

## Appendix 2: SUMMARY PAPER

### The New Decade, New Approach Deal (UK Government and Irish Government)

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The New Decade, New Approach deal, which was published by the British and Irish governments on 9<sup>th</sup> January, sets out a plan of action for a new Executive, which includes a list of priorities and specific commitments from the two governments.

#### Part 1. Priorities of the Restored Executive

- **Transforming our health service** (with a long-term funding strategy)
- **Transforming other public services** (particularly in education and justice)
- **Investing for the future** (to ensure Northern Ireland is equipped to harness opportunities and drive sustainable productivity, including opportunities for future trade as we leave the EU)
- **Delivering a fair and compassionate society** (that supports working families and the most vulnerable)
- **Developing a new Programme for Government**

#### Part 2. NI Executive Formation Agreement

Aimed at enabling the restoration of all the institutions of the Belfast (Good Friday) Agreement and making government better, it contains a range of specific proposals including changes to the ministerial code, a new approach to the Petition of Concern and a commitment to further reform to take account of the outcome of the RHI inquiry.

#### Transparency and accountability measures *including:*

- publishing details of Ministers' meetings with external organisations
- measures related to special advisers (financial and meeting transparency)
- improved record-keeping and the protections for whistleblowers
- establishment of a fiscal council which would assess and report

#### Petition of concern *including:*

- The mechanism, which was designed to ensure that all sections of the community are protected and can participate and work together, will return to its intended purpose
- Parties to publicly commit to using it in most exceptional circumstances and as a last resort
- Petition can still be triggered by the support of 30 MLAs, but it needs members from two or more parties (this can include independent MLAs)
- A valid Petition shall trigger a 14-day period of consideration. After this, if 30 MLAs confirm support, the Assembly will determine the matter in accordance with the cross-community consent procedure.

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### **Sustainability of the Institutions** *including:*

- Measures aimed at ensuring a 3-year absence of devolved government cannot happen again and/or providing stability if that should happen (a 24-week period before an Assembly election must be called, legislating what will happen if First or Deputy First Minister resigns and for Ministers remaining in office in a care-taker capacity to allow continuity of decision-making within well-defined limits as set out in the Ministerial Code)
- Creating new bodies, including a Party Leaders' Forum and Executive Sub-Committee on Brexit. Party Leaders' Forum established to meet at least once monthly. This will be reviewed after six months
- Measures to put civic engagement and public consultation at the heart of policy-making including reforming the existing Compact Civic Advisory Panel

### **Rights, language and identity** *including*

- An Office of Identity and Cultural Expression "to celebrate and support all aspects of Northern Ireland's rich cultural and linguistic heritage"
- Legislation to create a new Commissioner "to recognise, support, protect and enhance the development of the Irish language in Northern Ireland" including developing best practice standards and guidance
- Legislation to create a new Commissioner "to enhance and develop the language, arts and literature associated with the Ulster Scots / Ulster British tradition"
- The legislation will repeal the Administration of Justice (Language) Act (Ireland) 1737 and provide official recognition of both Irish and Ulster-Scots languages in Northern Ireland
- A central Translation Hub will be established in the Department of Finance within three months of an agreement, to provide language translation services for the Executive Departments, Arm's Length Bodies, **Local Government** and Public Bodies.
- Any person can conduct their business in Irish or Ulster-Scots before the Assembly or one of its committees
- Introducing a Bill on sign language
- An Ad-Hoc Assembly Committee will be established to consider the creation of a Bill of Rights

### **Programme for Government**

- An agreed a two-stage approach to establishing a strategic level Programme for Government - focus on delivery of priorities and actions during the remainder of 2019/20 and development of a longer term programme from 2020 onwards.
- Within two weeks of the restoration of the institutions, publish fuller details of an agreed Programme for Government.
- Publish a new strategic level outcomes-**based Programme for Government** by April 2020 aligned to a multi-year budget.
- Principles and practice of citizen and community engagement and co-design will be a key part of its development and delivery

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### Programme for Government - key areas of focus

Within two weeks of the restoration of the institutions, the Assembly will publish fuller details of [what is likely to be included in] an agreed Programme for Government for 2020 beyond. However, the document indicates that the parties have agreed to build on the 12 outcomes in the previous Programme for Improvement, adding a new focus on:

- Ending paramilitarism
- Ending sectarianism
- Health and Social Care
- Education
- Housing
- Climate change
- Worker's Rights

In addition to those priorities outlined above, the document also identifies the following priority actions for 2019-20:

- Childcare
- Investment
- Fair and sustainable welfare reform
- Leaner government
- Sustainable public finances
- Policing

The Programme for Government could be underpinned by key supporting strategies, including the following:

- Anti-poverty strategy
- Economic/Industrial Strategy
- Investment Strategy
- Energy Strategy
- Children and Young People's Strategy
- Childcare Strategy
- Child Poverty Strategy
- Racial Equality Strategy
- Disability Strategy
- Gender Strategy
- Sexual Orientation Strategy
- Active Ageing Strategy
- Irish Language Strategy
- Ulster Scots Strategy

### Key Commitments

The "New Approach" document runs to 62-page and provides more detail on the mechanisms, priorities and proposed actions. A summary of key priority actions, including commitments by the UK and Irish Governments by thematic area is provided below:

#### 1. Health

- Executive will settle the ongoing pay dispute
- A successor strategy and action plan to the Strategic Direction for Alcohol and Drugs Phase 2 within 3 months; and a new strategy and implementation plan on cancer by December 2020. Additional funding to support the Derry/Londonderry addiction centre

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- Reform the health and social care system in line with the Bengoa, Delivering Together and Power to People reports. The previously agreed programme of transformation will continue to be a priority. Within this, there will be a greater focus on mental health and well-being.
- A mental health action plan published within two months, a Mental Health Strategy by December 2020 and additional funding to support mental health over three years.
- Reconfigure hospital provision to deliver better patient outcomes, more stable services and sustainable staffing. Improvements will be made in stroke, breast assessment, urgent and emergency care and day case elective care by the end of 2020.
- Build capacity in general practice through the ongoing rollout of Multi-Disciplinary teams to cover a further 100,000 patients by March 2021.
- A new action plan on waiting times; an extra 900 nursing and midwifery undergraduate places over three years and a new graduate entry medical school in Londonderry

### **2. Education**

- Executive will work to resolve the teachers' industrial action
- Address resourcing pressures in the education system and ensure every school has a sustainable core budget
- External independent review of education provision
- New special educational needs framework
- Expert group to examine links between educational underachievement and socio-economic background, including the long-standing issues facing working-class Protestant boys. And draw up an action plan for change that will ensure all children and young people, regardless of background, are given the best start in life.
- Deliver an enhanced approach to careers advice, curriculum, training and apprenticeships to enhance employability.
- Enhanced strategic focus and support actions on educating children and young people of different backgrounds together in the classroom.

### **3. Housing**

- The PfG outcomes framework will be augmented with a new outcome and indicators to provide specific focus on ensuring every household has access to a good quality, affordable and sustainable home appropriate for its needs.
- Enhanced investment in new social home starts with legislation to reclassify Housing Associations as external to the public sector to ensure the continuation of new social house building and the Co-ownership Housing Scheme.
- Examine options to remove historical debt from the NIHE and exclude it from having to pay Corporation Tax and agree a long term trajectory for the rental charges of the NIHE.

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### 4. Supporting People and Workers

- A review of welfare mitigation measures will be taken forward as a priority, with any agreed measures in place before March 2020. Commitment to extend existing welfare mitigation measures beyond March 2020, when they are due to expire.
- Executive to commit to becoming a Living Wage employer and ban zero hours contracts. Seek to have the power to set minimum wage levels (i.e. should be made a devolved matter).
- Publish a Childcare Strategy and will give immediate priority to developing arrangements to deliver extended, affordable, responsive, high quality provision of early education and care initiatives for families with children aged 3-4.
- Develop and implement an Anti-poverty Strategy.

### 5. Economy

- A review of welfare mitigation measures will be taken forward as a priority, with any agreed measures in place
- Ensure Northern Ireland is equipped to harness opportunities and drive sustainable productivity, including opportunities for future trade as we leave the EU and developing a regionally-balanced economy with opportunities for all.
- Invest strategically in ensuring that NI has the right mix of skills for a thriving economy.
- UK Government to promote Northern Ireland as a global cyber security hub and to support the delivery of the NI International Trade plan, establishing a new Trade Advisory Board, appointment of Northern Ireland Trade Ambassadors, and developing a Trade Accelerator Plan and a “Made in NI” campaign.

### 6. “Turbocharging “ Infrastructure

- Support for City Deal packages for Derry & Strabane and Belfast, including through match capital funding for infrastructure, regeneration and tourism projects
- Develop and deliver the Growth Deals for Mid South West NI and Causeway Coast and Glens.
- Invest urgently in wastewater infrastructure which is at or nearing capacity in many places across Northern Ireland, including in Belfast, limiting growth.
- Plan to complete both the Regional and Sub Regional Sports Stadia Programmes, including Casement Park
- Executive to benefit from increased capital infrastructure funding 'as a result of the UK government's infrastructure revolution'. Potential capital projects that could benefit include
  - Essential sewage investment (Living With Water Programme)
  - 'Better Connecting Dublin and Belfast' strategy
  - York Street Interchange

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### **7. Climate Change**

Tackle climate change head on with a strategy to address the immediate and longer term impacts of climate change, including:

- Introduce legislation and targets for reducing carbon emissions in line with the Paris Climate Change Accord. Strategies to reduce carbon emissions will be reviewed in light of the Paris Climate Change Accord and the climate crisis.
- A new Energy Strategy will set ambitious targets and actions for a fair and just transition to a zero carbon society.
- A Climate Change Act to give environmental targets a strong legal underpinning.
- Establish an Independent Environmental Protection Agency to oversee this work and ensure targets are met.
- The Economic Strategy will support clean and inclusive growth and create jobs as part of a Green New Deal.
- Create a plan to eliminate plastic pollution and close down RHI and replace by a scheme that effectively cuts carbon emissions.

### **8. Policing and Justice**

- Increase police numbers to 7,500 and deliver committal reform to help speed up the criminal justice system.
- Reaffirm commitment to tackling paramilitarism - focus within the PfG on ending the harm done by paramilitarism, ending sectarianism and put in place supporting strategies and actions.

### **9. Miscellaneous**

- Further reform of the NI Civil Service and review of Arm's Length Bodies with a view to their rationalisation.
- Take forward the reform of licensing laws

### **10. UK government commitments (not already reflected above)**

- Additional funding in 2020/21 to help the executive address its priorities, such as pay parity for nurses compared to England and Wales
- Funding for projects which could include mental health provision, tackling paramilitarism and deprivation

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- Appoint a Northern Ireland Veterans' Commissioner and introduce UK-wide legislation to further incorporate the Armed Forces Covenant into law
- Relatives of people from Northern Ireland to be able to apply for UK immigration status "on broadly the same terms as the family members of Irish citizens in the UK"
- Scope the establishment of a Northern Ireland hub in London - complementing the Invest Northern Ireland London Hub - and explore the creation of a UK Government hub in Northern Ireland to increase the visibility and accessibility of UK Government departments.

### **11. Irish government pledges**

- Delivering on its commitment to key infrastructure projects, particularly in relation to connectivity and infrastructure, including £75m for the A5 up to 2022
- Serious and detailed joint consideration through the NSMC of the feasibility of a high-speed rail connection between Belfast, Dublin and Cork, creating a spine of connectivity on the island, which could be progressed as a priority.
- Take forward a review of potential support for "renewed viable air routes from Cork to Belfast and Dublin to Derry"
- Provision for additional funding over 3 years with a contribution to the Irish Language Broadcasting Fund, and funding for a promotional programme by An Ciste Infheistíochta Gaeilge to be delivered in partnership
- Develop proposals for an enhanced North/South programme of research and innovation, in cooperation with the NI Executive through the NSMC. And interested in jointly exploring the feasibility of an all-island research hub, in cooperation with relevant agencies and stakeholders, North and South.
- Commitment in principle to significant new funding for the IFI, working with other partners, to support the delivery of the IFI Strategy 2021-2024.
- Maintain the enhanced level of funding for the Reconciliation Fund at €3.7 million per year in support of projects in Northern Ireland and border areas
- Continue work with our EU partners, UK Government and NI Executive to ensure that the PEACE PLUS programme, building on and continuing the work of both PEACE and INTERREG, will be delivered through the Special EU Programmes Body in support of reconciliation and harnessing the opportunities of our peace for all.