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Executive Information Service

Department of Education

Peter, for filing on
1765/00 please

Thank you Ellen 7/11/2000

STRICTLY EMBARGOED UNTIL 11:30PM ON TUESDAY 31ST OCTOBER 2000

31 October 2000

MARTIN McGUINNESS ANNOUNCES MEMBERSHIP OF REVIEW BODY ON POST-PRIMARY EDUCATION

The Minister for Education, Martin McGuinness MP, MLA, today announced the membership of the independent Review Body on Post-Primary Education which will be chaired by Mr Gerry Burns, the former Ombudsman.

The Review Body has 10 members and has been asked to report to the Minister by next May. Commenting on the membership, the Minister said: **"I have consulted with colleagues on the Executive Committee and the Assembly Education Committee and in deciding on membership I have sought individuals who will inspire public confidence in the independence and objectivity of the Review Body, who will bring to bear appropriate experience and expertise from across the full range of perspectives and who have sufficient time to devote to consideration of this important and complex issue."**

The Minister added: **"The Review Body I have appointed comprises individuals with a wide and detailed knowledge of schools, further and higher education, industry and business. I have also endeavoured to include members with wider interests who do not normally feature on such groups. I am confident that it has the necessary professionalism, experience, integrity and independence to complete its task effectively."**

The Minister then explained the supporting arrangements that he is establishing to help the Review Body complete its work: **"I am very conscious that the Review Body has a demanding and vitally important job to complete within a tight timescale. To assist them with their task, I have appointed a panel of 5 education advisers comprising respected educationalists from Scotland, England and the South along with 2 local advisers, Professor Tony Gallagher and Professor Don McCloy."**

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"In addition, I will be establishing an Education Consultative Forum which will include the main education interests and representatives of other strands of opinion on selection. The Forum will be in place by the end of November. These supporting mechanisms are intended as sources of advice and ideas on which the Review Body may draw as it sees appropriate."

The Minister emphasised again his commitment to an open and public debate on the issues raised in the recent report on the effects of the selective system and in other research and publications. Urging everyone to participate in the debate, the Minister concluded by saying: **"The Review Body is now fully in place and ready to begin its work. I understand that it plans to hold a series of public meetings over the next 2-3 months as part of the consultation process. I strongly encourage everyone with an interest and opinion to attend these public meetings or submit views in writing to the Review Body for consideration. This is an opportunity for everyone to help shape the future of our education system."**

Notes for Editors

1. The Research Report entitled 'The Effects of the Selective System of Secondary Education in Northern Ireland' was commissioned by the Department of Education in 1998 and published on 28th September 2000.
2. The establishment of the Review Body on Post-Primary education was announced by the Minister at the launch of the research report. The Review Body is staffed by a secretariat of civil servants seconded from the Department of Education but is entirely independent of the Department. The Terms of Reference for the Body are attached and it has been asked to report with recommendations to the Minister by the end of May 2001.
3. The Review Body can be contacted at Enterprise House, 55/59 Adelaide Street, Belfast, BT2 8FE.
Telephone 90726040/90726041; Fax 90726081; e-mail; mail@pprbsni.gov.uk

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4. The full membership of the **Review Body** is as follows:

Chair

Gerry Burns
Former FE Lecturer
Former NI Ombudsman
Former CE of Fermanagh District Council

Vice-Chair

Dr Maureen Edmondson
Former Chief Food Scientist, Mars Products.

Members

Professor Eithne McLaughlin

Dept. of Social Studies, QUB

Tom Shaw CBE

Retired former Chief Inspector

Áine Downey

Chair of the Western Pre-School Education Advisory Group

Brian Keenan

Author and broadcaster

Ann Shaw

Former Chair of Institute of Directors and of the Health and Safety Agency

Bill McGinnis

Chair of Training & Employment Agency

Professor Anne Moran

Head of School of Education, UU

Professor John Coolahan

Professor of Education at the National University of Ireland and
Adviser to OECD and EU Commission

5. The members of the **Panel of Education Advisers** are:

Professor Tony Gallagher

School Of Education, Queen's University

Professor Don McCloy

Chair of Board of Governors, Stranmillis University College

Professor Frank Pignatelli

Scottish University for Industry,
Former CE of Strathclyde Education Authority

Professor Tim Brighouse

Chief Executive, Birmingham Education Authority

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Professor Áine Hyland
Vice-President
University College Cork

6. The **Education Consultative Forum** is intended to act as a source of ideas and advice to the Review body, particularly on the practical implications of any changes that may be proposed to current arrangements for post-primary education. It will be established by the end of November and will have around 16 members. The following individuals and educational interests will be invited to participate:-

Transferor Representatives Council (TRC)
NI Council for Integrated Education (NICIE)
Comhairle na Gaelscolaíochta
Council for Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment (CCEA)
Campaign Against Selection
Education Reform (Mr Niall McCafferty)
Council for Catholic Maintained Schools (CCMS)
Education and Library Boards

Teacher Unions

Governing Bodies Association (GBA)
Further Education
Higher Education

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Annex 1

REVIEW BODY ON POST-PRIMARY EDUCATION

TERMS OF REFERENCE

"To consider research and other relevant information on the impact of Selection on pupils, parents, teachers, the economy and society and undertake widespread consultation in order to:

- identify and consider key issues arising from the current selective system of post-primary education;
- assess the extent to which the current arrangements for post-primary education meet the needs and aspirations of children and their parents and the requirements of the economy and society; and
- report to the Minister of Education its conclusions and recommendations on the future arrangements for post-primary education and address specifically:
 - i. the most appropriate structures for post-primary education including the age or ages at which transfer should occur;
 - ii. the administrative arrangements for transfer;
 - iii. the implications for the curriculum at primary and post-primary levels;
 - iv. the implications for current school structures;
 - v. the implications for further and higher education and training;
 - vi. the anticipated impact of any proposed new arrangements on the economy;
 - vii. the costs of any revised arrangements; and
 - viii. the timing and phasing of any new proposed arrangements.

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