims, co-ordination arrangements and measures - to enable tourism in NI to grow and prosper. When the way forward has been agreed, we will work with our partners on the strategic

actions required to make the vision for NI tourism a reality and the tourism industry globally competitive through offering world class standards of service and hospitality.

- 7.31 We will also ensure that the Northern Ireland Tourist Board (NITB) is facilitated in its work to provide leadership and co-ordination and that it increases the priority it gives to improving the scale and quality of market intelligence and its dissemination to the NI tourism industry. It will provide a clear positive image of what NI has to offer within the context of the marketing strategy of TIL. With the establishment of TIL, Ireland is marketed as an island internationally. This affords the 'Northern Ireland offer' more marketing exposure and endorsement by the new Brand Ireland. To maximise investment in TIL, NITB will strengthen its partnership with industry and other government departments and agencies to ensure the image being portrayed is matched by the reality of the visitor experience on the ground. It will also raise the profile and value of short break, niche and special interest tourism. It will support all of these aims by improving the ICT capability of the sector.
- 7.32 Major events also have a significant role to play in developing our tourism potential. Staging international events such as the World Amateur Boxing Championships has helped project a positive image of Northern Ireland and generate income for the local economy. In co-operation with the Northern Ireland Events Company and other partners, we want to extend the range of such events, focusing on those that will help market Northern Ireland internationally and increase direct economic benefits to the community.
- 7.33 In support of this sub-priority we will:
- in 2003/04, working with the new Tourism Strategy Forum, implement a new 3-year priority programme aimed at improving the competitiveness of our tourism industry;
  - by December 2004, through support for TIL, secure growth in visitors to Northern Ireland of 3% above the growth in visitors to the island of Ireland as a whole;
  - in 2003/04, launch a new tourism website directed at meeting the needs of the industry;
  - from 2003/04 to 2005/06, support 8-10 major international events that will generate at least £1m of local economic activity each year; and
  - during 2003, implement the five sustainable tourism development strategies under the Natural Resource Rural Tourism Initiative.

**Sub-priority 5: We will ensure that businesses and consumers benefit from effective regulation**

- 7.34 We want to provide the conditions in which businesses and consumers can influence the development of government policy and develop efficient regulatory services that can both protect consumers and support business competitiveness. We will develop effective and sustainable consumer affairs policies, aligned with key developments both in GB and Europe. A new Consumer Strategy has been launched which will enhance consumer

knowledge and protection and to encourage businesses to become more competitive by learning from consumers.

- 7.35 We will also deliver a programme of services designed to protect both consumers and responsible traders against sharp practice and unfair trading. In doing so, we will raise public awareness and understanding of the Trading Standards Service, targeting in particular the most deprived areas, communities and people.
- 7.36 Over the next three years, we will introduce changes to the legal and regulatory framework which will further encourage enterprise, promote e-business and work in more creative ways to achieve our economic objectives. In particular, following consultation with the business community, we will bring forward proposals for a new framework of company law aimed at reducing the burdens on business, particularly small companies, by developing a modern regulatory framework that promotes fairness and sustainability. We will also introduce legislation to encourage enterprise and responsible risk-taking and to provide rescue mechanisms for small companies in financial difficulties.
- 7.37 Through our support for bodies including the Office of the Industrial Tribunals and the Fair Employment Tribunal, the Labour Relations Agency, the Industrial Court and the Certification Office we will promote best practice in employment, helping employers and employees in the area of employment rights and ensuring that the correct balance is struck between the rights of employees and the ability of employers to remain competitive in a changing global marketplace.
- 7.38 In support of this sub-priority we will:
- by the end of 2005, have in place an enhanced regional consumer affairs structure and legislative framework which delivers a fairer deal for NI consumers; and
  - by the end of 2005, have in place new legislation that encourages enterprise and responsible risk taking, enables the use of e-business, and promotes fairness and sustainability.

**Sub-priority 6: We will work together to regenerate our rural economy**

- 7.39 We are determined to work in partnership with others in businesses and in rural communities to regenerate our rural economy. The Vision Group report, *Vision for the Future of the Agri-Food Industry*, provides a context for this work. The Report, which was published in October 2001, contains over 200 recommendations grouped under 10 themes. Over 30 of these recommendations are for the industry themselves to implement. The recommendations focus on challenges which we accept must be addressed. They include:
- creating a more competitive agri-food sector;
  - better integration and co-operation within the food chain;

- a better trained and educated workforce;
- a more balanced age structure among farmers;
- improved protection against disease risk;
- developing the rural economy;
- an increased environmental focus in farming;
- making better use of R&D and ICT; and
- improving the representation of Northern Ireland interests.

- 7.40 An Action Plan setting out how we will respond to the Vision Group report and the challenges facing farming, will be published in November 2002; this will also take into account any necessary response to the EU Commission's proposals under the Mid Term Review of the Common Agricultural Policy. The Plan will be published alongside a wider modernisation programme being undertaken within the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development, including its response to the O'Hare Report on higher education and R&D in the agri-food sector. We will therefore also support the sustainable development of our agri-food industry through excellence in analytical and diagnostic services, education, research and technology transfer.
- 7.41 As part of our work to regenerate our rural economy we will focus on improving animal health. The lessons learned from the outbreak of Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) in 2001 will be taken forward as part of a work programme arising from the independent review of the outbreak. Work has also begun to examine the need for new legislation and to consolidate existing provision in a new Animal Health Bill for Northern Ireland.
- 7.42 We are also reviewing how we control the specific diseases of bovine Brucellosis and bovine Tuberculosis (TB), both diseases with human health implications. The eradication of Brucellosis and a substantial reduction in the number of TB reactors will be taken forward as part of the outcome of the Brucellosis and TB Policy Reviews, and will form part of an All-Island Animal Health Strategy.
- 7.43 In support of this sub-priority we will:
- during 2003/04, continue the process of implementation of recommendations from the *Vision for the Future of the Agri-food Industry* exercise, with special emphasis on facilitating the industry to implement those recommendations that relate directly to it;
  - during 2003/04, bring forward legislation to implement recommendations flowing from the Tuberculosis and Brucellosis policy reviews;
  - during 2003/04, implement a programme of work based on the recommendations arising from the independent review of the 2001 outbreak of FMD; and
  - during 2004/05, introduce a new Animal Health Bill.

**Sub-priority 7: We will protect, promote and develop our natural and built environment in a sustainable way**

- 7.44 Securing a high quality, unpolluted environment with good quality water and air is important not only in itself but also for building our future economy. We recognise the value to tourism and the rural economy of sustaining our clean, green image. We also recognise the growing demands for products that have been developed in an environmentally responsive way or that can help protect our environmental heritage.
- 7.45 We will play our part in taking forward actions flowing from the Johannesburg World Summit on Sustainable Development, continuing to apply the principles of Sustainable Development to our own policies and programmes. We are currently examining the responses to the consultation carried out in 2002 on our draft Sustainable Development strategy, looking at how best to mainstream the integrated approach to sustainable development into the way all our policies and programmes are developed and implemented.
- 7.46 We will follow up our study of the contribution that National Park status might make to the sustainable management of key areas of countryside. We will continue to protect and conserve our landscapes, wildlife habitats and species and to recognise the value of our built heritage, including our industrial heritage. The first survey of listing buildings of architectural or historical interest was initiated in the early 1970s. The listing criteria have evolved since then and the second survey, designed to comprehensively record the historic buildings of Northern Ireland, towards statutory protection of 'the best' of this heritage, was initiated in 1997. We aim to complete this survey by 2012.
- 7.47 The programme for identifying Areas of Special Scientific Interest (ASSI) is now well advanced with some 6% of the area of Northern Ireland declared as ASSI. As the programme progresses, we need to make sure that ASSIs are cared for effectively to conserve their wildlife and earth heritage interest and we plan to put in place new legislation to strengthen the provisions for their protection and management. Having published our strategy for biodiversity in 2002, we have now begun a progressive programme of measures in support of it. We will develop detailed plans to conserve all the main natural habitats in Northern Ireland. We expect to reach final agreement with the European Commission on which areas qualify as Special Areas of Conservation early in 2003 and will then begin the formal process of designation. Wild salmon stocks are now below safe biological limits and we want to take steps to conserve these for the economic benefit of future generations. We are therefore pursuing voluntary buy-out of commercial salmon nets to reduce commercial exploitation and ensure the sustainability of wild salmon. We will also update the Fisheries Act 1966 to introduce improved regulations for the conservation and protection of fish stock and assist the development of commercial and recreational fisheries.
- 7.48 It is important too that we take account of the environment, habitats and ecology of the sea, ensuring that our commercial sea fishing industry can



develop in a sustainable way. A review of the Common Fisheries Policy is currently underway at European level, with one of its key aims being to secure sustainable fisheries by matching fishing effort with stock availability. In this context we will continue to support measures to assist in preventing the decline in fish stocks, balancing these with appropriate support for fishery-dependent communities that can help address the socio-economic impact of future policies. With this in mind, we propose to begin a major review of the sea fisheries and aquaculture industries in the coming months with a view to developing a strategy for our fisheries industry.

- 7.49 Our review of forest policy shows that forestry can support sustainable development of the economy through timber production, tourism and energy generation; improving health through access to large areas of public open space; and protection and enhancement of our environment. We will take action in light of this review to ensure sustainable use of forests to deliver those improvements to economic growth, enhancement of our environment and improvements to the quality of our lives, that are most likely to be good value for money.
- 7.50 We will continue to progressively reduce the backlog of European Union environmental legislation. This will include enactment of environmental protection legislation including legislation to be made in 2003 that will meet EU obligations on waste, landfill, water quality and industrial pollution. These are significant measures which will make an important contribution to biodiversity and conservation throughout our countryside.
- 7.51 We recognise the role of farmers as custodians of our countryside and have set ourselves a number of actions and targets in the Rural Development Regulation Plan (RDRP). We plan to increase the number of places on environmental training courses for farmers and to increase significantly the number of farmers participating in the Countryside Management Scheme as well as to extend the area of woodland and the coverage of the organic conversion scheme. We recognise the problems of farm pollution and regulations are being prepared covering the storage of silage, slurry and agriculture fuel oils on farms as well as regulations that will require work to be undertaken to prevent or deal with pollution. Subject to State Aids approval being obtained, we will also introduce programmes to reduce farm source pollution and to encourage agriculture to make further positive contributions to the environment. We will take steps to reduce industrial pollution too and ensure that development respects concepts such as the “polluter pays” principle and the “precautionary” principle (taking action to protect the environment from significant environmental damage even though the impact is uncertain).
- 7.52 Reducing, recycling and the safe management of waste is a continuing priority for the Executive. A comprehensive Waste Management Strategy for Northern Ireland was produced in 2000 and this provides the framework for compliance with a range of European Directives and creates opportunities for Northern Ireland to become a leading example of sustainable resources and waste management. A major review of this Strategy will be undertaken over

the coming months and a specific strategy dealing with agricultural waste will be prepared. We will assist local councils in implementing sustainable arrangements for the provision of an integrated network of waste facilities through their Waste Management Plans.

- 7.53 We remain concerned that recycling and reuse in Northern Ireland are very low with a 94% dependency on landfill. We will provide assistance to industry to develop markets for recycled materials and to improve its production processes in order to produce more with less, promoting improved environmental management, energy efficiency, waste minimisation and recycling. We will encourage and facilitate our local companies to develop environmentally friendly products and services that will have a market as a result of increased customer awareness of environmental issues.
- 7.54 We also want government departments and other public bodies here to continue their efforts to build on the substantial progress made over the last three years in purchasing electricity from renewable sources. We will ensure that government departments and other public bodies demonstrate a positive attitude towards energy management, purchasing “green electricity” where possible and where this is consistent with value for money and delivering continued improvements in energy efficiency and reduction in emissions of greenhouse gases from the buildings for which they are responsible.
- 7.55 Effective wastewater disposal is essential to the quality of life and the environment and attracts considerable attention when things go wrong. We will maintain effective arrangements for the treatment and disposal of sewage and sewage sludge, using whatever levers we can to ensure continuity of these basic services. We will work to ensure that by 2010, the quality of river and bathing waters meet currently specified EU standards. We will also ensure the provision of wholesome drinking water and effective wastewater disposal through the management of a modern water and sewerage network and ensure an appropriate strategy for the management of flood risk from river systems.
- 7.56 In support of this sub-priority we will:
- ❑ by March 2004, assure the quality of the list of historic buildings by carrying through the recommendations of the second survey of listed buildings in 20 more wards;
  - ❑ by March 2006, promote the recovery of 25% of household waste and a reduction, to 85% of 1998 levels, in the landfilling of industrial and commercial waste;
  - ❑ by March 2005, departments and other public bodies to have made significant progress towards the Government’s target of purchasing 10% of their electricity supplies from renewable resources;
  - ❑ by July 2003, put in place a new policy and legislation framework for the protection and management of Areas of Special Scientific Interest;
  - ❑ by March 2005, publish action plans for 25 priority habitats in Northern Ireland;
  - ❑ by July 2004, complete the first review of the Northern Ireland Waste Management Strategy;

- by March 2004, achieve the buy out of 75% of commercial salmon nets to conserve wild salmon stocks; and
- during 2003/04, begin implementation of the outcome of the review of forest policy.

## 8. DEVELOPING RELATIONS – North/South, East/West and internationally

### Introduction

- 8.1 We want to develop Northern Ireland as an outward-looking region, ready to work with others on areas of mutual interest and mutual benefit and to improve our own policies. We believe that we can only make the progress we want to see in improving service delivery across our priorities by developing our relations within and between these islands, in Europe and on the international stage. Strengthening existing relations and building new ones will help us share our own experiences and learn from the experiences of others in a way that will improve our own policies.
- 8.2 The Agreement provided a unique framework to develop relations within the island of Ireland, within the United Kingdom and between these islands on an East/West basis. The institutions set up to support this framework are now in place and the challenge now is to ensure that they operate effectively to the mutual benefit of all the people on these islands.
- 8.3 We also want to develop our involvement in Europe, where so many key policies are formulated, and strengthen our relations with other parts of the world, particularly North America. We also want to change perceptions about our region, highlighting the many positive aspects of life here and showing other areas facing problems that democratic processes can overcome deep-rooted community divisions.
- 8.4 With this in mind, we will focus on:
- ❑ developing North/South relations and realising the potential for enhanced co-operation;
  - ❑ developing North/South co-operation in relation to European Structural Funds and other policies;
  - ❑ developing relations and co-operation within the United Kingdom;
  - ❑ developing relations and co-operation on an East/West basis;
  - ❑ developing effective links in Europe;
  - ❑ developing effective representation in, and relations with, North America; and
  - ❑ presenting a positive international image of Northern Ireland.

### **Sub-priority I: We will develop North/South relations and realise the potential for enhanced co-operation.**

- 8.5 We will continue to work together with the Irish Government to realise the full potential for enhanced cross-border co-operation for mutual benefit. We will take forward co-operation through the North/South Ministerial Council and in particular through the agreed areas for co-operation –(Agriculture, Education; Environment; Transport; Health; and Tourism) and the work of the North/South Implementation Bodies (Waterways Ireland; the Food Safety Promotion Board; InterTradeIreland; the Special EU Programmes Body; the

North/South Language Body; and the Foyle, Carlingford & Irish Lights Commission).

- 8.6 Following an intensive consultation phase of the cross-cutting study on obstacles to cross-border mobility of persons living/working in one jurisdiction and seeking to live/work in the other, we will implement a number of the recommendations made in the consultants' report by December 2003. We are also continuing to develop proposals for an all-island strategic approach for a joint Market Development Programme for recyclable waste products. The Steering Committee on Cross-Border Rural Development will continue to facilitate co-operation on the implementation of rural development programmes and exchanges of information, experience and best practice in relation to rural development. Joint strategies for improved animal health and for the control of animal movements for disease control purposes are on target to be in place by April 2003. By March 2004 we will have reviewed progress on the implementation of the All-island Animal Health Strategy.
- 8.7 We will also take forward work related to food safety through the Food Safety Promotion Board and in other areas including health (the five health-related areas for co-operation are cancer research; health promotion; accident and emergency services; planning for major emergencies; and co-operation on high technology equipment); education; the environment; and animal health. Co-operation in education continues to move forward with progress in areas such as school, teacher and youth exchanges and the development of an all-island register of people deemed unsuitable to work with children and young people. We are working together with the aim of establishing a Centre for Excellence in the education of children with Autistic Spectrum Disorders in Middletown, Co. Armagh, which will be the first of its kind on the island.
- 8.8 Through the work of the Loughs Agency, progress will continue on the effective conservation, management, promotion and development of the fisheries and marine resources of the Foyle and Carlingford areas. In particular, strategies are being developed on aquaculture licensing and fisheries and marine tourism development.
- 8.9 With regard to trade and business, we will continue to enhance the capability of businesses to trade in the island economy through the work of the Trade and Business Development Body, InterTradelreland. For example, knowledge transfer projects are bringing together businesses, graduates and third-level industrial research organisations across the island and the InterTradelreland equity network will deliver awareness of, and access to, private equity resources to small and medium enterprises. On tourism, Tourism Ireland Ltd, the company established to promote the island of Ireland overseas as a tourist destination has set itself the target of increasing visitors numbers to the island by 15.4%, i.e. to 7.9 million visitors per annum over the period 2002-2004.

- 8.10 In support of this sub-priority we will:
- by March 2004, have implemented at least 50% of the actions contained in the all-island animal health strategy;
  - by January 2005, establish a sustainable shellfish and aquaculture industry in Lough Foyle and the further development of that industry in Carlingford Lough, with a view to significantly increasing their annual production; and
  - by January 2005, improve the economic, environmental and social benefits available to the communities of the Foyle and Carlingford catchments through the development of their inland fisheries resources.

**Sub-priority 2: We will develop North/South co-operation in relation to European Structural Funds and other policies.**

- 8.11 We recognise the benefits that flow from the European Structural Funds programmes to both parts of this island and the importance of promoting Northern Ireland as a forward and outward looking region through north/south co-operation in the context of the Structural Funds. The overall aim of promoting economic, social and cultural cross-border co-operation is reflected in the Community Support Framework (CSF) for Northern Ireland (2000-2006) through the inclusion of “North South and Wider Co-operation” as one of the strategic priorities that governs the implementation of the PEACE II and Building Sustainable Prosperity (BSP) Operational Programmes. The INTERREG III programme will also assist development of North/South co-operation and infrastructure development.
- 8.12 In delivering the EU Structural Funds in Northern Ireland we will also ensure that the North/South dimensions of EU Structural Funds are fully addressed through the work of the Special EU Programmes Body (SEUPB), one of the cross-border implementation bodies. Through responsibility for the overall management and delivery of the PEACE II and INTERREG IIA programmes, the SEUPB will be encouraged and facilitated to fulfil its statutory role of monitoring and promoting the Common Chapter and promoting co-operative activities in the wider EU programmes, North and South. We will also liaise with social and local government interests through the Monitoring Committee structure to build on the partnership and inclusive delivery and decision-making processes developed during 2002/03.
- 8.13 The new Regional Partnership Board will encourage Local Strategy Partnerships to develop wider perspectives, forging new links and interaction with regional administration bodies including partnerships in the South in areas of mutual interest to ensure that the partnership ethos becomes a key element of local and regional administration.
- 8.14 We will also implement the INTERREG III Community Initiative which aims to strengthen economic and social cohesion by promoting cross-border co-operation. Implementation will include the setting up of INTERREG III Partnerships by the three Border Corridor Groups (the North West Regional Cross Border Group; the East Border Region Committee; and the Irish Central Border Area Network).

- 8.15 Through working together to deliver progress against the objectives of each of these programmes, we expect Northern Ireland to benefit from an investment of at least £100m over the period 2000-2006 and to participate in some £60m of actions in achievement of Common Chapter obligations in the Community Support Frameworks for North/South co-operation. In the latter, we will maintain a particular focus on promoting cross-border reconciliation and exploiting the growing opportunities for cross-border development.
- 8.16 In support of this sub-priority we will:
- by March 2004, ensure that at least 30% of the PEACE II Programme Cross-Border Co-operation Priority allocation is spent; and
  - by 2006, ensure that at least 15% of the PEACE II programme is used to promote cross-border reconciliation and opportunities for cross-border development.

**Sub-priority 3: We will develop relations and co-operation within the United Kingdom.**

- 8.17 In the coming year the Executive will take forward work in the Joint Ministerial Committee (JMC) which comprises Ministers of the UK Government, the Northern Ireland Executive, the Scottish Executive and the Welsh Assembly Government. The Committee acts as a forum for the consideration of non-devolved matters that impinge on devolved responsibilities and vice versa and provides central co-ordination to the overall relationships. Discussions may also take place, where all parties agree, on the respective treatment of devolved matters in the different parts of the UK.
- 8.18 To date JMC sub-committees have been established in the areas of health; Europe; poverty; and the knowledge economy. As well as being fully involved in these, Executive Ministers will also participate in other UK Government Committees including the Agriculture Ministers' Committee; the Forestry Ministers' Committee; the Drugs Task Force; the Sports Cabinet; and the MINECOR Committee which co-ordinates the presentation of public policy on Europe. Beyond the formal Committee structure, we anticipate that, as Ministers, we will continue to meet our counterparts from other UK administrations in bilateral and other formats to discuss a range of emerging issues. We will in particular work to ensure that our interests are promoted within the UK and taken into account in UK negotiating positions during the current reviews of both the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) and the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP).
- 8.19 We will maintain close working relationships with the devolved administrations in Scotland and Wales on matters of mutual interest and concern. We will continue to work with the Northern Ireland Office on a range of policy issues where the responsibilities of both require close co-operation and co-ordination in order to deliver maximum benefit. These

include work to tackle public sector fraud, drugs misuse and the promotion of community safety.

- 8.20 In support of this sub-priority we will:
- ❑ participate fully in the Joint Ministerial Committee and other UK Government committees;
  - ❑ continue to co-operate with the devolved administrations in Scotland and Wales on matters of mutual interest; and
  - ❑ during 2003/04, examine how inter-administration relationships may be developed further to maximise mutual benefits.

**Sub-priority 4: We will develop relations and co-operation on an East/West basis.**

- 8.21 The British-Irish Council has been established under the Strand Three provisions of the Agreement as a forum to exchange information, discuss, consult and use best endeavours to reach agreement on co-operation on matters of mutual interest within the competence of the relevant Administrations. Its membership includes representatives of the British and Irish Governments, the Scottish Executive, the Welsh Assembly and the administrations of the Isle of Man and Channel Islands as well as the Northern Ireland Executive.
- 8.22 The British-Irish Inter-Governmental Conference has been established to bring together the British and Irish Governments and, where relevant, Executive Ministers, to promote bilateral co-operation at all levels on all matters of mutual interest within the competency of both governments, including non-devolved Northern Ireland matters.
- 8.23 The response of all the member administrations to the British –Irish Council has been positive and wholehearted and has already contributed to improved linkages between the devolved administrations of the United Kingdom. At its inaugural meeting on 17 December 1999, the British-Irish Council (BIC) agreed to take forward work on a number of initial priority areas; environment; drugs; social Inclusion; knowledge economy and transport. At the second summit meeting on 30 November 2001, two further priority areas of work were agreed -telemedicine and tourism.
- 8.24 We will continue to contribute to the work being carried out in each of the sectors through working groups of officials. Work flowing from those groups led to a ministerial meeting on transport on 19 December 2000; two ministerial meetings on environment held on 2 October 2000 and 25 February 2002; and one on drugs on 22 March 2002. Further ministerial meetings are planned. The main focus of the third summit meeting held on 14 June 2002 was the issue of the Knowledge Economy and the development of plans for taking forward co-operation in this area. The Council agreed that the National Assembly for Wales would take forward work in the area of minority and lesser- used languages. A fourth summit meeting focusing on social inclusion, is scheduled to take place in November 2002.



- 8.25 In addition to meetings in priority areas, a BIC conference addressing the digital divide took place in April 2002. A conference on targeting the proceeds of the drugs trade took place in May. Further conferences in the BIC drugs and social inclusion sectors are planned. This wide-ranging programme of work will help advance co-operation and improve East West links.
- 8.26 In support of this sub-priority we will, during 2003/04:
- continue to co-operate with other administrations by participating fully in the British-Irish Council and the BIIGC;
  - participate fully in the work on Transport, Environment, Drugs, Knowledge Economy, Social Inclusion, Telemedicine, Tourism and minority and lesser used languages;
  - examine how best the Council can be supported and developed to promote and maximise its impact;
  - consider if further benefit could be derived from the bilateral and multilateral arrangements between two or more Members as described in paragraph 10 of Strand 3 of the Agreement; and
  - in the BIIGC, continue to pursue matters of importance to Northern Ireland.

**Sub-priority 5: We will develop effective links in Europe.**

- 8.27 The European Union is facing a time of re-evaluation and reform. A Convention on the reform of its institutions was initiated in February 2002 and will report in spring 2003. An inter-governmental conference will be held in 2004 to agree a new Treaty appropriate for an enlarged Union with more democratic, transparent and accountable structures and ways of working.
- 8.28 The European Union directly affects a large proportion of the Executive's activities, most notably through its law and the proposals for new legislation. To work effectively in Europe, Northern Ireland needs to present its interests clearly and with a single voice. We will ensure that we contribute to the debate about the Future of Europe, focusing on areas where Northern Ireland interests are greatest. We will do so by influencing the UK negotiating position on EU reform, by co-operating with similar regions to ensure our voice carries maximum weight and by working through our Brussels Office to influence key decision makers in Brussels directly.
- 8.29 The Brussels Office will work closely with our three MEPs and the Northern Ireland representatives on the Committee of the Regions and the Economic and Social Committee to further the region's interests. In line with our desire to build stronger partnerships, it will also ensure that its facilities are available to sectors outside government so that it provides access to Europe for as wide a spectrum of Northern Ireland society. It will develop links in Brussels with the representatives of other regions across Europe, including in the accession countries, to maximise our influence and facilitate mutually beneficial co-operation.

- 8.30 In implementing our EU strategy, the Executive will seek to maximise the potential for departments to play a full part in promoting their interests in Europe. As a contribution to this we will ensure that the implications of European law are understood and that our interests are taken into account in the development of new legislation. Our Ministers will attend European Councils of Ministers as part of the UK delegation. We look to enhance the awareness and skills base on European matters within the NICS through secondments and training and development. One area of focus will be on agri-food and rural development issues and a DARD official will be appointed to the Brussels office to deal full time with these issues in line with the recommendation in the Vision Report. We will also pursue opportunities to enhance awareness in the wider community through our activities to create a vision of Northern Ireland as an outward looking region of the EU.
- 8.31 In support of this sub-priority we will:
- through the Brussels Office, facilitate at least six visits each year to the European Institutions by Executive Ministers and Assembly Committees; and
  - sponsor continued regional debate on the Future of Europe and input Northern Ireland views to thinking at European level in the context of the Convention and preparations for the 2004 Intergovernmental Conference.

**Sub-priority 6: We will develop effective representation in, and relations with, North America.**

- 8.32 The Executive recognises the considerable help it receives from the US administration and the strong links that have been developed in recent years. As the peace process matures and delivers stable government in Northern Ireland we recognise that the role of the Northern Ireland Bureau will evolve also. The Bureau will continue to act as a focal point for Northern Ireland affairs and will represent the interests of the Executive and the Assembly with the Legislative and Executive branches in Washington. Beyond that, however it will also explore with relevant State Governments the possibilities for developing co-operative linkages with organisational counterparts in Northern Ireland.
- 8.33 In support of this sub-priority we will:
- by July 2003, complete an evaluation of the social, cultural and economic profiles of those US states that offer the best potential for developing relations with the institutions and bodies in Northern Ireland;
  - by September 2003, undertake a review of policy areas where there is potential for joint initiatives with US counterparts, developing mutually beneficial links that will improve policy development; and
  - by July 2004, deliver through the NI Bureau in Washington, a series of meetings between Executive Ministers and representatives of US State Governments to capitalise on identified opportunities to undertake joint initiatives.

**Sub-priority 7: We will present a positive international image of Northern Ireland.**

- 8.34 There is growing international recognition of the positive aspects of our society. We are aware of the potential for Northern Ireland's image abroad to be tarnished by outbreaks of civil disorder but over the last decade there has been a root and branch change in international perceptions. The establishment of the political institutions following the Belfast Agreement was hugely important in establishing a more positive view from afar. As Northern Ireland began the move away from conflict there was widespread recognition that this was a region grappling with new realities in a constructive way. We have built on that by establishing offices in Washington and Brussels to take account of the importance we place in improving our image in Northern America and Europe. Those offices are already working in partnership with those in public, private and voluntary organisations seeking to represent the best of Northern Ireland abroad. Through the Executive Information Service (EIS) we will continue to present and promote the administration's policies in a positive and effective way both at home and abroad. In 2001/02 the EIS has been host to 270 foreign visitors, mostly journalists seeking an insight into devolution.
- 8.35 In taking forward the work of presenting a positive image we will harness the energies of those organisations promoting tourism, inward investment to the region and those involved in promoting social and cultural events. As an example of this, we will develop world class sports training facilities as part of the UK Sports Institute network to enable our top sportsmen and women to compete in world class sporting events. We will also work with Imagine Belfast in support of the plan arising from the European Capital of Culture 2008 bid to raise confidence and improve the image of Northern Ireland at home and abroad.
- 8.36 Northern Ireland possesses a rich web of business, religious, family, social, sporting and other relationships with people and communities all over the world. We will seek to involve and co-operate with all those positive ingredients of our international image. We will develop international relationships, as a vehicle for presenting a positive image of all that is good about Northern Ireland, and as a means of re-defining our international image, maximising networks, promoting confidence and self esteem at local level.
- 8.37 In support of this sub-priority we will:
- by March 2006, have established world class training facilities for at least 7 sports as part of the UK Sports Institute Network; and
  - work with Imagine Belfast and others to implement the 'One-Belfast' bid document for the European Capital of Culture 2008, to raise confidence and improve the image of Northern Ireland at home and abroad.

## ANNEX A

### FINANCING OUR WORK

**TABLE A**

#### TOTAL DEPARTMENTAL EXPENDITURE LIMIT

£ million

	<b>2003/04</b>	<b>2004/05</b>	<b>2005/06</b>
Total departmental DEL	7188.1	7519.7	7965.5
Unallocated EPFs	23.1	149.3	142.0
Regional Rates & other items	-391.9	-389.6	-376.4
EPF Infrastructure/RRI allocations	232.8	0	0
<b>Total Spend</b>	<b>7052.1</b>	<b>7279.4</b>	<b>7731.1</b>
Less RRI allocation	-125.1	0	0
<b>Total Overall DEL</b>	<b>6927.0</b>	<b>7279.4</b>	<b>7731.1</b>

**TABLE B**

#### EXECUTIVE PROGRAMME FUNDS (EPFs)

£ million

<b>Fund</b>	<b>2003/04</b>	<b>2004/05</b>	<b>2005/6</b>
Children's Fund	15.0	15.0	15.0
Infrastructure Fund	100.0	100.0	100.0
Innovation & Modernisation Fund	73.5	73.5	83.5
Social Exclusion/Community Regeneration Fund	31.5	31.5	31.5
<b>Total EPFs</b>	<b>220.0</b>	<b>220.0</b>	<b>230.0</b>

### PUBLIC SERVICE AGREEMENTS

#### Introduction

1. The Public Service Agreements (PSAs) that are agreed each year for each of the eleven departments support the Executive's priorities and the commitments contained in our Programme for Government by setting out the key outcomes that departments will pursue. They also underline our focus on public services and our continuing commitment to accountability and openness, supplying a structured overview of what the Executive plan to achieve with the resources available to it.

#### Purpose of PSAs

2. The PSAs are intended to:
  - support the delivery of the Executive's Priorities and commitments;
  - set out each department's overall aim, its objectives, associated budget allocations and key targets; and thus
  - seek to link funding to achievement of agreed outputs and outcomes in a way that ensures a strong focus on improving public services.
3. The PSAs should identify what departments are aiming to achieve next year and in the longer term, and how these relate to the Programme for Government. While the Programme for Government focuses on specific actions which cover, for example, new initiatives or developments that support the Executive's priorities, it does not attempt to cover every activity undertaken by departments. The PSAs on the other hand seek to account for the wide range of activities across the main programmes of each department by setting out targets for the key outcomes which the department is working to deliver with the resources made available to it in the Budget. Similarly, there are many actions in this Programme which are not identified separately in PSAs because, for example, they may account for only a small proportion of the departmental budget.

#### PSA Structure

4. Each PSA includes the following:
  - a short statement of the department's aim and its objectives;
  - the key targets relating as far as possible to outputs and outcomes to be achieved in support of each objective;
  - the budget allocations associated with each objective; and
  - references to the relevant sections of the Programme for Government to which the PSA objective and targets relate.
5. The Programme for Government contains a number of Executive commitments which apply to all departments and which are recorded at the beginning of each PSA. These include meeting the objectives of the New Targeting Social Need policy, the promotion of equality of opportunity and

good community relations, protection of human rights and the need to improve efficiency and effectiveness and modernise the provision of services.

6. The draft PSAs contain summary information on the departmental allocations proposed in the draft Budget. The figures for each objective include EPF and RRI allocations but exclude Peace Programme and Chancellor's Initiative allocations. The draft Budget document provides more detailed information on these allocations.

### **Targets**

7. We are continuing to work to improve the targets we set in our PSAs, ensuring that they focus on the high-level outcomes which departmental policies and programmes are designed to deliver. We also remain committed to reporting, as we did in our first Programme for Government annual report earlier this year, on the progress we make towards achieving the targets we have set.

### **Service Delivery Agreements**

8. The PSAs are supported by Service Delivery Agreements which were published by departments earlier this year. These set out in greater detail the actions that departments will take to ensure delivery of their PSA targets and the associated performance targets for this work. They also include a strong focus on improving customer service and securing value for money. Revised SDAs covering the 2003/04 financial year will be developed and published by departments early next year.

## **DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURAL AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT**

### **DRAFT PUBLIC SERVICE AGREEMENT**

**Introduction:** The draft Public Service Agreement (PSA) covers all the Department's main programmes and sets out how the Department will carry out its responsibilities under the Programme for Government (PFG) and within the resources allocated by the Assembly.

In delivering its aim and objectives, and in pursuing the targets presented below, the Department is committed to promoting equality of opportunity and good community relations, protecting human rights and meeting the objectives of the Executive's New Targeting Social Need policy. In particular the Department will implement its Equality Scheme as approved by the Equality Commission and its New TSN Action Plan and these form an integral part of this PSA. The Department is also committed to modernising the provision of its services and improving efficiency and effectiveness. In discharging its responsibilities, the Department will work in partnership with others in the public, private and voluntary and community sectors, as appropriate.

**Aim:** To promote sustainable economic growth and the development of the countryside in Northern Ireland by assisting the competitive development of the agri-food, fishing and forestry sectors and being both proactive and responsive to the needs of consumers for safe and wholesome food, the welfare of animals and the conservation and enhancement of the environment.

Objective	Budget £m 2003/04	Targets	PfG References
<b>Objective 1</b> <i>To promote sustainable development of the agri-food industry and the countryside and stimulate the economic and social revitalisation of disadvantaged rural areas.</i>	<b>Resource 192.9</b>  <b>Capital 9.9</b>  <b>Total 202.8</b>	<b>1.1 To create conditions (including by implementing Vision) for the agricultural industry to achieve a 6% improvement in total factor productivity between 2001 and 2005<sup>①</sup>.</b>  <b>1.2 By June 2003, put in place a restructuring plan to improve customer service delivery and to ensure all key services are capable of electronic delivery by 2005<sup>②</sup>.</b>	<b>Chapter 7</b> <b>Sub Priority 6</b>  <b>Chapter 3</b>



Objective	Budget £m 2003/04	Targets	PfG References
		<p><b>1.3</b> To continue the expansion of the agri-environment programme to ensure that there are 10,000 farms with 330,000ha under management agreement by 2006<sup>③</sup>.</p> <p><b>1.4</b> To continue to encourage (through education) and to ensure (by surveillance, regulation, analyses and diagnostics) that farmers produce only animals which are safe to eat and meet market and welfare standards<sup>④</sup>.</p> <p><b>1.5</b> To create 1,000 Full Time Equivalent jobs in rural areas by 2008 under the Rural Development Programme.</p>	<p><b>Chapter 7 Sub Priority 8</b></p> <p><b>Chapter 5 Sub Priority 2</b></p> <p><b>Chapter 4 Sub Priority 7</b></p>
<p><b>Objective 2</b> To reduce the risk to life and property from flooding, promote sustainable development of the sea fishing industry and maintain, protect and expand forests in a sustainable way.</p>	<p><b>Resource 42.4</b></p> <p><b>Capital 12.8</b></p> <p><b>Total 55.2</b></p>	<p><b>2.1</b> During 2003/04, begin to implement a strategy that delivers the outcome of the review of forest policy, whilst continuing to deliver the same levels of benefits in terms of timber produced for sale, public access and environmental enhancement.</p> <p><b>2.2</b> During 2003/04, secure a reduced risk of flooding by 318 Housing Equivalents<sup>⑤</sup>.</p> <p><b>2.3</b> During 2003/4, and beyond, enhance the viability of the NI Sea Fishing Industry and Aquaculture sector as measured by increases in Irish Sea Commercial fish stocks, value of landings by NI vessels, employment, Value added processing and</p>	<p><b>Chapter 7 Sub Priority 8</b></p> <p><b>Chapter 7 Sub Priority 8</b></p> <p><b>Chapter 7 Sub Priority 8</b></p>

		<b>productivity in aquaculture, particularly shellfish</b> ©.	
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## Technical Notes

- ① **6% improvement is calculated as 1 percentage point above trend over a 4 year period. Trend from 1997-2001 was 4.9%. Total Factor productivity is effectively a volume measure which removes, as far as possible, currency effects.**
- ② **Initial restructuring proposals are due to be announced by the Minister in November 2002, followed by a period of consultation. An implementation plan will follow. SDA targets may include finite outcome measures when the details of the proposals become clear.**
- ③ **This target does not take account of the Mid-Term Review of CAP and/or decisions on modulation which may have the effect of increasing the agri-environment profile/uptake. At 30 June 2002 there were 5,690 farmers, farming a total of 194,130 hectares, participating in DARD's agri-environment schemes.**
- ④ **During 2001/02 104 cases of BSE were identified and 24 carcasses which were presented as under 30 months animals and fit for human consumption were prevented from reaching the food chain because they were shown to be over 30 months. There were 2 cases successfully prosecuted involving the welfare of animals and 5 other cases resulted in formal warnings and cautions.**
- ⑤ **The concept of Housing Equivalents (HEs) provides a common base for the measurement of the improved level of flood protection provided as a result of flood defence schemes undertaken by the Agency. The method uses conversion factors to express various elements of land use in terms of Housing Equivalents and is compatible with methodology developed and used by the Environment Agency which undertakes flood defence work in England and Wales. The number of HEs which benefit from reduced risk of flooding in any particular year depends on the types of schemes undertaken and will not necessarily show a year-on-year increase. However, there will be a cumulative increase over time as indicated by in respect of the years 1996/97 to 2000/01:**

<b>YEAR</b>	<b>ANNUAL TOTAL (HE)</b>	<b>CUM TOTAL</b>
1996/97	2266	2266
1997/98	1785	4051
1998/99	3329	7380
1999/00	2950	10330
2000/01	4163	14493

- ⑥ **Comparison, over a period of time, of historic trends on the composition of stocks and landings, weight and value of landings, fulltime employee equivalents etc. The data will be sourced from DARD Fisheries Inspectorate, DARD Agricultural & Environmental Sciences Division and the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES).**



## DEPARTMENT OF CULTURE ARTS AND LEISURE

### DRAFT PUBLIC SERVICE AGREEMENT

**Introduction:** This draft Public Service Agreement covers all the Department's main programmes and sets out the high level outcomes to be achieved by the department against its commitments in the Programme for Government (PFG) and the department's Corporate Strategy within the resources allocated by the Assembly.

In delivering its aim and objectives, and in pursuing the targets presented below, the department is committed to promoting equality of opportunity and good community relations, protecting human rights and meeting the objectives of the Executive's New Targeting Social Need policy. In particular the department will implement its Equality Scheme as approved by the Equality Commission and its New TSN Action Plan and these form an integral part of this PSA. The department is also committed to modernising the provision of its services and improving efficiency and effectiveness. In discharging its responsibilities, the department will work in partnership with others in the public, private and voluntary and community sectors, as appropriate.

**Aim:** A confident, creative, informed and prosperous community.

Objective	Budget £m 2003/04	Targets	PFG References
<b>Objective 1</b> To foster a creative, informed and active lifestyle which will act as a powerful catalyst for change and which will project a positive image of Northern Ireland both at home and abroad.	Resource    93.6 Capital        3.0 Total            96.6	<b>1.1 To increase the level of participation across culture, arts and leisure activities funded by DCAL to X% (against a baseline of Y% for 2001/02)</b>	<b>Chapter 4                      Sub priorities                      2&amp;8                      As above</b>
		<b>1.2 To increase the level of satisfaction across culture, arts and leisure activities, funded by DCAL to X% (against a baseline of Y%for 2001/02)</b>	<b>As above</b>
		<b>1.3 To increase the level of participation by lower income groups across culture,arts and leisure activities, funded by DCAL to X% against a baseline of Y%</b>	<b>Chapter 7                      Sub-priority 8</b>
		<b>1.4 To increase salmon production by 10% over a 5 year</b>	

		<p>period in those catchments where in-stream habitat improvements have been carried out.</p> <p><b>I.5 To have implemented Archives Policy for NI by December 2005</b></p> <p><b>I.6 To provide complete, up to date and quality mapping information for Northern Ireland, with 100% of maps complying with OSNI Map Revision Policy by 2005/2006</b></p>	<p><b>Chapter 4 Sub-priority 8</b></p> <p><b>Chapter 7 Sub-priority 1</b></p>
		<p><b>I.7 To increase the volume of the creative industry sector in Northern Ireland to X% by 2004 (Against a Baseline of Y% for 2000/01)</b></p> <p><b>I.8 To achieve an annual average X% of the NI population who indicate that they “agree” or “strongly agree” that the major events supported by DCAL promote a positive image of NI. (Against a baseline of Y% for 2000/01).</b></p>	<p><b>Chapter 7 Sub-priority 3</b></p> <p><b>Chapter 7 Sub-priority 4</b></p>

**The Department’s PSA targets await essential trend data that is currently being surveyed and will be available by the end of September. This is only the second year of monitoring and the Omnibus surveys that established the baseline data in year 1 were carried out in October 2001. In the interests of establishing a valid comparison based on at least a year’s performance, the surveys have been commissioned as near as possible to that date, balanced against the demands of PfG and PSA development timetable.**

## **Technical Notes:**

- 1. The measures of participation for cultural, arts, and leisure activities are taken from an omnibus survey carried out during September 2002**
- 2. The measures of satisfaction for cultural, arts, and leisure activities are taken from an omnibus survey carried out during September 2002**
- 3. Omnibus surveys are probability-based samples involving stratification by Local government District using Probability, Proportionate to Size (PPS). Surveys were conducted during September 2002 selecting a sample of 1000 persons randomly from the Electoral Register. The respondents were therefore aged 18 or over and were interviewed face to face in their own homes. Sample results are accurate to +/- 3%**
- 4. It is likely to be 4-5 years before any fish stock increases are to be expected. Fish stocks are assessed using electrofishing techniques developed at the River Bush Salmon Station, which are designed to identify existing salmon spawning areas and give approximated densities of juvenile salmon at those sites. Using previous data stored on the Salmonid Enhancement Database, the site average densities for salmon fry for catchment or sub catchment areas can be extrapolated. A 10% increase in juvenile salmon densities arising from in-stream works would be expected after the normal life cycle time period of 4-5 years. Where these works have taken place electro-fishing surveys will measure any increases against the baseline site average juvenile densities for the catchment/sub catchment area.**
- 5. Website data was collated from across the Department and the NDPBS.**
- 6. The baseline for the Creative Industries sector is an output from Stage One of the Creative Enterprise research and development programme undertaken by DCAL in conjunction with Queens University, the NI Economic Research Centre and Dream Ireland Ltd. Stage One of the project, completed in the last financial year, mapped the creative industries sector in detail. For the purposes of the research the following definition of creative industries was adopted: "Those activities which have their origin in individual creativity, skill and talent and which have a potential of wealth and job creation through the generation and exploitation of intellectual property." This definition embraces advertising, architecture, art, crafts, design, fashion, film, interactive leisure software, music, the performing arts, publishing, software, television and radio in close inter-relationship with tourism, hospitality, museums and galleries and the heritage sector.**

- 7. The measures relating to the events funded and promoted by DCAL for attendees and non-attendees resident in Northern Ireland are taken from an omnibus survey carried out during September 2002.**
- 8. The OSNI Map Revision Policy states that:**
  - A. Major topographic change is captured into the Large Scale database within 6 months of notification.**
  - B. Major Topographic Change is defined as properties or road changes of 10 units or more, where 1 unit is 1 house and its associated property boundary, or 20 meters of road with footpaths complete.**
  - C. All other topographic change is captured into the Large Scale database on a regular basis, as follows:**
    - Built up city, town and village areas are revised at least once every 5 years.**
    - Developed rural areas of high topographic change are revised at least once every 7 years.**
    - Rural areas with a low rate of topographic change are revised at least once every 10 years.**
  - D. 100 % of the small scale database will be digitised by 2001/2002, and each 1:50,000 scale map is revised thereafter, once every 3 years.**

**Specific annual targets leading to the achievement of the PSA target are set out in OSNI's annual Business and Corporate Plan.**



**DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**

**DRAFT PUBLIC SERVICE AGREEMENT**

**Introduction:** The draft Public Service Agreement (PSA) covers all the Department's main programmes and sets out how the Department will carry out its responsibilities under the Programme for Government (PFG) and within the resources allocated by the Assembly.

In delivering its aim and objectives, and in pursuing the targets presented below, the Department is committed to promoting equality of opportunity and good community relations, protecting human rights and meeting the objectives of the Executive's New Targeting Social Need policy. In particular the department will implement its Equality Scheme as approved by the Equality Commission and its New TSN Action Plan and these form an integral part of this PSA. The Department is also committed to modernising the provision of its services and improving efficiency and effectiveness. In discharging its responsibilities, the Department will work in partnership with others in the public, private and voluntary and community sectors, as appropriate.

**Aim:** To provide for the education and development of all our young people to the highest possible standards, with equal access for all.

Objective	Budget £m 2003/04	Targets	PFG References
<p><b>Objective 1</b></p> <p>To ensure that all young people, through participation at school, reach the highest standards of educational achievement, that will give them a secure foundation for lifelong learning and employment; and develop the values and attitudes appropriate to citizenship in an inclusive society.</p>	<p><b>Resource 1423.6</b></p> <p><b>Capital 74.4</b></p> <p><b>Total 1498.0</b></p>	<p><b>By 2006:</b></p> <p><b>1.1 75% of 11 year olds to achieve level 4 or above in Key Stage 2 assessments in English and 77% in maths</b></p> <p><b>1.2 72% of 14 year olds to achieve level 5 or above in Key Stage 3 tests in English and 70% in maths and science</b></p> <p><b>1.3 60% of 16 year olds to obtain 5 or more GCSEs at grades A* to C (or equivalent)</b></p> <p><b>1.4 97% of 18 year olds in the final year of an A level course to obtain 2 or more A levels at grades A to E (or equivalent)</b></p> <p><b>1.5 in the 25% of primary schools with the highest percentage free school meals entitlement, reduce to 33% the percentage of pupils not achieving level 4 in Key Stage 2 assessments in English and maths</b></p> <p><b>1.6 in the 25% of secondary schools with the highest percentage free school meals entitlement, reduce to 7% the percentage of year 12 pupils achieving no GCSEs (or equivalent)</b></p> <p><b>1.7 83% of 16 year olds in non-grammar schools to achieve 5 or more GCSEs at grades A* to G (or equivalent)</b></p> <p><b>1.8 reduce by 30% the number of primary and by 15% the number of post-primary pupils identified as poor</b></p>	<p><b>Chapter 6 Sub-priority 1</b></p> <p><b>Chapter 6 Sub-priority 2</b></p> <p><b>Chapter 6 Sub-priority 2</b></p> <p><b>Chapter 6 Sub-priority 2</b></p> <p><b>Chapter 6 Sub-priority 1</b></p> <p><b>Chapter 6 Sub-priority 2</b></p> <p><b>Chapter 6 Sub-priority 2</b></p> <p><b>Chapter 6 Sub-priority 1</b></p>

Objective	Budget £m 2003/04	Targets	PFG References
		<p>attenders, compared to 2002/03</p> <p><b>I.9 reduce by 15% the number of pupils (primary and post-primary) with multiple suspensions, compared to 2002/03</b></p> <p><b>I.10 reduce by 18% the backlog of high priority maintenance work as at March 2003</b></p> <p><b>I.11 start 18 major works projects in the period 2003/04 to 2005/06 in relation to the backlog as at March 2003</b></p> <p><b>I.12 start the replacement of 260 temporary classrooms with permanent accommodation</b></p> <p><b>In the period 2002/03 to 2005/06:</b></p> <p><b>I.13 in response to parental demand, an expected average 5% year on year increase in the number of pupils being educated in grant-aided Irish-medium schools or units</b></p> <p><b>I.14 in response to parental demand, an expected average 10% year on year increase in the number of pupils being educated in grant-aided integrated schools</b></p>	<p><b>Chapter 6 Sub-priority 2</b></p> <p><b>Chapter 6 Sub-priorities 1&amp;2</b></p> <p><b>Chapter 6 Sub-priorities 1&amp;2</b></p> <p><b>Chapter 6 Sub-priorities 1&amp;2</b></p> <p><b>Chapter 6 Sub-priority 3</b></p> <p><b>Chapter 6 Sub-priority 3</b></p>

Objective	Budget £m 2003/04	Targets	PFG References
<p><b>Objective 2</b>  <b>To promote, through the youth service, the personal and social development of children and young people and assist them to gain knowledge, skills and experience to reach their full potential as valued individuals; and, through community relations measures for young people, to encourage the development of mutual understanding and promote recognition of and respect for cultural diversity.</b></p>	<p><b>Resource 24.6</b>  <b>Capital 1.7</b>  <b>Total 26.3</b></p>	<p><b>2.1 34% of youth population in youth organisations compared with 32% in 2002/03</b></p>	<p><b>Chapter 6  Sub-priority 3</b></p>

## DEPARTMENT FOR EMPLOYMENT AND LEARNING

### DRAFT PUBLIC SERVICE AGREEMENT

**Introduction :** The draft Public Service Agreement (PSA) covers all the Department's main programmes and sets out how the Department will carry out its responsibilities under the Programme for Government (PfG) and within the resources allocated by the Assembly.

In delivering its aim and objectives, and in pursuing the targets presented below, the Department is committed to promoting equality of opportunity and good community relations, protecting human rights and meeting the objectives of the Executive's New Targeting Social Need policy. In particular the Department will implement its Equality Scheme as approved by the Equality Commission and its New TSN Action Plan, and these form an integral part of this PSA. The Department is also committed to modernising the provision of its services and improving efficiency and effectiveness. In discharging its responsibilities, the Department will work in partnership with others in the public, private and voluntary and community sectors, as appropriate.

**Aim :** To promote a culture of lifelong learning, and to equip people for work in a modern economy.

Objective	Budget £m 2003/04	Targets	PfG Reference
<b>Objective 1</b> To work with others to achieve wider access to education and training and to seek the highest standards of learning, research, training and scholarship, thereby contributing to economic development.	Resource: 575.1	<b>1.1</b> By March 2004 to have supported an additional 2,500 learners to update their essential skills including literacy and numeracy skills.	Chapter 6 Sub-priority 5
	Capital: -0.2	<b>1.2</b> During 2003/04 DEL will commence implementation of the proposed strategy and way forward for further education in Northern Ireland.	Chapter 6 Sub-priority 4
	Total: 574.9	<b>1.3</b> By September 2004, improve standards and student achievement of full or unit passes at NVQ levels 2 to 4 (or equivalents) by 5% over 2002/03 through a range of quality improvement initiatives.	Chapter 6 Sub-priority 4
			Chapter 6

		<p><b>I.4 During 2003/04 provide and fill 15,000 places through an initiative to support adult learning.</b></p> <p><b>I.5 To ensure that by March 2004 at least 70% of those who began Jobskills training in 2000/01 achieve success at NVQ level 2 or above.</b></p> <p><b>I.6 To ensure that by March 2004 at least 55% of the 2001/02 intake to Jobskills will achieve at least an NVQ level 2 (and that 70% will achieve such a qualification by March 2005).</b></p> <p><b>I.7 During 2003/04 increase participation in Modern Apprenticeships by 10%.</b></p> <p><b>I.8 During 2003/04, fund 330 additional full-time equivalent higher education student places.</b></p>	<p><b>Sub-priority 6</b></p> <p><b>Chapter 6</b> <b>Sub-priority 4</b></p> <p><b>Chapter 6</b> <b>Sub-priority 4</b></p> <p><b>Chapter 6</b> <b>Sub-priority 4</b></p> <p><b>Chapter 6</b> <b>Sub-priority 4</b></p>
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<b>Objective 2</b> <b>To promote access to, and fairness in, employment, thereby contributing to economic development and social inclusion.</b>	<b>Resource:</b> <b>107.4</b>	<b>2.1 By March 2004 to extend the new joint jobs and benefits service to 20 of the 35 Social Security Offices combined with JobCentres, incorporating procedures to put work at the forefront of the benefit claiming process for appropriate working age customers.</b>  <b>2.2 During 2003/04 help 10,000 unemployed people move from welfare into work.</b>  <b>2.3 During 2003/04 help 1,500 participants in New Deal 18-24 into work.</b>  <b>2.4 During 2003/04 help 1,500 participants in New Deal 25+ into work</b>	<b>Chapter 4</b> <b>Sub-priority 1</b>
	<b>Capital</b> <b>0.2</b>		<b>Chapter 6</b> <b>Sub-priority 5</b>
	<b>Total</b> <b>107.5</b>		<b>Chapter 6</b> <b>Sub-priority 5</b>
			<b>Chapter 6</b> <b>Sub-priority</b>





Objective	Budget £m 2003/04	Targets	PFG References
		<p>year period 1997/98 to 2000/01).</p> <p><b>I.3 Between 2003 and 2006 achieve a year on year increase in gross value added per employee (sales less purchases) in all manufacturing companies.</b></p>	<p><b>Chapter 7 Sub-priority 3</b></p>
		<p><b>I.4 Attract 75% of all first time inward investment projects to New Targeting Social Need (New TSN) areas (as compared to 70%) in the three years ending March 2001.</b></p> <p><b>I.5 Assist 20 new externally- owned knowledge-based investment projects each year</b></p>	<p><b>Chapter 7 Sub-priority 3</b></p> <p><b>Chapter 7 Sub-priority 3</b></p>
		<p><b>I.6 For fast growing small businesses, achieve, between 2002 and 2005:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>a) 25% real terms increase in external sales (8% per year) (as compared with 6% in 1999/00);</b></li> <li><b>b) 22% real terms increase in turnover (7% per year), (as compared with 5% in 1990/00); and</b></li> <li><b>c) 19% increase in employment (6% per year), (a maintenance of the 1999/00 rate of 6%).</b></li> </ul> <p><b>I.7 Between the years 2002 and 2005, support the start-up of 100 businesses per year with greater focus on growth potential.</b></p>	<p><b>Chapter 7 Sub-priority 3</b></p> <p><b>Chapter 7 Sub-priority 3</b></p>

Objective	Budget £m 2003/04		Targets	PFG References
			<p><b>1.8 Over the period 2002 to 2005, 210 small companies (70 per year), of which 150 will be drawn from New TSN areas, to undertake programmes to enhance qualifications and skills (baseline 33 companies in 2000-01 and 120 medium/large companies (40) per year) to initiate qualifications/skills improvement programmes, related to high growth projects (baseline 29 companies in 2000-01).</b></p>	<p><b>Chapter 6 Sub-priority 6</b></p>
			<p><b>1.9 Between April 2001 and March 2004, stimulate a 25% increase in private sector investment in Research and Development. (The baseline against which this target will be measured is £78million (real terms, 1995 prices) taken from the most recent survey of R&amp;D investment for the calendar year 1999)</b></p> <p><b>1.10 During 2003/04, establish 10 Centres of Research Excellence</b></p>	<p><b>Chapter 7 Sub-priority 3</b></p> <p><b>Chapter 7 Sub-priority 3</b></p>
			<p><b>1.11 Increase the amount of visitor spend by 9% per annum from a baseline of £282m in 2001 to £398m in 2005</b></p> <p><b>1.12 Increase visitor numbers by 7% per annum from a baseline of 1.676m in 2001 to 2.917m</b></p>	<p><b>Chapter 7 Sub-priority 4</b></p> <p><b>Chapter 7 Sub-priority 3</b></p>

Objective	Budget £m 2003/04		Targets	PFG References
			<p><b>in 2005</b></p> <p><b>1.13 Increase the share of all-Ireland visitors from a baseline of 18.76% in 2001 to 23% in 2005.</b></p>	<p><b>Chapter 7 Sub-priority 3</b></p>
<p><b>Objective 2</b></p> <p><b>To develop and maintain the policy and regulatory environment to achieve economic growth with equal opportunities for all.</b></p>	<p><b>Resource</b></p> <p><b>Capital</b></p> <p><b>Total</b></p>	<p><b>16.0</b></p> <p><b>0.0</b></p> <p><b>16.1</b></p>	<p><b>2.1 During the period 2003 to 2006, secure participation by representatives of 1,200 companies or employing organisations in HSENI promotional events.</b></p> <p><b>2.2 During the period 2003 to 2006, devote 4000 days (representing 7,000 visits) to inspections across all work sectors for which HSENI is responsible.</b></p>	<p><b>Chapter 5 Sub-priority 3</b></p> <p><b>Chapter 5 Sub-priority 3</b></p>
			<p><b>2.3 By -March 2005, develop and implement a new energy policy and legislative framework taking account of European deadlines for market opening,</b></p> <p><b>2.4 Place empowered consumers at the heart of an effective regulatory regime, bringing levels of consumer empowerment and protection into line with UK best practice by 2006, regularly monitoring and measuring the effectiveness of the regime, and ensuring a</b></p>	<p><b>Chapter 7 Sub-priority 1</b></p> <p><b>Chapter 7 Sub-priority 5</b></p>

Objective	Budget £m 2003/04		Targets	PFG References
			<p>fair deal for consumers and businesses through working in collaboration with the relevant regulatory agencies</p> <p><b>2.5 By March 2004, establish and promote new financial products with a view to increasing the number of venture capital funds promoted and also to increase the proportion of repayable finance in relation to total selective financial assistance</b></p>	<p><b>Chapter 7 Sub-priority 3</b></p>

## DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE AND PERSONNEL

### DRAFT PUBLIC SERVICE AGREEMENT

**Introduction:** This draft Public Service Agreement covers all of the Department's main programmes and sets out how the Department will carry out its responsibilities under the Programme for Government and within resources allocated by the Assembly.

In delivering its aim and objectives, and pursuing the targets presented below, the Department is committed to promoting equality of opportunity and good community relations, protecting human rights and meeting the objectives of the Executive Committee's New Targeting Social Need policy. In particular we will implement our Departmental Equality Scheme as approved by the Equality Commission and our New TSN Action Plan and these form an integral part of the PSA. The Department is also committed to modernising the provision of its services and improving efficiency and effectiveness. In discharging its responsibilities, the Department will work in partnership with others in the public, private and voluntary and community sectors, as appropriate.

**Aim:** To help Ministers secure the most appropriate and effective use of resources and services for the benefit of the community.

Objective	Budget £m 2003/04	Targets	PfG References
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<b>Objective 1</b> <b>To enable and ensure the funding of public services</b>	<b>Resource</b> <b>14.7</b> <b>Capital</b> <b>0.2</b> <b>Total</b> <b>14.9</b>	<b>1.1 To enable, in conjunction with the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister, the Executive and Assembly to decide upon an optimal allocation of Budget Resources for 2003-2004 and beyond, within agreed timescales.</b>  <b>1.2 To complete a systematic evaluation assessment of progress and achievement of targets in the European Union Community Support Framework Programmes for Northern Ireland by 31 December 2003.</b>  <b>1.3 To implement the Executive's decisions on the Review of Rating Policy within agreed timescales .</b>	<b>Chapter 3</b>  <b>Sub priority 2</b> <b>Chapter 8</b>  <b>Chapter 3</b>
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<b>Objective</b>	<b>Budget £m 2003/04</b>	<b>Targets</b>	<b>PfG References</b>
<b>Objective 2</b> <b>To support and enhance the business performance of Northern Ireland Departments, their Agencies and the wider public sector.</b>	<b>Resource</b> <b>111.2</b> <b>Capital</b> <b>18</b> <b>Total</b> <b>129.2</b>	<b>2.1 By March 2005 to complete the implementation of new policy and organisational and procedural arrangements for public procurement which will support the achievement of the executive's priority in the Programme for Government to improve the delivery of public services</b>  <b>2.2 By March 2004, to initiate the procurement process for the IT infrastructure necessary to deliver responsive Human Resource Management Information facilities to support Departments in the provision of open, accessible and enhanced services to the citizen</b>  <b>2.3 Report half-yearly on the implementation of the agreed action plan emanating from the Senior Civil Service Review covering recruitment and promotion of members of the Senior Civil Service</b>  <b>2.4 To have completed and published the Census analysis by July 2003. Census data are used in determining the level of increased public resources available to Northern Ireland in relation to the rest of the UK</b>	<b>Chapter 3</b>  <b>Chapter 3</b>  <b>Chapter 3</b>  <b>Chapter 3</b>

Objective	Budget £m 2003/04	Targets	PfG References
		<p>and in the allocation of resources to meet the needs of different areas and groups within Northern Ireland.</p> <p><b>2.5 Aim to increase the amount of green electricity purchased by public bodies to meet the overall target of 10% by March 2008</b></p> <p><b>2.6 By May 2003, produce for the Executive an implementation plan to reflect the outcome of the Government Office Accommodation Review, which includes an examination of the scope for decentralisation of civil service jobs</b></p> <p><b>2.7 To establish a comparative grading system in the Northern Ireland Civil Service by April 2004 to support the process of harmonising industrial and non-industrial terms and conditions of service.</b></p>	<p><b>Chapter 7 Sub priority 7</b></p> <p><b>Chapter 3</b></p> <p><b>Chapter 3</b></p>

Objective	Budget £m 2003/04	Targets	PfG References
<p><b>Objective 3 To efficiently administer, for the ultimate benefit of the Northern Ireland public, certain specialised services</b></p>	<p><b>Resource 18.8 Capital 2.0 Total 20.8</b></p>	<p><b>3.1 To ensure fairness in distribution of the rate burden by carrying out revisions of rateable valuations in the existing valuation list within timescales set out in the Valuation and Land Agency's Service Delivery Agreement and being able to respond to any decision by the Executive to proceed with a Domestic Revaluation by December 2004</b></p> <p><b>3.2 To keep the civil law of Northern Ireland under review. This includes by Summer 2003 bringing forward proposals relating to the law on physical punishment of children in the home. By end March 2004, to consult on proposals on family property law and nullity of marriage, to conduct an audit of land law, and to commence a review of the law on financial arrangements on divorce.</b></p>	<p><b>Chapter 3</b></p> <p><b>Chapter 4 Sub priority 5</b></p>

## DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, SOCIAL SERVICES AND PUBLIC SAFETY

### DRAFT PUBLIC SERVICE AGREEMENT

**Introduction :** The draft Public Service Agreement (PSA) covers all the Department's main programmes and sets out how the Department will carry out its responsibilities under the Programme for Government (PFG) and within the resources allocated by the Assembly.

In delivering its aim and objectives, and in pursuing the targets presented below, the Department is committed to promoting equality of opportunity and good community relations, protecting human rights and meeting the objectives of the Executive's New Targeting Social Need policy. In particular the Department will implement its Equality Scheme as approved by the Equality Commission and its New TSN Action Plan and these form an integral part of this PSA. The Department is also committed to modernising the provision of its services and improving efficiency and effectiveness. In discharging its responsibilities, the Department will work in partnership with others in the public, private and voluntary and community sectors, as appropriate.

**Aim:** To improve the health and well-being of the people of Northern Ireland.

<b>Objective</b>	<b>Budget £m</b> <b>2003/04</b>	<b>Targets</b>	<b>PfG References</b>
<b>Objective I</b>  To develop and promote policies and strategies, the efficient, economic and effective implementation of which will lead to good health and wellbeing, a reduction in preventable disease and ill-health, and greater social justice.	Resource 34.0  Capital 1.1  Total 35.1		



Objective	Budget £m 2003/04	Targets	PfG References
<p><b>Sub-priority: We will improve health and tackle health inequalities.</b></p>		<p><b>Improving health</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I.1. Maintain existing levels of activity and standards of service including 36,000 women receiving breast screening and 60,000 women receiving cervical screening.</li> <li>I.2. From April 2003, following consultation, take forward the Tobacco Action Plan to reduce smoking across all age groups.</li> <li>I.3. During 2003, develop a sexual health promotion strategy to reduce sexually transmitted diseases.</li> <li>I.4. During 2003/2004, complete all activities set out in the Drugs and Alcohol Regional Action Plan to curb the use of these substances.</li> <li>I.5. By January 2004, commission a review of the Drug and Alcohol Strategies and Joint Implementation Model..</li> <li>I.6. From April 2003, through the Investing for Health Partnerships, begin to implement local inter-agency health improvement plans to improve health and well-being.</li> </ul>	<p>Chapter 5, Sub-Priority I</p>
		<p><b>Developing Policies and Strategies</b></p>	

Objective	Budget £m 2003/04	Targets	PfG References
		<p>I.7. By June 2003, develop proposals for new HSS organisational structures taking account of the emerging principles/criteria of the Review of Public Administration.</p> <p>I.8. By March 2004 complete a review of the Community Dental Service and develop proposals for new organisational structures.</p> <p>I.9. By March 2004, complete a strategy for the development of mental health services and complete a review of mental health legislation.</p> <p>I.10 By March 2005,report on the implementation of the second phase of the review of community care.</p> <p>I.11 By November 2003, develop a detailed strategy for children in need.</p> <p>I.12 By March 2004 introduce new primary adoption legislation, as recommended in Adopting Best Care, the report of the Social Services Inspectorate's regional inspection of adoption services.</p>	
		<p>I.13 By December 2003 have in place an agreed regional strategy for recruitment and retention of foster carers to ensure</p>	

Objective	Budget £m 2003/04	Targets	PfG References
		<p>that this mainstay of the childcare system remains viable.</p> <p>I.14 By October 2003, develop an Action Plan to take forward the HPSS ICT Strategy.</p>	
		<p><b>Social Justice</b></p> <p>I.15 By January 2004, disseminate guidelines on the implications of human rights legislation on issues such as confidentiality and privacy, and clinical judgements.</p> <p>I.16 By March 2004, bring forward a cross-departmental report on measures necessary to promote social inclusion for carers and people with mental health problems and to contribute to the PSI priorities work for disability and older people.</p> <p>I.17 By March 2004, complete the 4<sup>th</sup> Report of the Capitation Formula to secure further improvements in the formula's sensitivity to need.</p>	
		<p>I.18 During 2003, progress work on 28 equality impact assessments contained in the Department's HPSSPS region-wide</p>	

Objective	Budget £m 2003/04	Targets	PfG References
		<p>equality impact assessment programme.</p> <p>1.19 By December 2003, disseminate the findings of four good practice reviews with the purpose of improving:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❑ Access to information;</li> <li>❑ Complaints procedures;</li> <li>❑ User involvement; and</li> <li>❑ Promoting positive staff attitudes to diversity.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Objective 2. To ensure the delivery of effective, high quality health and social care</b></p>	<p>Resource: 2,804.7</p> <p>Capital 150.1</p> <p>Total 2954.7</p>		
<p><b>Sub-priority: We will raise the quality of health and personal social services and tackle issues of poor performance.</b></p>		<p>2.1. <i>By April 2003, establish a Standards and Guidelines Unit within the Department.</i></p>	<p>Chapter 5, Sub-Priority 4</p>
		<p>2.2. <i>By September 2003, consult on minimum care standards for regulated services.</i></p>	
		<p>2.3. <i>By September 2003, establish the new Health and Social Services Regulation and Improvement Authority in shadow form.</i></p>	

Objective	Budget £m 2003/04	Targets	PfG References
		<p>2.4. <i>By April 2003, ensure that each HPSS organisation has in place a risk management strategy embracing clinical and social governance.</i></p> <p>2.5. <i>By December 2003, establish formal links with the National Institute for Clinical Excellence, the Social Care Institute for Excellence and the National Patient Safety Agency.</i></p>	
		<p>2.6. <i>Establish, by March 2004, a performance framework for medicines management, initially within the hospital sector,</i></p> <p>2.7. <i>By October 2004, implement a package of reforms to professional social work education and training (including revised student funding support) leading to a more competent and confident social work workforce.</i></p> <p>2.8. <i>By April 2003, formally commence the arrangements for the appraisal of GPs.</i></p>	
<p><b>Sub-priority: We will modernise our hospital services</b></p>		<p><b>Hospital Services</b></p> <p>2.9. <i>Maintain existing levels of activity and standards of the acute hospital service, by:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ <i>providing for approximately 255,000 patients treated as inpatients, 130,000 patients treated as day cases, and 1,200,000 patients as outpatients;</i></li> <li>□ <i>ensuring that 75% of patients requiring hospital inpatient treatment are admitted within three months of referral; and</i></li> <li>□ <i>ensuring that 95% of patients requiring</i></li> </ul>	<p>Chapter 5, Sub-Priority 5</p>

Objective	Budget £m 2003/04	Targets	PfG References
		<p><i>hospital inpatient treatment are admitted within 12 months of referral.</i></p>	
		<p><i>2.10 By April 2003, put in place measures to improve the management of waiting lists so that, by March 2004, there is a 50% reduction in the number of patients waiting longer than 18 months for hospital inpatient or daycase treatment compared to the June 2002 position.</i></p>	
		<p><i>2.11 By March 2004, reduce the number of people waiting for hospital inpatient or daycase treatment by 5% from the level at June 2002.</i></p> <p><i>2.12 By April 2003, ensure that some 20 beds are protected for the delivery of elective surgery at the Mater and Lagan Valley Hospitals.</i></p> <p><i>2.13 By March 2005, complete the mid-life upgrade of Altnagelvin Hospital to extend the Tower Block facility by a minimum of 25 years.</i></p> <p><i>2.14 By the end of 2005, complete the construction of the Regional Cancer Centre.</i></p> <p><i>2.15 By March 2004, enhance acute hospital capacity by 103 additional beds at Antrim Area Hospital, Craigavon Area Hospital and the Mater Hospital.</i></p>	

Objective	Budget £m 2003/04	Targets	PfG References
		2.16 By March 2004, complete a review of the HPSS workforce and develop a strategy to ensure we have a flexible, tailored and competent workforce, able to deliver high quality services.	
		2.17 By March 2006, expand renal dialysis services in line with demand (growing at 10% a year) to handle 100 new patients by the end of the period.	
		2.18 By March 2004, provide for an additional 10 kidney donor transplants per year.	
		2.19 By March 2006, recruit staff, install new equipment and, where necessary, purchase surgical procedures outside Northern Ireland to increase cardiac surgery capacity and cardiology procedures.	
<b>Sub-priority: We will improve our primary care and community care services.</b>		<p><b>Primary Care</b></p> <p>2.20 Maintain existing primary care services provided by nearly 1,000 family doctors, over 680 dentists and 510 community pharmacies.</p> <p>2.21 Ensure that, during 2003-04, all Local Health and Social Care Groups commission in conjunction with HSS</p>	Chapter 5, Sub-Priority 6

Objective	Budget £m 2003/04	Targets	PfG References
		<p>Boards some services.</p> <p>2.22 By March 2005, ensure that Local Health and Social Care Groups commission with the assistance of Board staff at least 30% of all health and social services in their areas.</p>	
		<p>2.23 Expand the range and volume of schemes and initiatives to give vulnerable people short spells of care outside the hospital environment and to support the development of primary care services.</p>	
		<p>2.24 By March 2004, enable all GP practices to access ICT system across organisational boundaries, to support direct booking of outpatient appointments from GP practices and more rapid and reliable reporting to GPs and hence to patients) of pathology and radiology tests.</p>	
		<p>2.25 By March 2004, reduce the estimated level of patient exemption fraud in family health services to 50% of the 1999-2000 level.</p>	
		<p><b>Community Services</b></p> <p>2.26 Maintain existing levels of activity and standards of service for elderly people by</p>	



Objective	Budget £m 2003/04	Targets	PfG References
		providing 13,000 care packages, 8,200 places in residential accommodation and home helps to 21,500 people.	
		<b>2.27 By December 2003, support an additional; 300 people in community settings to prevent inappropriate admissions to hospital and address waiting in the community.</b>	
<b>Sub-priority: We will safeguard the rights and interests of children</b>		Children's Services <b>2.28 Maintain existing levels of activity and standards of service for 2,500 children looked after at any one time, including 300 in residential care, 1,500 in foster care, 500 placed with a member of their own family.</b>	Chapter 4, Sub-Priority 5
		<b>2.29 By March 2005, implement the recommendations of Secure Care, the report of the Social Services Inspectorate's inspection of secure accommodation at Shamrock House and Linden House. This includes the provision of a new secure unit to replace the existing accommodation.</b>	
		2.30 By March 2004, complete work on a range of specific projects designed to improve services by enhanced training and support for foster carers, the development of a Family Centre in Causeway HSS Trust, provision of a "time	

Objective	Budget £m 2003/04	Targets	PfG References
		out” project for looked after children and provision of additional support for young carers.	
		<p>2.31 By March 2004, improve the range of residential care places available by increasing the total number of places from 372 (the September 2002 level) to 412 and providing 51 replacement places.</p> <p>2.32 By March 2004, evaluate the residential family assessment centre, parental support scheme and wraparound scheme for disabled children, and disseminate the findings to inform future policy and practice.</p>	
		2.33 By December 2003, provide 50 extra foster carers and during 2003/04 provide increased support to the Parents Advice Centre.	
<b>Sub-priority: We will give all our children the best start in life</b>		2.34 By December 2003, provide an additional 2000 Sure Start places targeted for deprived children and their families bringing to 18,000 the total available.	Chapter 6, Sub-Priority 1
<b>Sub-priority: We will support those with disabilities, mental health difficulties, chronic or terminal illness and their carers</b>		<p>2.35 Maintain existing levels of activity and standards of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Mental health services, by providing for</li> </ul>	Chapter 5, Sub-Priority 7

Objective	Budget £m 2003/04	Targets	PfG References
		<p>10,000 patients treated as inpatients, 575 long stay patients; and 1,100 care packages.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Learning disability services, by providing for: 9,300 contacts with community health and social care services, 2,500 patients treated as inpatients, 500 long stay patients, 1,600 care packages, 1,170 places in residential accommodation and 550 persons receiving home help; and</li> <li>□ Physical and sensory disability services, by providing for 11,800 people in contact with community health and social care services, 1,350 care packages, and 1,800 persons receiving home helps.</li> </ul>	
		2.36 Complete the medium secure unit by December 2004.	
		<p>2.37 By March 2004, complete work on the Acquired Brain Injury Unit and develop a plan for community brain injury service to complement inpatient care.</p> <p>2.38 From April 2003, to provide 25 additional places in the community for people with learning disability at present in long-stay</p>	

Objective	Budget £m 2003/04	Targets	PfG References
		hospitals and an additional 100 day care places to facilitate resettlement.	
		2.39 .From April 2003, initiate action to provide 25 additional places in the community for people with mental health difficulties at present in long-stay hospitals	
<b>Objective 3. To create a safer environment for the community by providing an effective fire fighting, rescue, and fire safety service.</b>	Resource    63.7 Capital      6.0 Total        69.6	3.0 By March 2004, ensure that the Fire Authority for Northern Ireland complies with national standards for 24-hour fire cover provision of a minimum of 98% for appliances , 91% for crew(riders) and 93% for attendance times.	Chapter 5, Sub-Priority 3

## **DEPARTMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT**

### **DRAFT PUBLIC SERVICE AGREEMENT**

**Introduction:** The draft **Public Service Agreement (PSA)** covers all the Department's main programmes and sets out how the Department will carry out its responsibilities under the **Programme For Government (PFG)** and within the resources allocated by the **Assembly**.

In delivering its aim and objectives, and in pursuing the targets presented below, the Department is committed to promoting equality of opportunity and good community relations, protecting human rights and meeting the objectives of the Executive's New targeting **Social Need** policy. In particular the department will implement its **Equality Scheme** as approved by the **Equality Commission** and its **New TSN Action Plan** and these form an integral part of this **PSA**. The Department is also committed to modernising the provision of services and improving efficiency and effectiveness. In discharging its responsibilities, the Department will work in partnership with others in the public, private and voluntary sectors, as appropriate.

**Aim :** To improve the quality of life in Northern Ireland, now and for the future, by promoting a better and safer environment and supporting effective and efficient local government.



		<p><b>I.4 To promote:</b></p> <p>a) the recovery of 25% of household waste by March 2006; and</p> <p>b) a reduction, to 85% of 1998 levels, in the landfilling of industrial and commercial waste by March 2006,</p> <p>by working, through District Council Waste Management Plans, and with private and voluntary sectors.</p> <p><b>I.5 To maintain or improve the conservation condition of 95% of the features underlying the designation of internationally important wildlife sites and Areas of Special Scientific Interest by 2013.</b></p> <p><b>I.6 To maintain the archaeological and architectural / historical quality of 800 sites and buildings annually, out of the total of 15,500 recorded archaeological sites and 8,500 listed buildings, through development control, statutory protection and grant aid.</b></p>	<p><b>Chapter 7 Sub-priority 7</b></p> <p><b>Chapter 7 Sub-priority 7</b></p> <p><b>Chapter 7 Sub-priority 7</b></p>

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Objective 2</b></p> <p><b>To ensure that development takes place in ways which will contribute to a quality environment and meet economic and social aspirations</b></p>		<p><b>2.1 By the end of 2004, implement those actions flowing from the Implementation Plan on Modernising Planning Processes, which do not require legislative change.</b></p> <p><b>2.2 By the end of 2005, implement those actions flowing from the Implementation Plan on Modernising Planning Processes, which require legislative change, subject to the agreement of the Assembly.</b></p> <p><b>2.3 Complete the Planning Policy Statement programme set out in the Planning Service Corporate and Business Plans 2002/03 – 2004/05 by producing 10 further Planning Policy Statements by the end of 2005.</b></p> <p><b>2.4 Complete the Development Plan Programme set out in the Planning Service Corporate and Business Plans 2002/03 – 2004/05 by adopting and publishing a further 10 Area Plans by the end of 2006.</b></p> <p><b>2.5 In 2003/04, determine 90% of the number of valid planning applications received.</b></p>	<p><b>Chapter 7 Sub-priority 2</b></p> <p><b>Chapter 7 Sub-priority 2</b></p> <p><b>Chapter 7 Sub-priority 2</b></p> <p><b>Chapter 7 Sub-priority 2</b></p> <p><b>Chapter 7 Sub-priority 2</b></p>
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<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Objective 4</b></p> <p><b>To support a system of local government which meets the needs of residents and ratepayers.</b></p>		<p><b>4.1 By Summer 2003 finalise revised Best Value Guidance and Procedures in partnership with district councils and other local government interests.</b></p> <p><b>4.2 Provide input to the Review of Public Administration as required by the RPA Review Team.</b></p> <p><b>4.3 To arrange for the delivery of an audit programme for the 26 district councils; Local Government Staff Commission; and NI Local Government Officers Superannuation Committee</b></p>	<p><b>Chapter 3</b></p> <p><b>Chapter 3</b></p> <p><b>Chapter 3</b></p>
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## **DEPARTMENT FOR REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

### **DRAFT PUBLIC SERVICE AGREEMENT**

**Introduction:** The draft Public Service Agreement (PSA) covers all the Department's main programmes and sets out how the Department will carry out its responsibilities under the Programme for Government (PFG) and within the resources allocated by the Assembly.

In delivering its aim and objectives, and in pursuing the targets presented below, the Department is committed to promoting equality of opportunity and good community relations, protecting human rights and meeting the objectives of the Executive's New Targeting Social Need policy. In particular the department will implement its Equality Scheme as approved by the Equality Commission and its New TSN Action Plan and these form an integral part of this PSA. The Department is also committed to modernising the provision of its services and improving efficiency and effectiveness. In discharging its responsibilities, the Department will work in partnership with others in the public, private and voluntary and community sectors, as appropriate.

**Aim:** To improve the quality of life for everyone in Northern Ireland by maintaining and enhancing a range of essential infrastructure services and by shaping the region's long-term strategic development.

Objective	Budget £m 2003/04	Targets	PFG References
<p><b>Objective 1</b> To maintain and develop transportation networks, airport and harbour services, shape the long term development of the region and provide other services to the public and other Departments</p>	<p><b>Resource 273.7</b> <b>Capital 53.6</b> <b>Total 327.3</b></p>	<p><b>1.1 In support of the 10-year Regional Transportation Strategy (RTS) and the Road Safety Strategy, we will introduce measures that will contribute to a reduction in personal injury resulting from road accidents.</b></p> <p><b>1.2 In support of the 10 year RTS target to improve the average weekday morning peak journey times on both key transport corridors and in the Belfast Metropolitan area, we will commence data monitoring and modelling by end of 2003.</b></p> <p><b>1.3 In support of the 10 year RTS we will introduce measures to improve transport in the region through the preparation of a number of Strategic Transport Plans.</b></p> <p><b>1.4 In support of the 10 year RTS, we will substantially upgrade the strategic road network by completing major strategic highway improvement schemes during 2003-06 to provide 14.7km of dual and 12.8km of single carriageway. (Figures to be confirmed)</b></p> <p><b>1.5 In support of the 10 year RTS target to eliminate 75% of road structural maintenance backlog we will invest over X % of structural maintenance budget on resurfacing or reconstructing roads.</b></p> <p><b>1.6 In support of the 10 year RTS we will introduce measures that will support the Northern Ireland Cycling Strategy target to double Cycle trips by 2005 (compared</b></p>	<p><b>Chapter 5 Sub-priority 3</b></p> <p><b>Chapter 7 Sub-priority 1</b></p> <p><b>Chapter 7 Sub-priority 1</b></p> <p><b>Chapter 7 Sub-priority 1</b></p> <p><b>Chapter 7 Sub-priority 1</b></p> <p><b>Chapter 7 Sub-priority 1</b></p>

Objective	Budget £m 2003/04	Targets	PFG References
		<p>with 2000). We will also introduce measures that support the Northern Ireland Walking Strategy target to increase walking trips.</p> <p><b>1.7</b> In support of the 10 year Regional Transportation Strategy target to introduce modern, sustainable, safe and integrated transport for everyone we will improve and support public transport services.</p> <p>supporting the housing objectives of the RDS we will work in co-operation with other Departments and external stakeholders to achieve more sustainable patterns of development. 60% of urban housing growth should be provided within urban limits, without town cramming, for the period up to the review of the RDS in 2010;</p> <p>We will work in partnership with all NI Departments (and other key stakeholders) to ensure that, as far as practicable, their strategies across the environmental, economic and social spectrum coincide with the strategic objectives of the Regional Development Strategy</p> <p><i>1.10 We will support the priority to secure a competitive economy by providing assessment, analysis and advice on key spatial development issues</i></p> <p><i>1.11 Support DOE in its role to modernise the planning process by contributing to the current programme of</i></p>	<p>Chapter 7 Sub-priority 1</p> <p>Chapter 4 Sub-priority 6</p> <p>Chapter 7 Sub-priority 2</p> <p>Chapter 7 Sub-priority 2</p> <p>Chapter 7 Sub-priority 2</p> <p>Chapter 7</p>

Objective	Budget £m 2003/04	Targets	PFG References
		<p><i>Planning Policy Statements by publishing three regional PPSs by end 2005.</i></p> <p><b>I.12 In the period of this PSA, we will keep the ports and airports legislation under review and updated as necessary. In particular, to promote legislation to update and further extend the commercial powers of the Trust Ports.</b></p> <p><b>I.13 In the period of this PSA, we will seek to secure Northern Ireland's air links to the major London hub airports and to encourage the development of other valuable national and EU services.</b></p> <p><b>I.14 By 1 September 2003, to have brought forward detailed alternative funding proposals to support transportation, water and sewerage infrastructure provision and enhancement in Northern Ireland.</b></p>	<p><b>Chapter 7 Sub-priority 1</b></p>

Objective	Budget £m 2003/04	Targets	PFG References
<p><b>Objective 2</b> To contribute to the health and well being of the community and the protection of the environment through the provision and development of cost-effective water and sewerage services.</p>	<p><b>Resource</b>    130.5</p> <p><b>Capital</b>        131.7</p> <p><b>Total</b>            262.2</p>	<p><b>2.1 Achieve 99% compliance with the drinking water standards set in the Water Quality Regulations (NI) 1994 by March 2006.</b></p> <p><b>2.2 Ensure that the capital works programme is updated regularly to take account of available investment and emerging need.</b></p> <p><b>2.3 Achieve 80% compliance with the wastewater treatment works discharge standards set by Environment and Heritage Service by 2005.</b></p>	<p><b>Chapter 5 Sub-priority 2</b></p> <p><b>Chapter 7 Sub-priority 1</b></p> <p><b>Chapter 7 Sub-priority 7</b></p>



## DEPARTMENT FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

### DRAFT PUBLIC SERVICE AGREEMENT

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**Aim:** Together, tackling disadvantage, building communities.

<b>Objective</b>	<b>Budget £m 2003/04</b>	<b>Targets</b>	<b>PfG References</b>
<b>Objective 1</b> To provide a fair system of financial help to those in need and to ensure that parents who live apart maintain their children; encouraging personal responsibility and improving incentives to work and save.	<b>Resource</b> 216.0  <b>Capital</b> 12.4  <b>Total</b> 228.4	<b>1.1 To increase the number of children who receive Child Maintenance direct from the Child Support Agency by 200% by March 2006.</b>	<b>Sub-priority 5</b>

Objective	Budget £m 2003/04	Targets	PfG References
		<p><b>I.2 During 2003/04, continue to implement the Welfare Reform and Modernisation Programme by:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❑ <b>Introducing, in conjunction with Inland Revenue the new Child Tax Credit and Working Tax Credit by April 2003;</b></li> <li>❑ <b>Introducing the State Pension Credit to provide help to 76,500 existing pensioner households by October 2003 and promoting take-up to a further 15,000 households with a new entitlement by March 2004;</b></li> <li>❑ <b>Extending the new joint jobs and benefits service to 20 out of 35 offices across our local office network by March 2004, incorporating procedures to put work at the forefront of the benefit claiming process for appropriate-working age customers;</b></li> </ul> <p><b>I.3 During 2003/04 continue to improve customer service and service delivery by:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❑ <b>Maintaining overall customer satisfaction levels at 90%;</b></li> <li>❑ <b>Reducing the levels of official and customer fraud and error by 5% on the previous year's target in 4 of our main benefits (Income Support, Jobseeker's Allowance and Incapacity Benefit) by March 2004;</b></li> </ul>	<p><b>Chapter 4 Sub-Priority 1</b></p> <p><b>Chapter 4 Sub-Priority 1</b></p> <p><b>Chapter 4 Sub-Priority 1</b></p> <p><b>Chapter 3</b></p> <p><b>Chapter 4 Sub-Priority 1</b></p> <p><b>Chapter 4 Sub-Priority 1</b></p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>❑ <b>Completing the assessment of take-up of selected benefits and producing a strategy to further encourage benefit take-up by March 2004;</b></li><li>❑ <b>Converting 65% of customers from order book and giro payments to payment directly into bank accounts by March 2004.</b></li></ul>	
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<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Objective 2</b></p> <p><b>To promote measurable improvements to housing in Northern Ireland</b></p>	<p><b>Resource</b> 306.8</p> <p><b>Capital</b> -5.2</p> <p><b>Total</b> 301.6</p>	<p><b>2.1 By March 2004, address the need to secure permanent tenancies for those on the waiting list by enabling:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>☐ <b>9,000 allocations to be made to applicants.</b></li> </ul> <p><b>2.2 By March 2004, in order to improve and maintain the fitness standard of housing stock over all tenures for those on low incomes we will provide funding to:-</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>☐ <b>Maintain 20,000 social housing stock; and</b></li> <li>☐ <b>Improve 7,500 private sector stock.</b></li> </ul> <p><b>2.3 By March 2004, enable people, who need special assistance, to maintain an independent lifestyle in a recognised standard of accommodation by providing funding to meet the costs of:-</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>☐ <b>4,000 minor adaptations to homes; and</b></li> <li>☐ <b>7,500 major adaptations to homes. (For example, extensions, major alterations, heating and lifts.)</b></li> </ul> <p><b>2.4 To raise standards of energy efficiency for the estimated 170,000 at risk on low incomes within the owner –occupied, private rented and social rented sectors we will by March 2004 provide funding to help reduce fuel poverty in:-</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>☐ <b>10,000 homes across all tenures.</b></li> </ul>	<p><b>Chapter 4</b> <b>Sub-priority 6</b></p>
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<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Objective 3</b></p> <p><b>Tackling disadvantage amongst individuals, communities and neighbourhoods, with particular emphasis on greatest need and encouraging, developing and supporting community development</b></p>	<p><b>Resource</b> <b>51.2</b></p> <p><b>Capital</b> <b>-1.1</b></p> <p><b>Total</b> <b>50.0</b></p>	<p><b>3.1 During 2003/04, implement strategies for the renewal of the most disadvantaged neighbourhoods in urban areas and for the reinvigoration of city and town centres and agree targets, systems and processes to measure success.</b></p> <p><b>3.2 To provide funding and support to the voluntary and community sector at regional, sub-regional and local level.</b></p> <p><b>3.3 By March 2004, have outline proposals for the regeneration of Londonderry in the light of consultation on the “Heart of the City” Study.</b></p>	<p><b>Chapter 4</b> <b>Sub-priority 7</b></p>
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## OFFICE OF THE FIRST MINISTER AND DEPUTY FIRST MINISTER

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**Aim:** A cohesive, inclusive and just society governed effectively through fully representative and well-informed structures.

Objective	Budget £m 2003/2004	Targets	PFG References
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<p><b>Objective I</b>  <b>To assist the Executive in making and implementing well-informed and timely policy decisions and improving public services by:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>supporting OFMDFM Ministers and the Institutions of Government; and</b></li> <li>• <b>building a Programme for Government and Modernising Government Programme</b></li> </ul>	<table border="0"> <tr> <td><b>Resource</b></td> <td><b>16.6</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>Capital</b></td> <td><b>1.4</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>Total</b></td> <td><b>18.0</b></td> </tr> </table>	<b>Resource</b>	<b>16.6</b>	<b>Capital</b>	<b>1.4</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>18.0</b>	<p><b>1.1. The efficient and effective operation of the institutions of the devolved administration in Northern Ireland.</b></p> <p><b>1.2. Well developed relations, both internationally and within these islands.</b></p> <p><b>1.3. Greater public understanding of government policies and services.</b></p> <p><b>1.4. A well-developed Programme for Government, with Executive agreement and Assembly endorsement sought within the published timescales.</b></p> <p><b>1.5. Modernised government and public services that are more efficient and tailored to customers' needs.</b></p>	<p><b>Relevant to all PfG priorities.</b></p> <p><b>Chapter 8 – all sub priorities.</b></p> <p><b>Relevant to all PfG priorities.</b></p> <p><b>Relevant to all PfG priorities.</b></p> <p><b>Chapter 3 – 3.52</b></p>
<b>Resource</b>	<b>16.6</b>								
<b>Capital</b>	<b>1.4</b>								
<b>Total</b>	<b>18.0</b>								
<b>Objective</b>	<b>Budget £m 2003/2004</b>	<b>Targets</b>	<b>PfG References</b>						

<b>Objective 2</b> <b>To promote equality of opportunity, human rights and improved community relations, tackle poverty and social disadvantage, and meet the needs of victims.</b>	<b>Resource</b>	<b>20.6</b>	<b>1.6</b>	<b>Effective implementation of the Reinvestment and Reform initiative.</b>	<b>Chapter 3 – 3.52</b>
	<b>Capital</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>1.7</b>	<b>Improved policy development, implementation and evaluation across the Administration.</b>	<b>Chapter 3 – 3.52</b>
	<b>Total</b>	<b>20.6</b>	<b>2.1.</b>	<b>EC Directives implemented and work progressed on harmonising anti-discrimination law.</b>	<b>Chapter 4 – sub priority 4</b>
			<b>2.2.</b>	<b>Practical help and high quality services delivered to support the victims of the conflict in Northern Ireland.</b>	<b>Chapter 4 – sub priority 3</b>
			<b>2.3.</b>	<b>An overarching cross-departmental strategy developed by March 2004 to promote and protect the rights and interests of children in Northern Ireland.</b>	<b>Chapter 4 – sub priority 5</b>

<b>Objective</b>	<b>Budget £m 2003/2004</b>	<b>Targets</b>	<b>PfG References</b>
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		<p><b>2.4 A new strategy and implementation plan to tackle sectarianism and promote good relations in place by December 2003.</b></p> <p><b>2.5 Draft legislation introduced by March 2004 to remedy human rights deficiencies in existing legislation and promote equality of opportunity and human rights.</b></p> <p><b>2.6 New TSN policy promoted and developed across departments by March 2004 taking account of the outcome of the New TSN evaluation.</b></p> <p><b>2.7 Cross-cutting strategies that address the needs of disabled and older people through the Promoting Social Inclusion (PSI) Working Groups developed by March 2004.</b></p> <p><b>2.8 Implementation of Race and Gender Equality Strategies overseen and progress reported on by March 2004.</b></p>	<p><b>Chapter 4 – sub priority 2</b></p> <p><b>Chapter 4 – sub priority 4</b></p> <p><b>Chapter 4 – sub priority 1</b></p> <p><b>Chapter 4 – sub priority 1</b></p> <p><b>Chapter 4 – sub priority 4</b></p>
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### EQUALITY CONSIDERATION OF PROGRAMME FOR GOVERNMENT

#### 1. Background

- 1.1 Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 requires public authorities in carrying out their functions relating to Northern Ireland to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity:
- Between persons of different religious belief, political opinion, racial group, marital status or sexual orientation;
  - Between men and women generally;
  - Between persons with a disability and persons without; and
  - Between persons with dependants and persons without.
- 1.2 In addition, without prejudice to the above obligation, public authorities are also required in carrying out their functions relating to Northern Ireland, to have regard to the desirability of promoting good relations between persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group.
- 1.3 Schedule 9 of the Act requires public authorities to prepare Equality Schemes stating how they propose to meet these statutory duties. The main vehicle for doing so is through the carrying out of equality impact assessments (EQIAs) in line with guidance produced by the Equality Commission. Both the Office of First Minister and Deputy First Minister (OFMDFM) and the Department of Finance and Personnel (DFP) have commitments in their respective Equality Schemes to assess the impact of the Programme for Government (PfG) and the Budget.
- 1.4 As in previous years the Equality Commission has concurred that the unique nature of the Programme for Government as a summary of the Executive's overarching priorities did not lend itself to the full procedures for the conduct of impact assessment as set out in their Practical Guidance. They recognised that arrangements put in place to facilitate consultation and engagement on the PfG and Budget process in previous years had been well received and that our proposals for this year served to build on that foundation to ensure that equality was fully considered in all aspects of the Executive's work.

#### 2. Pre-consultation arrangements

- 2.1 The process started with the publication on 5 June 2002 of the Executive's Position Report that set out for consideration by the Assembly and others, the key issues affecting our public services. We made this report widely available within the Assembly and among the social partners and invited their views. We also participated in a round-table discussion on its content

organised by the Northern Ireland Council for Voluntary Action for the voluntary and community sector and arranged a similar event for members of the Civic Forum.

### **3. Equality considerations in drafting the Programme for Government**

- 3.1 As each department drafted its own input to the PfG at sub-priority level, it provided a brief assessment of whether the action aimed to promote equality of opportunity and/or redress an inequality or disadvantage. Where this was the case they were asked to identify the Section 75 groups affected and the extent of the impact. Similarly they were asked to identify actions that would have an adverse impact on any group and what measures they proposed to mitigate that impact.
- 3.2 Each department is committed to the completion of EQIAs on all the new policy commitments in the PfG where screening indicates that this is necessary. All these commitments are marked with an \* in the overall list of EQIAs that departments have scheduled for 2003 –2004 and is set out in Annex D (1).
- 3.3 Taking all this information together and drawing on the work done in previous years the following paragraphs aim to produce an overview of the equality impact of the amalgam of actions and measures that is the Programme for Government using, as far as was possible, the format recommended in the Equality Commission’s Practical Guidance on Equality Impact Assessment.

### **4. Consideration of available data and research**

- 4.1 In last year’s Programme for Government we undertook to work with other public bodies to develop a strategic framework for increasing our research and information on equality and social need to enable us to fully assess the equality impact of our work.
- 4.2 During the year an inter-departmental steering group chaired by the Equality Directorate and including representatives from the Equality Commission and the Northern Ireland Council for Voluntary Action brought forward a “Cross-departmental Equality and Social Need Research and Information Strategy”. The document will be issued for consultation and will be submitted to the Executive thereafter.
- 4.3 Equality and Social Needs policies are highly dependent on good quality research and statistics. Much has already been done or is planned, particularly by the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA), to increase and improve on the statistics available to those concerned with equality and

social needs issues. Priorities for policy specific statistics and research are determined departmentally, while larger surveys such as the Northern Ireland Continuous Household Survey and the Northern Ireland Census are planned and prioritised by NISRA in the context of both UK priorities and Northern Ireland departmental needs.

4.4 Recent development of policies, initiatives and activities in line with New TSN policy and in compliance with Section 75 are common to all departments. The new strategy, therefore, aims to:

- assist our understanding of the extent, distribution and causes of inequality and social exclusion in Northern Ireland society and the consequences of policies and actions aimed at their reduction, and to assess their impact on those affected;
- assist departments to access the data they need to inform their implementation of New TSN and to monitor its impact; and
- assist departments and Public Bodies in complying with their statutory duties under Section 75 of the Act.

4.5 This will be achieved by:

- identifying gaps in our existing knowledge, research and data; and
- ensuring that there is co-ordination and co-operation in the commissioning and undertaking of relevant research and statistical work to achieve maximum impact across departmental areas of responsibility.

4.6 In the following paragraphs we have highlighted some of the data that is currently available relating to the Section 75 groups under the five key priorities used in the Programme for Government. Data used in last year's Programme for Government has not been reproduced again unless it has changed/ been updated to a significant degree.

### **Growing as a Community**

4.7 The core principles of equality and community relations are fundamental to this priority:

- Children and young people under 18 account for 27% of the population.
- Approximately 47% of children and young people are Roman Catholic; 47% are Protestant; and 6% are of a different religion or no religion.
- 12.6 % of children come from lone parent households.
- 26% of children are dependents of claimants of Jobseeker's Allowance or Income Support.
- We spend over 25% less per head than England on children's services.
- People with disabilities represent approximately 17% of the population.
- Almost one third of the population do not have access to private transport.
- Current anti-discrimination legislation only covers religious belief, political opinion, racial group, gender and disability.

## **Working for a healthier people**

4.8 The Executive acknowledges that general health standards in Northern Ireland are below the best in Europe but that some groups experience particular difficulties. For example:

- Research suggests that people from minority ethnic communities may not make use of primary care and hospital services to the same extent as other population groups with similar morbidity characteristics.
- Home accidents are a major cause of death and disability particularly among children and older people.
- Research shows that children and older people tend to require the greatest access to general medical services.
- A recent survey of 15 and 16 year olds showed;
  - some 90% of respondents had at some time consumed alcohol
  - two thirds had at some time smoked cigarettes
  - nearly 40% of boys and 30% of girls had used some form of illicit drug.

## **Investing in education and skills**

4.9 Helping every individual to achieve their own potential is one of our fundamental principles as it enables them to access the employment market and so raise the quality of their own lives. There are still many equality issues to be resolved.

- Girls continue to do better than boys in examinations and are more likely to continue in education after leaving school.
- The number of school leavers with no qualifications has decreased but there remains a gender differential with boys outnumbering girls.
- School leavers with no qualifications are more likely to be unemployed.
- There has been a significant increase in children attending pre-school education. Of these 51% are Roman Catholic and 40% are Protestant.

## **Securing a competitive economy**

4.10 Creating a vibrant and competitive economy that provides plentiful career opportunities for all is a key component of the Executive's commitment to producing a cohesive, just and inclusive society. There are a number of equality issues to be considered in this context:

- The so-called "Age Shift" (the older population in NI is projected to increase substantially by 2005) has far reaching social and economic implications for everyone; and for the economy generally. The current Programme for Government clearly acknowledges the need to explore the economic opportunities in this area.
- Reasons for lower participation by certain groups, e.g. women, in the economy need to be further explored and addressed.

- The particular needs and difficulties faced by certain Section 75 groups – ethnic minorities and disabled people – in participating in the economy also need to be explored.
- Reasons for continuing community differentials in unemployment need further examination, and practical solutions brought forward.

## **5 Assessment of Impacts**

5.1 As outlined above, in preparing this Programme for Government, departments will have completed their own analysis and are committed to programmes of equality impact assessments as set out in their Equality Schemes. The following sections show, for each priority area, key policies and programmes that should directly promote equality of opportunity for one or more of the Section 75 categories. As above information shown in the last Programme for Government has not been repeated unless there has been a significant change to the policy. In addition an overview of equality impact is included.

### **Growing as a community**

5.2 In a priority that focuses on equality, human rights and community relations there are many examples of policies that are directly applicable to promoting equality of opportunity.

- Our proposals on the law on the physical punishment of children in the home will particularly benefit children and young people.
- The changes we propose on family property law and nullity of marriage and the review of the law on financial arrangements on divorce should have a positive impact on both men and women and their dependents.
- Implementation of our Research and Information Strategy to improve data availability to all departments will have a positive impact on all the Section 75 categories.
- By monitoring and evaluating the implementation of our strategies on both gender and race and by taking forward the recommendations of the Disability Rights Task Force, we will improve the situation of these groups.
- Our strategy on children will recognise the fundamental importance of the role of parents and family life and directly benefit all children and young people.
- Our proposals to harmonise, as far as is practicable, anti-discrimination legislation in a Single Equality Bill and to implement EC Directives on Age and Sexual Orientation should benefit all categories.
- Our Regional Transport Strategy and Belfast Metropolitan Transport Plan aim to provide a modern, integrated and sustainable public transport system that will improve the facilities for older people, young mothers, those with dependants and those with disabilities.
- Our plans to improve access to travel information other than in English will benefit members of ethnic minority groups.

- The improvement in access to participating in sport should favour those with a disability, women and the young.
- People of different religious belief, political opinion, racial group and those with a disability should benefit from our Understanding our Culture, History and Heritage programme.
- The creation of a voluntary Regional Register of Children with a disability will improve the information available for the planning of services and may provide the potential to provide an information support network for parents and carers.
- Action on foster care and family support should improve the life chances of children and young people.
- Strengthening both hospital and community services should meet the wider needs of children and young people with mental health problems and those with learning disabilities.
- New arrangements should improve the life chances of young people leaving care.
- The pilot project flowing from the Procurement Review to assist the unemployed, especially the long-term unemployed, is likely to have a positive impact with regard to religious belief, political opinion, gender and disability.

## **Working for a Healthier People**

5.3 In our Investing for Health Strategy we will focus on improving the public health of the population in general but will also highlight and aim to reduce some of the inequalities currently being experienced by some groups.

- Actions to improve health for alcohol and drugs mis-use, accident prevention, smoking and teenage parenthood.
- Improved primary care provision through community-based services will aid those with a disability and older people but will lead to an increased demand for respite for their carers.
- We plan to have in place an audiology service that can pass on the benefits of digital hearing aid technology to those who need it.
- A strategy to address oral health will particularly target people with a learning disability for whom dental decay is a problem.
- In addition, the Regional Transport Strategy and the Belfast Metropolitan Transport Plan will produce positive health benefits for women, children, those with a disability, older people and those with dependants.
- Implementation of the Road Safety strategy will reduce casualty rates especially in relation to children, young men and older people.

## **Investing in Education and Skills**

5.4 The basic right to education and training helps to create new opportunities for the individual and promotes personal and community development.

- The provision of new libraries should ensure that those with a disability are not disadvantaged in having access to information resources.
- The integration of pupils with special needs into mainstream schools.
- Assistance to Universities and FE colleges to meet their obligations to improve access for students with a disability.
- Participants in New Deal 18-24 will be helped into work.
- The planning, funding and management of the education and training programmes for 16-19 year olds will be reviewed.

## **Securing a competitive economy**

5.5 A successful economy can open opportunities for all sections of the community.

- The development of the Social Economic Forum and the implementation of agreed priorities should maximise input on social issues and so benefit those with disabilities, older people and those with dependants.
- By December 2003, through the West Belfast Task Force's initiative, practical recommendations will have been produced to target and tackle the particularly serious economic and social problems faced by the Greater Shankill and West Belfast areas.
- The inability to reach employment opportunities in traditional sectors and areas may, in part, be offset by strategies that promote the capacity of local economies. We will therefore examine the potential of locally based employment growth in community businesses, intermediary labour markets and local exchange trading schemes (the social economy).
- The work of the Task Force on Employability and Long-term Unemployment should have positive equality outcomes for a number of Section 75 categories who are over-represented amongst those not in employment.
- Continual monitoring of EU programmes can have a positive effect on all Section 75 groups.
- Enhancing the angling estate to provide increased access to young people and those with a disability.
- The development of the capabilities of all our people for creativity and innovation under the Unlocking Creativity Strategy will promote and sustain the cultural, social and economic well being of Northern Ireland. Support will be available to excluded groups engaged in creative industries and under performers in the education system.

## **Developing Relations - North/South, East/West and Internationally**

5.6 We are committed to strengthening our links with the other devolved administrations, the UK Government, the European Union and the Republic of Ireland, all of which offer opportunities for a positive impact.



- As far as North/ south co-operation in the Community Support Frameworks are concerned, actions under the Peace Programme will aim to exploit opportunities for cross border development in areas such as community reconciliation particularly including women, the young and the socially excluded.
- Membership of UK Committees on such issues as the Drugs Task Force, the Sports Cabinet and the MINECOR Committee to co-ordinate the presentation of public policy towards Europe will enable the Executive to work closely with the UK Government and the Devolved Administrations to co-ordinate actions to benefit groups of the young, minority ethnic communities and dependants.
- Effective links in Europe will enable Departments to be better informed on developments in EU equality and employment law, to offer input in the formulation of law at an early stage and to influence the outcome.
- Our bid for the European Capital of Culture in 2008 aims to raise the confidence and improve the image of Northern Ireland at home and abroad.

## **Overview of Equality Impact**

5.7 The enormous range of strategies, policies, programmes and functions contained in the Programme for Government makes any assessment of its equality impact both difficult and limiting. Accepting that significant inequalities exist in the fields of health, education and employment in relation to some or all of the Section 75 categories, key strategies are in place, or are planned, to address them. There are many links between the actions of the various departments that show that genuine crosscutting measures are in place and operating successfully to the benefit of all concerned.

5.8 The recommendations of the Task Force on Employment and the Long-term Unemployed are aimed at removing barriers to employment such as childcare and the ability of individuals to travel to work as well as addressing their literacy and numeracy skills. The Regional Transportation Strategy highlights the availability of public transport as an objective and expands it into areas of servicing rural areas and is ensuring that access for those with a disability are greatly improved. The provision of better schools and colleges are addressed through the RRI and PPP initiatives (that also create employment opportunities themselves) and the curriculum within them are targeted at expanding access to people of all levels of ability and providing an improved and more individually centred career advisory service. Promoting a culture of tolerance in schools and colleges, citizenship and a vision of life-long learning are also directed at preparing young people for a career in employment. Recommendations from the Welfare Reform and Modernisation Programme take up that theme by introducing new measures to significantly improve access for Jobseekers and a single work focused gateway to the entire benefit system. Help for vulnerable groups in isolated and deprived areas is also improved. The gap between the achievements of boys and girls and between

those in deprived areas and the community at large continue to receive attention.

5.9 The Investing for Health Strategy targets, among other things, the prevention of accidents both at home and in work with particular reference to children and older people while the Regional Transportation Strategy has the same aim for its Road Safety Campaign identifying young men as an additional vulnerable group. Specific policies on alcohol, drugs, teenage parenthood and homelessness have obvious cross-departmental relevance. The provision of safe affordable housing is seen as a pre-requisite for improved health and social and economic well-being and special support is available for vulnerable people. While good quality housing can aid regeneration of our towns, cities and rural communities it also links well with the priorities of the Regional Transportation Strategy to upgrade the existing rail and road networks. This strategy aims to provide new and accessible trains and buses, helping in a small way to provide employment in those areas that need it most. Social housing is a particular concern in some areas and is being provided. Building, be it residential, commercial or industrial, requires a modern planning process that is being developed in conjunction with community and business partners. This partnership approach stretches across many areas ranging from the allocation/ monitoring of EU Structural Funds, the development of the Compact and Partners for Change with the voluntary and community sector, to the formation and operation of Local Strategic Partnerships who advise in Neighbourhood Renewal Strategies.

5.10 As well as measures to promote equality of opportunity, running right through the Programme for Government is our commitment to targeting social need that complements, and in many instances overlaps with actions being taken to alleviate the inequalities experienced by the Section 75 categories. The Promoting Social Inclusion element of New TSN involves departments working together and with partners outside of government to improve the circumstances of those most at risk. Work has in the past focused on minority ethnic groups in general and Travellers in particular and in future years will see action to address the position of people with a Disability, Older People, the Homeless, those with Mental Health problems and Carers. The promotion of social inclusion approach therefore represents a focused integration of actions across departments towards a common purpose including the removal of inequalities.

## **6. Consultation**

6.1 To assist us to fully assess the overall impact of our work, we would appreciate your views on any equality aspect of our proposals. In particular, we would welcome views on the following:

- Do you consider that any of the proposals are likely to have a positive or negative equality impact on any of the groups within Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998?

- If you have identified any impact, do you have any suggestions as to how this might be mitigated or alternative approaches that we might adopt to promote equality of opportunity for these groups?

## **7. Decision and publication**

7.1 Public consultation on this draft document and equality aspects will be taken into account in finalising the Programme for Government. A report of the review of equality impact will be made available as an annex to the Programme for Government that will be published following approval by the Executive.

## **ANNEX C (i)**

### **LIST OF EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENTS (EQIAs) PLANNED OR UNDERWAY**

The following tables detail by department the policies on which Equality Impact Assessments have been completed, are underway or will begin by 31 March 2003, and those planned for 2003/2004.

Policies marked with an asterisk (\*) relate specifically to commitments in the Programme for Government.

Department	EQIAs Complete	Underway	To commence 31 March 2003	Planned for 2003/04
DARD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Less Favoured Area Support</li> <li>• Payment of Agricultural Grants and subsidies (including implementation of Agenda 2002)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Peace II (Natural Resource Rural Tourism Measure)*</li> <li>• Forestry*</li> <li>• Milk Quotas</li> <li>• Consideration of admission criteria for The following courses and development programmes               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- People Development through Higher and Further Education Courses</li> <li>- Lifelong Learning through short courses</li> <li>- Lifelong Learning to ensure competitiveness and sustainability</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Research and Education Policy*</li> <li>• Sea Fisheries Policy, Enforcement and Conservation *</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Specific elements of the rural Development Programme as contained               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Transitional Objective I (BSP)</li> <li>- LEADER + and</li> <li>- INTERREG III*</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
DCAL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Electronic libraries for Northern Ireland</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Library review</li> <li>• Capital of Culture Bid*</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review of Local Museums and Heritage</li> <li>• Irish language translating and interpreting services</li> </ul>
DE		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Arrangements for School funding</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Selective structure of Post Primary education:</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Open Enrolment</li> <li>• Initial Teacher</li> </ul>

		<p>(Local Management of Schools)*</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promotion of Personal and Social Development of young People through Leisure activities*</li> <li>• Differential eligibility for retirement from teaching for men and women</li> <li>• Pay benefits to surviving Family or other nominated Beneficiaries</li> <li>• Maintenance of Statutory NI Curriculum*</li> <li>• English as an additional language</li> <li>• Promotion of inclusion of children with Special Educational needs in mainstream Schools and Classes</li> <li>• Recovery of Capital Grant from schools</li> </ul>	<p>Transfer Procedure tests*</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Home to school transport</li> <li>• Raising standards of Literacy/Numeracy through Literacy/ Numeracy Strategy*</li> <li>• Support for low and Underachieving Schools*</li> <li>• Promotion of inclusion for pupil groups in danger of education underachievement*</li> <li>• Maximising Learning Opportunities for children with Learning difficulties/special Education needs.</li> <li>• School Building Programme – to ensure that available capital resources are directed to highest priorities in terms of Educational need.</li> <li>• Pre-School education Expansion programme</li> <li>• Dissemination of Good Practice</li> <li>• Raising School standards –</li> </ul>	<p>Training</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continuing Professional Development of Teachers</li> <li>• Teachers Education – Technology skills</li> <li>• Statutory assessment of Pupils</li> <li>• Funding of Youth Services, Capital Projects according to need</li> </ul>
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			<p>maximum Class sizes at Key Stage I (30 pupils)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School Meals provision</li> <li>• Free School meals</li> <li>• Promotion of Positive Pupil behaviour</li> <li>• Promotion of good community relations among young people</li> <li>• Promotion of child protection policies and procedures in schools</li> <li>• The use by Schools of target setting and development planning to improve performance</li> </ul>	
DEL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student Finance</li> </ul> <p>The following is a list of EQIAs carried out on legislation proposals to date:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maternity, paternity and adoption pay and leave</li> <li>• Flexible working (Recommendations of</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Worktrack</li> <li>• Bridge to Employment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New Deal 50+</li> <li>• New Deal for Disabled People</li> <li>• Widening access in Further and Higher Education</li> <li>• Disabled student access</li> <li>• Capital Funding</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provision of Funding to Non-statutory providers</li> <li>• Higher Education in the Further Education Sector</li> <li>• Capital Funding</li> <li>• Further Education - Recurrent Funding</li> <li>• University Grant for teaching, research and related activities</li> </ul>

	<p>the Work and Parents Taskforce)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work &amp; Parents: Competitiveness and Choice – flexible Working Draft Regulations</li> <li>• Fixed Term Work</li> <li>• Dispute resolution</li> <li>• Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment)</li> <li>• Redundancy Code of Practice</li> <li>• Labour Relations Agency – Arbitration Scheme</li> <li>• Labour Relations Agency – Disciplinary &amp; Grievance Code</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information and Communications Technology Strategy</li> <li>• Support for Teacher Training Institutions</li> <li>• Strategic Investment Fund <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Skills Fund</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support for post-graduate students</li> <li>• Walsh Visa Programme</li> <li>• Labour Market Intermediaries</li> <li>• New Deal 25+</li> <li>• Job Brokerage</li> <li>• Access to Work</li> <li>• Job Introduction Scheme</li> <li>• Jobskills</li> <li>• Modern Apprenticeships</li> <li>• Learn Direct</li> </ul>
DETI	Restructuring of DETI agencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attracting new inward investment</li> <li>• Supporting local investment</li> <li>• Raising the level of research and development</li> <li>• Increasing the use of</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Business industry and commerce regulator framework.</li> <li>• Administration of affairs of bankrupts and companies in compulsory liquidation</li> <li>• Consumer and business</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DETI is currently revising its Equality Scheme due to the recent establishment of the new Economic Development Agency – Invest NI. Therefore it is not yet clear what policies will be subject to an EQIA during this period.</li> </ul>



		<p>new technologies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promoting management development and encouraging employers to develop the skills and versatility of those in employment.</li> <li>• Draft Energy Bill*- Primary Legislation which includes the following areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Effective regulation of gas and electricity industry in NI and diversification</li> <li>- Energy efficiency/ alternative energy sources</li> <li>- Electricity and gas legislation EU energy directives</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	trading environment.	
DoE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local Government Compensation for redundancy and premature retirement Regs.</li> <li>• Planning Development Control Advice Note-</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Procedures relating to the issue of a licence to drivers with a medical condition likely to affect their fitness to drive.</li> <li>• Driving theory test procedures.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local Government (Early Termination of Employment) (Discretionary Compensation) Regs</li> <li>• Planning Development Control Advice Note on</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Procedures for registering a vehicle in Northern Ireland</li> <li>• Licensing and relicensing of a vehicle</li> <li>• Vehicle test</li> <li>• Practical Driving Test</li> <li>• Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan</li> </ul>

	<p>Hot Food Bars*</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Dungannon and South Tyrone draft area plan revised bypass option</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review of General Grant (Resources Element)</li> <li>Review of Planning Fees*</li> <li>Qualifying procedures for registration as an approved driving Instructor</li> <li>Road safety education and Policy*</li> <li>Application for the issue of a driving licence</li> <li>Local government Pension Scheme Regulations</li> <li>Pollution control*</li> <li>Ards/Down Area Plan*</li> <li>Banbridge, Newry and Mourne Area Plan*</li> <li>Magherafelt Area Plan*</li> <li>Access to Built Heritage Procedures</li> </ul>	<p>Access for People with Disabilities*</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Northern Area Plan</li> <li>Antrim/Ballymena/Larne Area Plan</li> <li>Derry Airport Local Plan*</li> <li>2 Planning Development Control Advice Notes on <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Residential and Nursing Homes; and</li> <li>b) Creches, Day Nurseries and Pre School Play Groups</li> </ul> </li> <li>Taxi driver licensing procedures (where licences are issued for 5 instead of 10 years after age 40)</li> <li>Waste management</li> <li>Environment and heritage education Policies</li> <li>Access to the countryside</li> </ul>
DFP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review of Civil Law- Family Law Act 2001</li> <li>Managing European</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review of Civil Law – Marriage Laws</li> <li>Review of Civil Law –</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review of Civil Law – Aspects of law on domestic violence</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review of Civil Law- Nullity</li> <li>Review of Civil Law- Land Law</li> </ul>

	<p>Union Programmes – Structural Funds</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quinquennial review of Rate Collection Agency</li> </ul>	<p>Physical punishment of Children</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Formulating future procurement policy and purchasing arrangements*</li> <li>• Review of Civil Law Divorce</li> <li>• Developing Policy on Location of Northern Ireland Civil Service Jobs*</li> <li>• Rating Policy*</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developing policy on recruitment</li> <li>• Developing policy on Promotion</li> <li>○ Review of Civil Law – family property ownership</li> </ul>	
DHSSPS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Investing for Health*</li> <li>• Tobacco Control*</li> <li>• Mental Health Promotion Strategy: Prevention of Suicide*</li> <li>• Teenage Parenthood*</li> <li>• Capitation Formula Review</li> <li>• Sure Start</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community Care*</li> <li>• Oral Health Strategy; General Dental Services</li> <li>• Sub-fertility Treatment*</li> <li>• New Central Maternity Unit*</li> <li>• Strategic review of Cardiac Services*</li> <li>• Renal Services Review*</li> <li>• Acute Care – Acute Hospital Review*</li> <li>• Children’s Social</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social Services for Children with a Disability*</li> <li>• Charging for Residential Care</li> <li>• Learning disabilities*</li> <li>• Out of Hours Arrangements for General Medical Services</li> <li>• Capital Investment Strategy; General Capital review*</li> <li>• Regional Human Resources Strategy*</li> <li>• Agenda for change Relating to pay and Conditions of HPSS</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Child Protection</li> <li>• Domestic Violence</li> <li>• Health Service charges</li> <li>• Pharmaceutical Services (dispensing of drugs and medicines)</li> <li>○ Alcohol Strategy; Drugs Strategy</li> <li>• Cancer Services</li> <li>• Health Action Zones</li> <li>• Immunisation</li> <li>• Prevention of abuse of vulnerable adults</li> <li>• Recruitment policy in the Fire Service</li> </ul>

		<p>Services Strategy*</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consent to Examination and Treatment</li> <li>• Home Accident Strategy</li> <li>• HSS Board and GP Prescribing budget Formula</li> <li>• Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Strategy for HPSS</li> </ul>	<p>Staff</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community Dental Services <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Patient care services (NI Ambulance Service)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Response times to fire call outs</li> <li>• Screening</li> <li>• Mental Health Review*</li> <li>• Fire Precautions, advice and guidance</li> <li>• Access to Professionals allied Medicine and Occupational Therapy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Personal Data- Confidentiality Policy</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
DRD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Proposed Discontinuance of Services on Antrim/ Knockmore Railway line</li> <li>• Regional Transportation Strategy*</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review of Concessionary Fares Scheme*</li> <li>• Rural Transport Fund</li> <li>• Fares pricing policy</li> <li>• Planning policy Statement on Housing</li> <li>• Planning policy Statement on Transportation and Land Use*</li> <li>• Planning policy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Transport for disabled people</li> <li>• Households not connected to mains water or sewerage*</li> <li>• Planning Policy statement on development in the Countryside</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Belfast Metropolitan Area Transport Plan*</li> <li>• Decriminalised Parking Enforcement</li> </ul>

		<p>Statement on Retailing and Town Centres*</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Water Service Infrastructure Charges</li> <li>• Provision of pedestrian facilities*</li> <li>• Operation and management of car parks</li> </ul>		
DSD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Child Support Agency Northern Ireland Field Operations</li> <li>• Private Sector Grants*</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accommodation for Travellers*</li> <li>• Provision of relevant accurate and timely information and advice about Social Security benefits</li> <li>• Partners for change*</li> <li>• URBAN II*</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy,*</li> <li>• Urban regeneration Belfast*</li> <li>• Urban regeneration Londonderry*</li> <li>• Town Centre Reinvigoration*</li> <li>• Community Support Programme*</li> <li>• Peace II*</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recruitment of casual Staff</li> <li>• Uptake of Social Security benefits</li> <li>• Customer service (access to Social Security Benefits)</li> </ul>
OFMDFM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Equality (Disability etc) NI Order 2000 Equality Commission (Time Regulations)</li> <li>• Implementations of</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Policy on Honours</li> <li>• A guide to emergency planning in Northern Ireland (CEPU)</li> <li>• Race Strategy*</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Single Equality Bill*</li> <li>• Support for the Equality Commission</li> <li>• PSI review on access to information on disadvantaged people</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Policy on Public Appointments</li> <li>• Equal pay policy</li> <li>• Policies associated with the new Community Relations Strategy.</li> <li>• Research Programme</li> </ul>

	<p>the Burden of Proof Directive in NI</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regulation of Investigatory Powers Legislation</li> <li>• Strategic plans for victims policy issues including relations with the voluntary sector organisations*</li> <li>• Corporate Strategic Framework for delivering government services electronically*</li> <li>• Commissioner for Children*</li> <li>• Proposals for legislative changes on disability discrimination law arising from the Disability Rights Task Force Report*</li> <li>• Revision of guidance on evacuation (CEPU)</li> <li>• Programme for Government 2002/05</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PSI report on Travellers*</li> <li>• Development of a Children's Strategy*</li> <li>• Policy on Public Private Partnerships</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gender Strategy*</li> <li>• Dissemination of information</li> <li>• Policy on publication of adverts etc</li> <li>• Corporate IT standards</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The promotion of Implementation, within the devolved administration, of obligations arising under The Human Rights Act*</li> <li>• The promotion of human rights considerations in the development of policy within the devolved administration.*</li> <li>• Review of NTSN*</li> <li>• Improving Performance in NI public sector.</li> <li>• Policy on modernising Government.</li> </ul>
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## ANNEX D

### GLOSSARY OF TERMS

<b>AONB:</b>	Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty
<b>ASSI:</b>	Areas of Special Scientific Interest
<b>BIC:</b>	British-Irish Council
<b>BIIGC:</b>	British-Irish Inter-Governmental Council
<b>BSE:</b>	Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy
<b>BSP:</b>	Building Sustainable Prosperity
<b>BTA:</b>	British Tourism Authority
<b>CAP:</b>	Common Agricultural Policy
<b>CCEA:</b>	Northern Ireland Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment
<b>CFP:</b>	Common Fisheries Policy
<b>COMPACT:</b>	A document containing a compact between Government and the Voluntary and Community Sector in Northern Ireland that was issued in December 1998
<b>CSCGST:</b>	Clinical and Social Care Governance Support Team
<b>CSF:</b>	Community Support Framework
<b>DARD:</b>	Department of Agriculture and Rural Development
<b>DCAL:</b>	Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure
<b>DE:</b>	Department of Education
<b>DEL:</b>	Department for Employment and Learning
<b>DETI:</b>	Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment
<b>DFP:</b>	Department of Finance and Personnel
<b>DHSSPS:</b>	Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety
<b>DOE:</b>	Department of the Environment
<b>DRD:</b>	Department for Regional Development
<b>DSD:</b>	Department for Social Development
<b>DTI:</b>	Department of Trade and Industry (UK)
<b>EC:</b>	European Commission
<b>EIS:</b>	Executive Information Service
<b>EPF:</b>	Executive Programme Funds
<b>EQIA:</b>	Equality Impact Assessments
<b>EU:</b>	European Union
<b>FE:</b>	Further Education
<b>GB:</b>	Great Britain
<b>GDP:</b>	Gross Domestic Product
<b>GP:</b>	General Practitioner
<b>GRO:</b>	General Register Office
<b>HSS:</b>	Health and Social Services
<b>HSSRIA:</b>	Health and Social Services Regulation and Improvement Authority
<b>ICT:</b>	Information and Communication Technology
<b>IFB:</b>	Intermediary Funding Body
<b>ILA:</b>	Individual Learning Accounts
<b>INTERREG IIIA:</b>	European Structural Funds Programme aimed at developing cross-border co-operation between member states

<b>IT:</b>	Information Technology
<b>JMC:</b>	Joint Ministerial Committee
<b>LEADER+:</b>	European Union funding programme aimed at stimulating rural economies
<b>LSP:</b>	Local Strategy Partnership
<b>MAGNI:</b>	Museums and Galleries of Northern Ireland
<b>MAN:</b>	Metropolitan Area Network
<b>MEP:</b>	Member of Parliament (Westminster)
<b>NEE:</b>	Needs and Effectiveness
<b>New TSN:</b>	New Targeting Social Need policy
<b>NICS:</b>	Northern Ireland Civil Service
<b>NICVA:</b>	Northern Ireland Council for Voluntary Action
<b>NISRA:</b>	Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency
<b>NITB:</b>	Northern Ireland Tourist Board
<b>OFMDFM:</b>	Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister
<b>PEACE II:</b>	EU funded programme to encourage Peace and Reconciliation
<b>PfG:</b>	Programme for Government
<b>PFI:</b>	Private Finance Initiative
<b>PPP:</b>	Public Private Partnerships
<b>PSA:</b>	Public Service Agreement
<b>PSI:</b>	Promoting Social Inclusion
<b>QBC:</b>	Quality Bus Corridors
<b>R&amp;D:</b>	Research and Development
<b>RDI:</b>	Research and Development and Innovation
<b>RDRP:</b>	Rural Development Regional Plan
<b>RoI:</b>	Republic of Ireland
<b>RPB:</b>	Regional Partnership Board
<b>RRI:</b>	Reinvestment and Reform Initiative
<b>RSTN:</b>	Regional Strategic Transportation Network
<b>RTS:</b>	Regional Transportation Strategy
<b>SCS:</b>	Senior Civil Service
<b>SDA:</b>	Service Delivery Agreement
<b>SEUPB:</b>	Special EU Programmes Body
<b>SPU:</b>	Support Programme for University Research
<b>TIL:</b>	Tourism Ireland Limited
<b>URBAN II:</b>	Urban II is an EU funded Community Initiative worth approximately £8.6m from 2000 to 2006
<b>WEP:</b>	Water Efficiency Plan
<b>WRS:</b>	Water Resource Strategy



- Comments on the draft Programme for Government should be submitted to:

Economic Policy Unit  
OFMDFM  
Block E5.20  
Castle Buildings  
Stormont Estate  
Belfast  
BT4 3SR

- Telephone      028 9052 2088  
                         028 9052 2576

- Textphone      028 9052 2526

- Fax              028 9052 2552

- E-mail    [pfg@ofmdfmni.gov.uk](mailto:pfg@ofmdfmni.gov.uk)

- This document is available on our website at <http://www.pfgni.gov.uk>

- Copies are also available by telephoning the above numbers.