

**RESTRICTED – EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

*New Bill  
for  
subject*

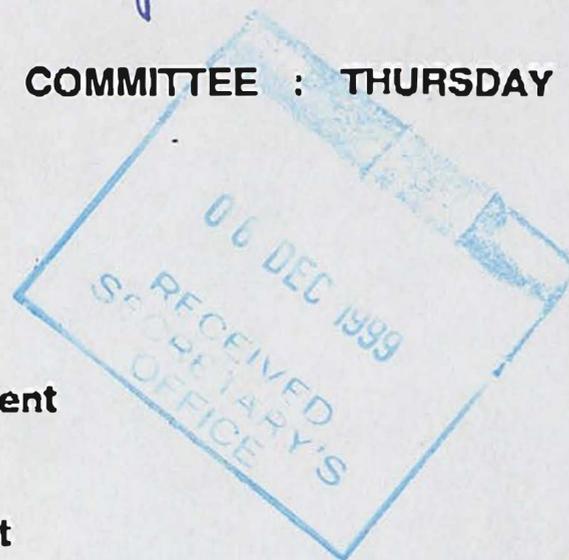
EC(M)(99)1

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE : THURSDAY  
2 DECEMBER 1999**

**Present:** First Minister  
Deputy First Minister

Minister of Agricultural and Rural Development  
Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure  
Minister of Education  
Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment  
Minister of the Environment  
Minister of Finance and Personnel  
Minister of Further and Higher Education, Training and Employment  
Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety

Secretary to the Executive to the Committee



The Chairmen welcomed members to the first meeting of the Executive Committee.

Before moving to consider the Agenda items, the Committee agreed that the Minutes of meetings should be limited to recording the outcome of the discussion on each item. It was agreed that the Ministers for Regional Development and Social Development who were not present would receive papers for, and minutes of, Executive Committee meetings.

**ITEM 1: DRAFT MINISTERIAL CODE – EC(99)1**

It was agreed that the draft Code of Practice should be given careful attention. Committee members would put their comments to the Committee Secretary by 17 December so that a revised version could be considered by the Committee early in the New Year. ✓

**ITEMS 2 & 3: FINANCE, PROGRAMME OF GOVERNMENT – EC(99)2; EC(99)3**

The Executive Committee considered the two papers presented by the Minister for Finance and Personnel. The first paper examined the financial position in the current year; Ministers were asked to ensure that their Departments lived within tight budgets. The second paper looked forward to the options for the further years. Decisions would be needed before Christmas on expenditure in 2000/01 so that spending bodies could be informed of their budgets.

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Proposals would be required on the future of Belfast Harbour so that the Committee could be aware of the budgetary consequences.

The Committee agreed to consider the detail of the papers at its next meeting, when members could comment on their specific proposals and the strategic approach for future years.

Proposals would also be brought forward on 7 December for the process of devising a future Programme of Government.

**ITEM 4: INITIAL LEGISLATIVE PROGRAMME – EC(99)4**

Committee members considered the proposals for the introduction of 3 Assembly Bills – the Assembly Members' Pensions Bill; the Grants to Members of the Assembly and Office Holders Bill; the Financial Assistance for Political Parties Bill; and the need for Ministers to identify their legislative proposals so that an overall NI legislative programme could be devised.

The Executive Committee agreed that the 3 Bills should be introduced by members of the Assembly Commission as Private Members Bills on 6 December. The Committee also agreed the need for Ministers to classify and prioritise their legislative priorities.

**ITEM 5: SENIOR CIVIL SERVICE APPOINTMENTS – EC(99)5**

The Executive Committee considered the way in which vacancies at Deputy Secretary level in Departments should be filled. It was agreed that, on this occasion, the existing pool of candidates judged suitable for promotion by an internal selection board could be used to fill three vacancies, on the advice of the Head of the NI Civil Service. The remaining vacancies would be filled by open competition. The need for additional posts to be filled would be decided on the basis of cases put to DFP. DFP would bring forward terms of reference for a review of Civil Service procedures for filling senior posts.

**ITEM 6: CODE OF CONDUCT FOR THE APPOINTMENT OF SPECIAL ADVISERS – EC(99)6**

Executive Committee members noted the Code.

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