

IN THE MATTER OF AN APPEAL TO THE FIRST TIER TRIBUNAL (INFORMATION
RIGHTS)

BETWEEN:

COMMITTEE ON THE ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE

APPELLANT

-and-

THE INFORMATION COMMISSIONER

FIRST RESPONDENT

-and-

THE NORTHERN IRELAND TOURIST BOARD

SECOND RESPONDENT

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[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 11 January 2011 18:16
To: PCU Mail; Alan Clarke
Cc: Private.Office@detini.gov.uk; noel.cornick@detini.gov.uk; david.thomson@detini.gov.uk; david.sterling@detini.gov.uk; [REDACTED]; Crawford, Andrew
Subject: Bilingual Signage
Attachments: DETI Response Bilingual Signage.doc

Alan

Please note that the Minister has instructed that NITB policy as outlined in the attached paper should be adhered to and that NITB should not consider funding bilingual signage outside of this policy.

Grateful if this could be disseminated to the appropriate personnel within NITB.

Regards

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
Private Office
Department of Enterprise, Trade & Investment Netherleigh Massey Avenue Belfast, BT4 2JP
Tel: [REDACTED]
Mob: [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
Web: www.detini.gov.uk

Please consider the environment - do you really need to print this e-mail?

-----Original Message-----

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 23 December 2010 12:31
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: Private Office DETI; PCU Mail; Cornick, Noel; [REDACTED]; Thomson, David (DETI); Sterling, David; [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Tourism

[REDACTED]
Can you please use this response approved by Alan Clarke instead of the previous response I forward from Stephen.

Regards,

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
Policy & Environment Unit
Northern Ireland Tourist Board

Tel: 02890 441618

E-mail: [REDACTED]

pcu@nitb.com

-----Original Message-----

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 23 December 2010 09:53
To: PCU Mail
Cc: Cornick, Noel; [REDACTED]; Thomson, David (DETI); Sterling, David; [REDACTED]
Subject: FW: Tourism
[REDACTED]

Please see email query below from the Special Adviser.

I would be grateful if you could provide advice please as soon as possible.

Many thanks and happy christmas to you all.

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
Private Office
Department of Enterprise, Trade & Investment Netherleigh Massey Avenue Belfast, BT4 2JP
Tel: [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
Web: www.detini.gov.uk

Please consider the environment - do you really need to print this e-mail?

-----Original Message-----

From: Crawford, Andrew
Sent: 23 December 2010 00:12
To: [REDACTED]; Foster, Arlene
Subject: Tourism
[REDACTED]

At Monday nights meeting of Down Council a long debate took place regarding signs for 14 locations on what is known as the St Patrick's Trail. These places are in North Down, Ards, Down and Newry and Mourne District council areas. They are grant aided by the Tourist Board and NIEA.

While it was originally intended that all the signs would have the same design Down and Newry and Mourne have unilaterally decided to have these in Irish and English.

Can you check if we are funding Irish signs through the NITB?

Is there anything in the letter of offer to prevent bilingual signs going up?

Would be grateful if you can query this

Thanks

Andrew

This message was sent from my Blackberry device.

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Northern Ireland Tourist Board	Tel: 00 353 1 6057732
Tourist Information Center	Callsave: 1850 230 230
Suffolk Street	Fax: 00 353 1 6057725
Dublin 2	

ROI Marketing & PR	Tel: 00 353 1 4394731 / 4394732
East Point Plaza	
Dublin 3	

The Northern Ireland Tourist Board is an accredited Investor In People organisation.

Tourist enquiries are handled on our behalf by the Belfast and Northern Ireland Welcome Centre.

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DETI RESPONSE – SIGNAGE

- NITB as part of the St Patricks Christian Heritage Trail are completing interpretation at key sites to identify attractions and places and interpret their relevance to the St Patricks Heritage Story.
- In terms of the visitor experience, NITB is keen to ensure that all tourist interpretation and signage is clear, not confusing and assists the visitor in understanding the importance of the destination.
- NITB has adopted its standard policy to interpretation which is already in place for white of brown road signs. This was agreed as a joint policy that all signs are in English except where an attraction is known in Irish for example Culturlann.
- Down District Council recently adopted a bi-lingual policy and wanted sites referred to in English and Irish. However, NITB informed the Council that our policy is all signs are in English except where an attraction is known in Irish.
- David Thomson was notified on the 16th December 2010 that there may be potential issue with interpretation on the St.Patricks Christian Heritage Trail.
- Councillors from Down have requested a meeting with NITB to discuss the matter in the New Year.

17 January 2011



**northernireland
tourist board**

Cllr. William Walker



Dear Cllr. Walker

BI-LINGUAL SIGNAGE

Thank you for your letter dated 21st December 2010 regarding bi-lingual signage in the Down District Council area.

As part of the St. Patrick's Trail Signature Project, the Northern Ireland Tourist Board (NITB) in conjunction with various Councils and the Northern Ireland Environment Agency is putting in place interpretation panels at key sites, to provide visitor information and interpret their relevance to the St. Patrick's Heritage Story. A guide to best practice featuring the St. Patrick's interpretation guidelines is available for information at <http://www.nitb.com/visitorinspired/downloads/InterpretationGuide.pdf>

NITB's focus is on the visitor experience - to ensure that all tourist interpretation signage is clear, consistent, not confusing and assists the visitor in understanding the importance of the destination. Therefore the approach which NITB has adopted to funding interpretation is consistent with that which we already use for white-on-brown road traffic signs with Roads Service. The joint policy agreed with Roads Service is that all signs should be in English except where an attraction or facility is known in Irish (for example, Culturlann).

I should emphasise that NITB's approach is driven by visitors' requirements and the need for consistency. We have seen no evidence from the visitor perspective to justify a change from this approach.

NITB has a very good working relationship with Down and other councils involved in this project. We are keen that these projects, which must be completed before the end of March 2011, progress at the earliest opportunity.

Yours sincerely

ALAN CLARKE
Chief Executive

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Belfast BT1 1NB.
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Consumer website: www.discovernorthernireland.com

Chairman: Howard Hastings
Chief Executive: Alan Clarke

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OBJECTIVE: To drive delivery of all five Signature Projects.

FOI IMPLICATIONS: This note is fully disclosable.

1. INTERPRETATION

Background

As part of the development of both the Mournes and St. Patrick's Signature Projects, NITB has been working closely with Councils and other stakeholders to implement infrastructural improvements and install interpretation at key identified sites across the south east of NI. NITB has driven forward the designs for the interpretation panels and has been in constant discussions with partners to script and agree content. Newry & Mourne District Council has a bi-lingual policy in place and had requested that NITB consider the signing of the names of 4 sites in Irish and English. Other sites in the area were to be signed in English only. Recently Down District Council proposed to request the same approach to sites in Downpatrick along the St. Patrick's Trail. This debate has attracted some media interest.

Issue

NITB's primary concern is with the visitor experience - to ensure that all tourist interpretation and signage is clear, consistent, not confusing and assists the visitor in understanding the importance of the destination. Therefore NITB has adopted its current approach to interpretation, which is also in place for white-on-brown road traffic signs with Roads Service. This joint policy agreed that all signs should be in English except where an attraction or facility is known in Irish (for example, Culturlann). NITB's approach is driven by the visitors' requirements and the need for consistency. NITB has seen no evidence from the visitor perspective that a change from this approach would have any economic merit or improve the tourist experience. The Department has supported this approach and NITB has informed both Councils that funding for the interpretation at each site is dependent upon their agreement to this approach.

While the current debate focuses on names in Irish as well as English, as a wider issue the Ulster Scots dimension and other (especially European) languages also need to be considered. NITB's view remains, irrespective of language, that the name of the site is signed by what it is known and operates as. However, that is not to say that going forward NITB would not consider supporting the use of other languages on wider interpretation where appropriate - for example, where an attraction can provide evidence that a significantly large proportion of visitors is from one specific country and that the provision of interpretation in another language would enhance and improve the visitor experience at that site.

2. ROADS SIGNAGE

Background

NITB and Roads Service have an agreed joint policy in place for the provision of white on brown tourist traffic signs. Tourist signs constitute one part of the overall family of direction signs. The main purpose of tourist signs is to guide visitors to their desired destination via the most appropriate route at the latter stages of their journey, particularly where destinations are hard to find. As with all other direction signs, tourist signs are an aid to safe and efficient navigation, to complement, but not replace, pre-planning of the journey and the use of verbal instructions, maps, satellite navigation systems and road atlases.

Roads Service of the Department for Regional Development is currently out to consultation regarding the use of bi-lingual signing on 3 specific types of signs:

- Town/village place name signs;
- Some worded supplementary plates to standard warning signs (e.g. "School"); and
- Certain tourist signs

In summary, the draft policy proposes the inclusion of either Irish or Ulster-Scots, as well as English on these signs. Also:

- Only 1 additional language will be permitted per sign
- Signs will have to be requested by a promoter (e.g. tourist attraction/accommodation operator or school Principal) through their local Council
- The "applicant pays" principle will apply and Roads Service will not incur any associated costs
- Roads Service recognises that this is a politically sensitive issue so as a pre-requisite any proposed bi-lingual sign must have local Council support
- Roads Service has no plans to provide bi-lingual signage generally for all road signs

Issue

The issue of bi-lingual tourism signs has been mooted previously between Ministers and also discussed at the Assembly. When proposed, both Ministers for tourism, Dodds and Foster, have stated that they would not support the proposal.

NITB has seen no evidence from the visitor perspective that a change from the existing policy - that all signs should be in English except where an attraction or facility is known in Irish or Ulster-Scots - would have any economic merit or improve the tourist experience. It is proposed to respond to the consultation along those lines.

NITB will provide a draft response to this consultation for the next Board for approval.

RECOMMENDATION:

The Board is asked to note the information provided and endorse the approaches for interpretation and road signage set out above.

Board Meeting 26 January 2011

NORTHERN IRELAND TOURIST BOARD MINUTES OF BOARD MEETING HELD AT NITB HEADQUARTERS, ST. ANNE'S COURT ON WEDNESDAY 26 JANUARY 2011

Present:

- Mr Howard Hastings (Chairman)
- Mr Kevin Baird
- Mr Michael Deane
- Mr Clive Gordon
- Mr Alistair McGowan
- Dr Sally Montgomery
- Mr Don Price
- Mr Martyn Todd

In attendance:

- Mr Alan Clarke, Chief Executive
- Ms Kathryn Thomson, Chief Operating Officer
- Ms Susie McCullough, Director of Marketing & Events
- Mr Jim Daly, Policy and Environment Unit

Apologies:

- Mr Thompson Keating

1. Presentations

1 (i) Draft Budget

The meeting opened with a presentation from the Chief Executive and Chief Operating Officer on NITB's draft budget plans for 2011-15. Setting the context, NITB's recent achievements were noted, including some £60m investment on capital infrastructure in the Signature Projects and substantial growth in the domestic and Republic of Ireland markets. Work has been ongoing throughout the last year to prepare budget bids and priorities for NITB as input to the Comprehensive Spending Review. Key principles underpinning this work were to focus on areas where NITB adds most value and to avoid a "salami-slicing" and adopt a more focused approach to delivery of savings.

The budget for 2011-15 will be set firmly in the context of the Tourism Strategy for Northern Ireland (TSNI), the NI tourism brand and the draft NITB Corporate Plan 2011-15 previously approved by the Board.

NITB has received an indicative allocation from DETI in the draft budget 2011-15. Although tourism has been identified as a key economic driver and is to some extent protected, NITB will see an overall

17% decrease in programme expenditure by year 3 (2013-14). In addition no budget bids for revenue expenditure were met and therefore any new initiatives or priorities will require to be met from the reduced programme budget. Therefore NITB will require to be more focused in prioritising all future investment in areas where it adds most value and as a consequence may not be able to continue to invest in all of the activity it has done so to date. However, the recurring pension pressure on NITB's administration budget has been relieved by a one-off adjustment of the baseline.

The capital allocation from DETI has been aligned against completion of the Signature Projects and key projects in the Walled City. On the basis of NITB's allocation there is no funding to operate an open call for the Tourism Development Scheme (capital) or the Tourism Innovation Fund (revenue).

Discussions in 2009 to inform the Comprehensive Spending Review identified the areas where NITB's activity adds most value including the ROI and domestic markets; events; technological innovation to move the industry online and offer greater efficiency in the collation and dissemination of visitor information; the 2012/13 programme; research and insights; quality; and tourism area plans. As there will not be sufficient resources to carry out all of these, options need to be considered for what NITB can do and how it can best be done.

It has been widely accepted that 2012/13 represents an unprecedented opportunity to raise Northern Ireland's profile and a sense of expectation has been created. NITB has advised DETI that, on the basis of consultants' assessment, at least £2m additional funding is required to deliver a successful programme of 2012 events and the Permanent Secretary had acknowledged the need to address this funding gap. Should no additional funding be allocated NITB will only be able to support one major Titanic event in 2012, and can provide only minimal support to the City of Culture in 2013.

The Board was advised that there is a need to achieve greater clarity with DETI on local tourism areas. DETI's draft TSNi advocates for tourism delivery to be focused at 2 levels – national and local – with NITB taking the lead at a national level and the local authorities at a local level. In addition it proposes examples of "key tourism areas" or destinations within Northern Ireland defined by coherency and based on a well-defined geographic area that is easily recognised and understood by external and internal markets where it is easy for people to work together.

Local tourism areas will have different product strengths and weaknesses and are all at different stages in the product development life cycle. As a result not all areas will be equal in either their tourism potential or stage of development. It is recommended that Tourism Area Plans are developed that focus on 3 key themes of product development, clustering and promotion. It is for the local authorities to lead in the development of these plans and define what is the most suitable mechanism (or structure) to engage with the private sector.

NITB will provide a national strategic framework for development of tourism in Northern Ireland and market Northern Ireland in both the domestic and Republic of Ireland markets. NITB will support the local tourism areas by:

- Provide national and local research, intelligence, insights and advice to inform the development of plans for the area
- Aligning marketing and promotional activity e.g. website, campaigns, collateral

- Developing and implementing technology solutions that will transform the provision and distribution of visitor information e.g. one product database for Northern Ireland so that individual organisations will no longer need to own, collect or store data which allows the private sector to fully exploit commercial opportunities
- Providing opportunities to access support through the Tourism Development Scheme (capital) and Tourism Innovation Fund (revenue) – subject to funds being made available
- Collaborating in accessing other development funds e.g. Rural Development Programme
- Identifying key products aligned to market segments at a Northern Ireland level

Discussion turned to the likely implications for NITB. The organisation's structure and skills set will need to be reviewed and realigned against future priorities.

Members were asked for their views on the suggested priorities. The Board accepted the priorities outlines and emphasised that there was a need to plan beyond the pain of immediate budget restraint for the years beyond 2015, in order to get back on track and fulfil the growth targets envisioned by the Tourism Strategy. It was emphasised that communication and relationships with government, industry and staff will be critical. Members also felt that work could be done in promoting corporate social responsibility to encourage more sponsorship or value-in-kind support of events by local business. Commenting that service to tourism providers should not suffer, Members remarked that NITB had already been seen to raise the bar of industry's capability and should continue to demonstrate that this is where it adds value. Within this context it was felt that there was an opportunity to improve the industry's capabilities by developing a business case for NITB becoming the "one-stop shop" for tourism in line with the Independent Review of Economic Policy.

Noting the presentation, the Board endorsed the approach and priorities suggested.

2. Items for Decision

2 (i) Bilingual Signage

The background was outlined to recent requests from Newry & Mourne and Down District Council for bilingual signage to be included in the interpretation on the Mournes and St Patrick's Signature Projects. The issue had been the subject of some debate by the Councils and had attracted a degree of media interest. The Board was advised that in response to these requests, NITB had adopted a position already in use as part of the joint policy for white-on-brown signage with Roads Service. This was that signs should be in English, except where the attraction or facility is already commonly known by its Irish name. It was emphasised that NITB's primary concern is with the visitor experience and to ensure that all interpretation is clear, consistent, not confusing and assists visitors in understanding the importance of the destination. Noting the paper, the Board endorsed the current policy with Roads Service re white and brown signs and agreed the Chairman would write to DETI to that effect (**ACTION: HH**).

2 (ii) Consultation on Executive's Economic Strategy

The Board was advised that consultation had commenced on the Northern Ireland Executive's Economic Strategy. The strategy had arisen out of work by an Executive Sub-Committee. NITB

proposes to convene a group of key partners from the Campaigning for Tourism initiative to discuss a co-ordinated response to the consultation. Members were advised that as the consultation has just opened there is no indication yet of how local authorities may respond. The Board endorsed the proposed approach.

2 (iii) Tourism Development Scheme (TDS) – Restoration of SS Nomadic

A submission was presented seeking additional support under the Tourism Development Scheme to ensure the delivery of the Nomadic project. This was necessary because the cost of renovations, construction and fit-out had come in over budget, principally in required specialist works and additional structural work identified by extensive surveying over the last year. It was noted that while NITB is a minority funder for the project, its support would be likely to encourage further assistance from the Department for Social Development and Heritage Lottery Fund to develop the public realm surrounding Nomadic. Agreeing that the project was vital to the success of the Titanic Centenary and Signature Project, the Board approved further funding of up to £250,000, subject to a satisfactory value for money assessment and emphasised the need for a clear audit trail (**ACTION: SMcC**).

2 (iv) National Park

The Board was presented with an overview of the current position with regard to a National Park for Northern Ireland including the likely legislative and consultative process which would need to be followed. Members were noted to have discussed the sequencing of enabling legislation with the Board of the Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA) at their meeting on 25 January. Members asked about the resources likely to be required to support a Park and were advised that government would need to establish and fund a dedicated Park Authority for this purpose. NITB proposes to establish a policy engagement group to consider proposals within the enabling legislation, once it appears. The Board suggested that it might be useful to establish the group in advance of consultation commencing, in order to help establish development criteria for a Park. Clive Gordon and Martyn Todd volunteered to represent the Board on the group.

3. Standing Items

3 (i) Minutes of Last Meeting

The minutes of the Board Meeting on 9 December 2010 were approved subject to a minor amendment.

3 (ii) Matters Arising from Last Meeting

The Board noted actions completed since the last meeting along with the following updates:

Tourism Strategy – Noting the Department's intention to establish a Steering Group to oversee implementation, Members asked if Board representation would be sought on the group. The Chairman is to raise the issue with DETI (**ACTION: HH**).

Culture Change Programme – the Chief Operating Officer provided clarification of the Board's role in approving policies and procedures. Members commented that the Board simply needs to be assured

that the required policies and procedures are in place and suggested that this could be done through the Audit Committee (**ACTION: KT**).

Chief Executive's Report – it was noted that the DETI Permanent Secretary and Deputy Secretary had agreed to attend discussions of the budget at the Board Meeting and had then withdrawn. Members asked if the invitation could be extended again at the debrief meeting and suggested that they should be invited to attend at least one Board Meeting per year (**ACTION: HH**).

4. Reports

4 (i) Chairman's Report

The Chairman asked if Members had any queries following the Board's meeting on 20 January with the Board of Titanic Foundation Ltd. It was noted that DETI were seeking to allocate a Programme Manager by the time of the next Titanic Advisory Group meeting. Members commented that they were reassured by a greater sense of ownership and accountability with partners on the project and expressed their hope that this would continue.

Noting that the Strategic Investment Board will commission work on a masterplan for the Titanic Quarter area, Members stressed that a focus on accountability and ownership also needs to be part of this, and for a sales and marketing plan for the project. Members also discussed the need to have in place by 2012 a more attractive public realm and adequate public transport links in the area around the signature building. The Board was also advised of a proposal to extend the length of the operator's contract from 7 years to 25. Titanic Foundation Ltd was asked to write to NITB and Belfast City Council to outline the rationale.

The Chairman then asked if Members had any queries arising from the previous evening's meeting with the NIEA Board. Members had noted NIEA's proposal to establish a website on the NI Direct platform highlighting Northern Ireland events. It was noted that NITB will be represented on the working group established to take this work forward. Members commented that similar engagement would be useful between the Board and DARD or Forest Service, on issues such as farm diversification, access and the National Park. The Board was advised that NITB officials are due to meet with DARD in the next few weeks and that this would provide the basis for future engagement.

The Chairman advised that he would be on leave from 19 – 26 February and in his absence, Kevin Baird would deputise on any urgent matters that arise.

4 (ii) Chief Executive's Report

The Board noted the report's content and the following issues were highlighted:

Lagan Legacy – the Chief Executive had attended the launch of MV Confiance and confirmed that the project is an excellent addition to the maritime heritage product.

Walled City – discussions have been ongoing with the Apprentice Boys regarding the scope and scale of their proposals for the Memorial Hall. It was emphasised that a decision will need to be taken quickly for the level of project that can realistically be delivered in time for 2012/13.

Events Funding – the Board was advised that the new NITB events funding programme would launch in the next few weeks. The timescales for submission, appraisal and assessment of applications will be extremely tight during the first year.

European Foundation for Quality Management – NITB are attending the EFQM awards and are hopeful of a positive result.

4 (iii) Other Reports

Tourism Ireland – the Chairman updated the Board on recent discussions. With TIL's budget taking a 3% reduction per annum over the next four years there would be a focus on consolidating activity in closer-to-home markets.

VisitBritain – Mr Gordon provided an update on recent VB activity and the Board noted the news release regarding the initiative to create a £100m marketing fund to boost tourism around the Royal wedding, the Queen's Diamond Jubilee and the Olympics.

Audit Committee – Mr Price advised that there were no issues to report. He had been invited to attend the Departmental Audit Committee in February but had to decline this due to other commitments. It was suggested that Mr Keating might be asked to attend.

Funding Committee – Mr Baird advised that there were no matters to report.

5. Papers for Noting

5 (i) Quarter 3 Performance Monitoring

The following reports were noted by the Board:

- 2010-11 Operating Plan
- Finance
- Tourism Performance
- Risk Management

With regard to the Risk Register it was noted that risks associated with the launch of the events programme had been escalated but are likely to be reduced again for the fourth quarter given recent progress. The Board was pleased to note that Internal Audit Service had also upgraded its opinion given last year in relation to the Titanic Signature Project, from "limited" to "satisfactory".

The Board was advised that the £600k in year budget reduction which DETI had processed in the December monitoring round had now been reinstated.

The Board asked for updated statistics for visits to the discovernorthernireland.com site (**ACTION: BM**). It was noted that the first large tax levies instituted by the Republic of Ireland's government were imminent and that there was likely to be a knock-on effect arising out of the impact this would have on ROI taxpayers' wages.

6. Any Other Business

6 (i) Board Papers

Members were asked for their feedback on the Board Papers and commented that the content was succinct, to the point and well presented. They requested that papers should be sent out where possible a clear week in advance of the meeting, with papers requiring a decision circulated first if the other papers are not available (**ACTION: JD**). Members also noted from the papers included with the correspondence annex that the disposal of Rural Cottage Holidays was now complete and thanked the staff involved for their work in bringing the issue to resolution.

6 (ii) Presentation on Spring Campaign

NITB's Director of Marketing and Events Susie McCullough joined the meeting for a presentation on the spring campaign which will be launching in the next few weeks. By way of background the Board was advised that in 2009, over 50% of Northern Ireland's tourism revenue came from the domestic and ROI markets. In this context the new campaign strategy was an evolution of that which NITB had been producing previously. The television adverts for the campaign were screened.

Prospective visitors' awareness was high, with Northern Ireland now higher on many destination wish-lists. Much good work had been done in changing perceptions but safety still remained a barrier. However the main impetus behind the new campaign images was an emphasis on things to see and do in evenings and weekends, and outside of Belfast. The NI tourism brand has underpinned the creative activity, emphasising that Northern Ireland is not simply about "one big thing". The campaign was supported by a spread of material including TV, press and a much more sophisticated online presence with interactive maps, video and user-generated content. Members commended the campaign.

8. Date of Next Meeting

The next Board Meeting is scheduled to take place in Bangor on Thursday 10 March.



northernireland
tourist board

31 January 2011

[REDACTED]
Newry and Mourne District Council
Haughey House
Rampart Street
Greenbank Industrial Estate
Newry
BT34 2QU

Dear [REDACTED]

BI-LINGUAL SIGNAGE

Thank you for your letter dated 26 January 2011 regarding bi-lingual signage in the Newry & Mourne District Council area.

As part of the St. Patrick's Trail Signature Project, the Northern Ireland Tourist Board (NITB) in conjunction with various Councils and the Northern Ireland Environment Agency is putting in place interpretation panels at key sites, to provide visitor information and interpret their relevance to the St. Patrick's Heritage Story. A guide to best practice featuring the St. Patrick's interpretation guidelines is available for information at <http://www.nitb.com/visitorsinspired/downloads/InterpretationGuide.pdf>. The Mourne Signature Project signage is being developed by Scott Wilson as part of their brief for the delivery of the Mourne Coastal Route.

NITB's primary concern is with the visitor experience - to ensure that all tourist interpretation and signage is clear, consistent, not confusing and assists the visitor in understanding the importance of the destination. Therefore NITB has adopted its current approach to interpretation, which is also in place for white-on-brown road traffic signs with Roads Service. This joint policy agreed that all signs should be in English except where an attraction or facility is known in Irish (for example, Culturlann). I should emphasise that NITB's approach is driven by the visitors' requirements and the need for consistency. We have seen no evidence from the visitor perspective that a change from this approach would have any economic merit or improve the tourist experience.

NITB's Board has recently ratified our established approach which has been in place for some time. This is that all signs are in English except where an attraction is known in Irish. This approach applies to all signage and interpretation across all projects involving NITB.

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Consumer website: www.discovernorthernireland.com

Chairman: Howard Hastings
Chief Executive: Alan Clarke

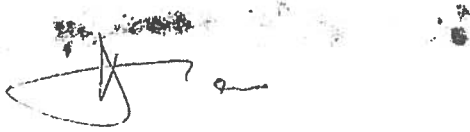
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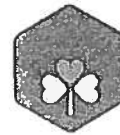
INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

NITB has a very good working relationship with Newry & Mourne District Council and we are keen that these projects progress as soon as possible. Any assistance in ensuring the delivery of these projects, which are must be completed before the end of March 2011, would be much appreciated.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Alan Clarke', with a large loop at the end of the name.

ALAN CLARKE
Chief Executive



**northernireland
tourist board**

1 March 2011

David Sterling
Permanent Secretary
Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment
Netherleigh
Massey Avenue
BELFAST
BT4 2JP

Dear David

DRD Consultation on Road Signage

Roads Service of the Department for Regional Development recently issued for consultation a draft policy on bilingual road signage – the purpose of which is to promote minority languages. NITB would like to input through DETI to this consultation. You will be aware that the issue of bilingual signage was discussed by the Board of NITB at its meeting on 26 January 2011, albeit specifically in relation to requests from Down District Council and Newry and Mourne District Council that bilingual interpretative signage panels should be included on the St Patrick Trail and Mournes Coastal Route.

NITB and Roads Service already have an agreed joint policy in place for the provision of white on brown tourist traffic signs, which constitute one part of the overall family of direction signs. The main purpose of tourist signs is to guide visitors to their desired destination via the most appropriate route at the latter stages of their journey, particularly where destinations are hard to find. As with all other directional signs, tourist signs aid safe and efficient navigation, and complement (but do not replace) pre-planning of the journey and the use of verbal instructions, maps, satellite navigation systems and road atlases. They should not be confused with advertising.

Although it is a joint policy it is led by DRD. NITB's role is to confirm that applications for those white on brown signs which fall outside the standard categories are genuinely a tourist attraction or facility. DRD also takes all the final decisions on whether or where a sign can be erected. However, in light of this joint policy being in place, NITB is disappointed that Roads Service did not discuss the proposed bi-lingual policy change with NITB prior to issue of the consultation document.

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Chairman: Howard Hastings
Chief Executive: Alan Clarke

The Roads Service consultation concerns the use of bilingual signing on three specific types of signs:

- Town / village place-name signs;
- Some worded supplementary plates to standard warning signs (e.g. "School"); and
- Certain tourist signs - funded by private premise owners (e.g. tourist destinations, churches, schools and certain commercial premises) in close proximity to the destination

The draft policy proposes the inclusion either of Irish or Ulster-Scots, as well as English on these signs. Also:

- Only one additional language will be permitted per sign
- Signs will have to be requested by a promoter (e.g. tourist attraction / accommodation operator or school Principal) through their local Council
- The "applicant pays" principle will apply and Roads Service will not incur any associated costs
- Roads Service recognises that this is a politically sensitive issue so as a pre-requisite any proposed bi-lingual sign must have local Council support
- Roads Service has no plans to provide bi-lingual signage generally for all road signs

The joint policy provides at paragraph 4.2.2.4 "In the interests of road safety, the names of tourist destinations should be as succinct as possible and shortened to a form acceptable to road signs." NITB's primary concern is with the visitor experience - to ensure that all tourist interpretation and signage is clear, consistent, not confusing and assists the visitor in understanding the importance of the destination. NITB has adopted the same approach to interpretative signing as that already jointly agreed with Roads Service for use on white-on-brown road traffic signs. This position is that all signs should be in English except where an attraction or facility is known in Irish (for example, Culturlann).

The consultation document notes that bi-lingual traffic signing is used throughout the Republic of Ireland and in some parts of the Highlands of Scotland. Roads Service is not aware of any formal research or data that assesses the impact of either. The consultation also notes that treating all signs bi-lingually would place an enormous burden on Roads Service in terms of finance, to replace the signs, and staff resource, to design the signs and manage their installation. This would be difficult to justify given that there is no operational need for the inclusion of other languages.

The draft DRD EQIA also concludes that there is potentially a negative impact on the religious belief and political opinions groupings and in particular those of a unionist persuasion. The proposal for bi-lingual traffic signs has the potential to impact on good relations between persons of different political opinion, however, DRD would maintain that the policy has been carefully developed in order to try and minimise these impacts by confining the use of bi-lingual traffic signing to discrete areas where there is a confirmed level of overall support for the signing.

The consultation also notes that DRD has also to be mindful of issues such as the ongoing difficulties with the presentation of Londonderry on traffic signs (paragraph 4.14) which may

indicate that a minority of the community, from both sides of the political divide may have difficulties with the draft policy proposal.

The issue of bi-lingual tourism signs has been mooted previously between Ministers and also discussed at the Assembly. When proposed, both Ministers for tourism, Dodds and Foster, have stated that they would not support the proposal.

NITB has seen no evidence from the visitor perspective that a change from this approach would have any economic merit or improve the tourist experience. Indeed, should both sides of the political divide have difficulties with bi-lingual signing the resultant defacing and damage of signs would be counterproductive from a tourism point of view.

I should be grateful if the Department would reflect NITB's views in its response to the Roads Service consultation.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Howard Hastings". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial 'H'.

HOWARD HASTINGS
Chairman

NEWRY & MOURNE COUNCIL MEETING RE BILINGUAL SIGNAGE 24 FEBRUARY 2012

PRESENT: Alan Clarke NITB
Stephen Bill NITB
Bob McMillen NITB

[REDACTED]

The council had a bi-lingual policy in place for a number of years and communities were able to request bi-lingual signage in their areas. There was a high number of Irish speakers in the area and Irish was incorporated into key attractions like Bagenal's Castle and the Ross Monument in Rostrevor.

Newry & Mourne Council feel visitors come because of the Irish language usage, there is a demand to provide signage and the Irish speaking community is growing day by day. Irish language signage is really integral to the tourism offer in the area and because of all this the signs that are in English only stand out as different and do not fit with the council's approach..

NITB explained it advised the department on policy issues and our survey work did not show a need for Irish signing from visitors. The line from successive DETI ministers where funding was concerned was signage in English only. However the Visitor Attitude Survey was Northern Ireland but going regional at the moment. Our main markets were also English speaking – NI / ROI / GB - but as the numbers of visitors grow we will need to think about the use of non-English communication.

Our experience in West Belfast was that language was not a big product motivator – the offer is wider. We have been working with reps from west Belfast to get them to think about stand out activities that were distinctive. This squares with the standout we are working on for Northern Ireland as regards the island offer as a whole – i.e. a focus on cultural and heritage products. Thus west Belfast can offer cultural activities and gaelic games which provide a distinctive offer in the Belfast context.

NITB would be happy to work with the council on these types of issues. It was also suggested that the council should consider other methods of communication taking account of technology where Irish could be incorporated by them.

It was noted that the council was also involved in two Culturlanns and there was also discussion about work being undertaken at Annalong at the harbour, mill and marine park. The council has also signed up with Louth for co-operation including tourism and a geopark. They will also be looking to carry out capital schemes.

→ Bob McMillen

[REDACTED]
27 February 2012



**northernireland
tourist board**

11 April 2012

Mr David Thomson
Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment
Netherleigh
Massey Avenue
BELFAST
BT4 2JP

Dear David

FUNDING POLICY ON TOURISM INTERPRETIVE SIGNAGE AND THE IRISH LANGUAGE

I have enclosed a copy of a letter sent to NITB by Daniel Holder on behalf of the Committee on the Administration of Justice. It raises an issue about bilingual signage that has come up before although from a different perspective.

You will recall that Newry & Mourne and Down Councils had raised the matter of bilingual signing on the St Patrick's Christian Heritage Trail and NITB had responded to the effect that we had no evidence demonstrating a tourism need for such an approach. The letter from the CAJ raises two matters. The first is the scope of the policy and legislative framework under which we are operating this approach and the second is clarification on Human Rights Compliance.

By way of clarification the current position is as follows.

Brown and White tourism directional road signs are the responsibility of DRD. They facilitate visitors finding their way to a named destination. A second set of signs often exists at the entrance to visitor facilities/amenities – these are not road signs but usually carry the name of the facility and possibly other information. A third set may exist inside the site taking the form of Interpretation panels and/or internal direction signs.

The matter is further complicated because the correspondence relates to our funding of third party tourism interpretative signing panels i.e. the signs other than road signs but the approach we have adopted is derived from that used for Brown and White road signs.

Additionally the CAJ letter refers to circumstances whereby in order to obtain NITB funding all signage and Interpretation panels must be in English except where the attraction is known in Irish. In fact the Board paper and decision related to the names of the sites i.e. the second type above, the context being if the site was known by its English name and signposted in English on road signs it should be named in the same way on arrival.

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Chairman: Howard Hastings Chief Executive: Alan Clarke



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The Board went on to note that while the current debate focused on names in Irish as well as English, as a wider issue the Ulster Scots dimension and other (especially European) languages also need to be considered.

NITB's view remained, irrespective of language, that the name of the site is signed by what it is known and operated as. However, that is not to say that going forward NITB would not consider supporting the use of other languages on wider interpretation where appropriate - for example, where an attraction can provide evidence that a significantly large proportion of visitors is from one specific country and that the provision of interpretation in another language would enhance and improve the visitor experience at that site.

NITB has previously funded interpretation in languages other than English. However if we understand the thrust of the CAJ letter correctly the implication is that there is an obligation to help promote minority languages in those countries which are signatories to the European Convention on Human Rights and the Framework Convention for National Minorities. If that is the case it raises the question of primacy of these treaties over what we believed was a reasonable and practical approach to providing clear information to visitors. It has also been propounded that in this context only Irish is designated a minority language as Ulster Scots is a dialect of English.

Following a request from Andrew Crawford in December 2010 about whether NITB was funding Irish signs, NITB provided the following advice to Private Office:

- *NITB as part of the St Patricks Christian Heritage Trail are completing interpretation at key sites to identify attractions and places and Interpret their relevance to the St Patricks Heritage Story.*
- *In terms of the visitor experience, NITB is keen to ensure that all tourist interpretation and signage is clear, not confusing and assists the visitor in understanding the importance of the destination.*
- *NITB has adopted its standard policy to interpretation which is already in place for white of brown road signs. This was agreed as a joint policy that all signs are in English except where an attraction is known in Irish for example Culturlann.*
- *Down District Council recently adopted a bi-lingual policy and wanted sites referred to in English and Irish. However, NITB informed the Council that our policy is all signs are in English except where an attraction is known in Irish.*
- *David Thomson was notified on the 16th December 2010 that there may be potential issue with interpretation on the St.Patricks Christian Heritage Trail.*
- *Councillors from Down have requested a meeting with NITB to discuss the matter in the New Year.*

On 11 January 2011 [REDACTED] advised Alan Clarke:

"Please note that the Minister has instructed that NITB policy as outlined in the attached paper (i.e. above) should be adhered to and that NITB should not consider funding bilingual signage outside of this policy."


Incidental to this Conor Murphy as DRD Minister initiated a consultation on creating a number of bilingual road signs. At the time (December 07) Minister Dodds responded to the Executive paper as follows. *"As Minister for Tourism I want to ensure all visitors are made to feel welcome in Northern Ireland. I have no evidence of any potential benefits associated with the inclusion of bilingual signage on tourism signs, nor is there any research to show that bilingual signage would be beneficial to growing the economy and attracting visitors to Northern Ireland. In addition it is clear that your proposal would run counter to a number of current policy objectives and goals in the draft Programme for Government. For these reasons I cannot support the proposal"*.

In July 08 Minister Foster wrote to Minister Murphy quoting Minister Dodds and adding: *"I share the views of my Ministerial colleague and as Minister of Tourism I am keen to ensure that all tourist signage is clear, not confusing and assists the visitor in finding their destination safely and effectively."*

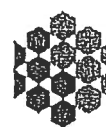
The current Minister Danny Kennedy announced on 29 March that he would not be implementing this bilingual proposal. His press release is attached as Annex A. I have also attached a copy of a minority language rights briefing paper produced by the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission.

NITB now finds itself involved in a politically sensitive issue where any decisions arrived at will have implications beyond NITB and tourism signposting. On this basis we would welcome policy direction, advice and guidance from the department on how to proceed.

Yours sincerely



ALAN CLARKE
Chief Executive



Copy Distribution List Below

From: David Thomson

Date: 3 May 2012

To: Alan Clarke

TOURISM INTERPRETIVE SIGNAGE AND THE IRISH LANGUAGE

Thank you for your letter of 11 April 2012 in which you requested advice and direction in respect of NITB's funding of tourism interpretive signage.

The Committee on the Administration of Justice (CAJ) letter highlights issues which relate to NITB activities and funding and I think it would be important that you seek your own advice, including any legal advice, in respect of the points raised in the CAJ letter.

The Council of Europe Charter on Regional and Minority Languages was ratified by the UK Government on 27 March 2001, and came into effect on 2 July 2001. It is designed to protect and promote regional and minority languages. Under Part II of the Charter NI Departments are required to promote, facilitate and encourage the use of regional and minority languages which includes both Irish and Ulster Scots. However, under Part III, which from a NI context only covers Irish, Departments are committed to:

- Accepting oral or written applications in Irish;
- Allowing and/or encouraging documents to be drafted in Irish;
- Allowing and/or encouraging debates in Irish in assemblies e.g. the Assembly and District Councils;
- Allowing or encouraging use or adoption of traditional and correct forms of place-names in Irish;
- Allowing Irish speakers to submit a request for public services in Irish;
- Providing translation or interpreting as required; and
- Allowing the use or adoption of family names in Irish.

These obligations on departments, which would probably cover departmental bodies conducting activities on behalf of departments, do not require that signs include the Irish language. Outside of this DETI does not have any explicit policy on signage and has, to date, not used bilingual or trilingual versions of the departmental logo, letterhead, public notices etc.

CAJ indicates that there should be objective and reasonable justification for any policy restriction on signage by NITB. Having signs in English only is not, in our view, a restriction. You should be sure you are clear on the justification of your signage and interpretation policy and I would suggest that NITB concentrates on the main objective which is to meet the needs of the visitor. It appears from the papers provided that the expectation of visitors generally is for signage to be in English. It seems to us that your policy of facilitating visitors, in conjunction with DRD, to find their way to a named destination and providing interpretation information at the tourism destination is a reasonable one. However, if you have not already done so I suggest that you undertake an equality screening exercise in the standard format on this policy.

More generally, on signage, your review of tourist signing has gone to the Minister and we await her comments.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D Thomson'.

DAVID THOMSON



northernireland
tourist board



Newry & Mourne District Council
Haughey House
Rampart Road
Greenbank Industrial Estate
Newry
BT34 2QU

July 2011

Dear 

BILINGUAL SIGNAGE

Thank you for your letter dated 4th July 2011 in relation to bilingual signage.

In terms of white on brown tourist traffic signage, there is in place a Tourist Signing in Northern Ireland policy jointly agreed between Roads Service within the Department for Regional Development (DRD) and the Northern Ireland Tourist Board (NITB) regarding this type of direction signs which is available on www.nitb.com. The main purpose of tourist signs is to guide visitors to their desired destination via the most appropriate route at the latter stages of their journey, particularly where destinations are hard to find. An equality screening analysis has been carried out on this policy. The analysis did not identify a differential impact on any of the groups listed in Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998.

The joint policy states at paragraph 4.2.2.4:

"In the interests of road safety, the names of tourist destinations should be as succinct as possible and shortened to form acceptable to Roads Service".

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NITB's primary concern is with the visitor experience – to ensure that all tourist signage, and interpretation, is clear, consistent, not confusing and assists the visitor in understanding the importance of the destination.

In line with the Tourist Signing in Northern Ireland policy, NITB has adopted the same approach to interpretive signing. That is, that all signs should be in English except where an attraction, destination or facility is known in Irish (for example, Culturlann). This approach has been ratified by the NITB Board and Arlene Foster MLA, Minister of Enterprise, Trade & Investment.

The issue of bilingual tourism signage has been raised previously between Ministers and also discussed at the Northern Ireland Assembly. When proposed, previous Minister for Enterprise, Trade & Investment Nigel Dodds OBE MP MLA and incumbent Minister Arlene Foster MLA have stated that they would not support the proposal.

In summary, NITB has seen no evidence from the visitor perspective that a change from this approach would have any economic merit or improve the tourist experience.

I trust this clarifies our position.

Yours sincerely,

ALAN CLARKE

Chief Executive

Northern Ireland Tourist Board

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COR/437/2012

FROM: Alan Clarke
Chief Executive
Northern Ireland Tourist Board

Date: 30 July 2012

Copy Distribution List Below

TO: 1. Andrew Crawford, Special Advisor
2. Arlene Foster MLA

Issue:

[REDACTED], Newry & Mourne District Council has written to Caral Ni Chuilin, Minister of Culture, Arts & Leisure regarding Bilingual information panels and signs for the St. Patrick's Trail Signature Project at Bagenal's Castle.

Timing: Routine.

Need for referral
To the Executive: N/A.

Presentational Issues: NITB has also received correspondence from the CAJ on this issue.

Freedom of Information: N/A.

Programme for Government
/PSA Implications: N/A.

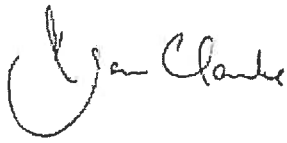
Financial Implications: N/A.

Legislation Implications: N/A.

Statutory Equality
Obligations: Fully compliant.

Recommendation: NITB is seeking clear policy advice from the Department on this matter about how to proceed

before providing part input or responding to the CAJ.



Alan Clarke
Chief Executive
Northern Ireland Tourist Board
Tel: 028 9044 1623
E-mail: a.clarke@nitb.com

Cc:

Alastair Ross MLA
David Sterling
Mike Thompson
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
Press Office
Tourism Policy Branch
Alan Clarke, NITB
Kathryn Thomson, NITB
Laura McCorry, NITB
Mark Hazelton, NITB
Aine Kearney, NITB
Stephen Bill, NITB
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
PCU, NITB
PR, NITB

BACKGROUND:

Current Approach re: Bilingual Interpretation Signs:

1. Following a request from Andrew Crawford, Special Advisor in December 2010 about whether NITB was funding Irish signs, NITB provided the following advice to Private Office:
 - NITB as part of the St Patricks Christian Heritage Trail are completing interpretation at key sites to identify attractions and places and interpret their relevance to the St Patricks Heritage Story.
 - In terms of the visitor experience, NITB is keen to ensure that all tourist interpretation and signage is clear, not confusing and assists the visitor in understanding the importance of the destination.
 - NITB has adopted its standard policy to interpretation which is already in place for white of brown road signs. This was agreed as a joint policy that all signs are in English except where an attraction is known in Irish for example Culturlann.
 - Down District Council recently adopted a bi-lingual policy and wanted sites referred to in English and Irish. However, NITB informed the Council that our policy is all signs are in English except where an attraction is known in Irish.
 - David Thomson was notified on the 16th December 2010 that there may be potential issue with interpretation on the St. Patricks Christian Heritage Trail.
2. On 11 January 2011 [REDACTED] to Arlene Foster MLA advised Alan Clarke:

"Please note that the Minister has instructed that NITB policy as outlined in the attached paper (i.e. above) should be adhered to and that NITB should not consider funding bilingual signage outside of this policy."

Challenge to Current Position from Committee for the Administration of Justice:

3. Newry & Mourne and Down District Councils requested a meeting with NITB in February and raised the matter of bilingual signing on the St Patrick's Christian Heritage Trail.
4. NITB responded as per the aforementioned policy approach.

5. Following this meeting, Daniel Holder, Deputy Director of the Committee for the Administration of Justice (CAJ) wrote to NITB on the 26th March 2012. In his letter he raised concern about NITB's 'unwritten' policy approach regarding bilingual interpretation signage.
6. He requested further information on the basis, scope and lawfulness of the "policy" – in particular in relation to compatibility with human rights law relating to non-discrimination on the grounds of language.
7. NITB subsequently wrote to David Thomson, Deputy Secretary requesting Departmental advice on the issue. He responded on 3 May 2012 suggesting that it was an issue for NITB to pursue and we might wish to seek our own legal advice.
8. NITB subsequently sought advice from our solicitors

Recommendation:

9. NITB are seeking clear policy advice from the Department on this matter about which way to proceed.
10. By way of supplementary material please find enclosed:
 - a. Letter from CAJ (**Annex A**)
 - b. Letter from David Thomson (**Annex B**)
 - c. Legal Advice from Carson McDowell. (**Annex C**)



**northernireland
tourist board**

17 October 2012

Mr David Thomson
Department of Enterprise Trade & Investment
Netherleigh
Massey Avenue
BELFAST
BT4 2JP

Dear David

BILINGUAL TOURIST INTERPRETATION SIGNAGE

I refer to the aforementioned issue in accordance with the Management Statement and Financial Memorandum at section 3.3.3 which provides the following:

"Tourism Policy Branch will inform NITB of relevant Government policy in a timely manner, advise on the interpretation of that policy if necessary; and issue specific guidance to NITB as necessary"

In that context, NITB received a Departmental direction on this issue on 13th September as follows "The Department considers that NITB should respond along the lines of the approach outlined in point (i) – [Do not formalise a policy, but stand over the current approach. This could involve the inclusion of a Human Rights Impact Assessment proforma into the current Equality Screening procedures going forward;]

This provides useful clarification following the Ministerial Direction received on 11th January 2011 that NITB should adhere to the following and "should not consider funding bilingual signage outside of this policy"

- NITB as part of the St Patrick's Christian Heritage Trail are completing interpretation at key sites to identify attractions and places and interpret their relevance to the St Patrick's Heritage Story.
- In terms of the visitor experience, NITB is keen to ensure that all tourist interpretation and signage is clear, not confusing and assists the visitor in understanding the importance of the destination.
- NITB has adopted its standard policy to interpretation which is already in place for white of brown road signs. This was agreed as a joint policy that all signs are in English except where an attraction is known in Irish, for example the Cultúrlann.

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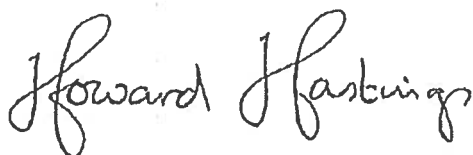


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We therefore accept the Ministerial Direction and subsequent Departmental direction and clarification.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Howard Hastings". The script is cursive and fluid, with the first name and last name clearly distinguishable.

HOWARD HASTINGS
CHAIRMAN

DAVID THOMSON
Deputy Secretary



Department of
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22 October 2012

Howard Hastings
Chairman
Northern Ireland Tourist Board
St Anne's Court
59 North Street
BELFAST
BT1 1NB

Dear Howard

BILINGUAL TOURIST INTERPRETATION SIGNAGE

Thank you for your letter of 17 October.

There are a number of points which I would like to clarify.

Under the Tourism (Northern Ireland) Order 1992, the Department has the power to issue directions of a general or specific nature as to the exercise by the Board of its functions. You use the word "direction" both in relation to Mike Thompson's letter of 13 September and the email from the Minister's Private Secretary on 11 January 2011. I do not consider either of these as formal "directions" and they should not be treated as such. Nevertheless, I accept that they are communications from the Department in which we sought to give advice.

In relation to the email of January 2011, it is useful to refer to the full wording, which was "Please note that the Minister has instructed that NITB policy as outlined in the attached paper should be adhered to and that NITB should not consider funding bilingual signage outside of this policy". The Minister was simply stating that NITB should keep to its existing policy and not stray outside it. That does not, in itself, stop the NITB from reconsidering any of its policies should it wish to do so, and approaching the Department with proposals for changes, should it consider these would be beneficial. But a move away from an existing policy should be a considered one, and not the result of ad-hoc action.

Since then there has been some further correspondence on the issue. Alan Clarke wrote to the Department again in July, having received some legal advice (which he shared with us), [REDACTED] In doing so, he raised a question around whether the NITB had a policy or an approach. We didn't consider it was useful to debate that point as what matters is what your practice is, regardless of what you call it.

The Department is supportive of NITB's current approach on bilingual or multilingual signage for the reasons set out in previous correspondence, which, from a general perspective appears proportionate and reasonable. However, we have not carried out a more detailed analysis or assessment and therefore, in responding, our advice was that NITB should continue with its existing approach, but should ensure that it has clearly set out its rationale for its policy position, if it has not already done so. We also suggested that, to provide reassurance, it would be prudent to assure yourselves that the position was appropriately equality screened and that some further Human Rights screening would provide added comfort.

If any further research or screening raises issues, then it would be reasonable for the NITB to review its policy approach. If, as a result, the NITB wishes to amend its current position then the case should be put to the Department for approval.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D Thomson'.

DAVID THOMSON



From: Mike Thompson
Date: 13 September 2012
To: Alan Clarke

Copy Distribution List Below

BILINGUAL TOURIST INTERPRETATION SIGNS

Background

1. You wrote to Minister Arlene Foster, MLA on 30 July 2012 seeking advice from the Department on issues relating to NITB's policy approach in respect of bilingual tourist interpretation signage.
2. Your submission advises that [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] Newry and Mourne District has written to the Minister for Culture, Arts and Leisure regarding bilingual panels and signs for the St Patrick's Trail Signature Project at Bagenal's Castle. Part input has been sought from NITB.
3. In addition, I am aware that NITB is in receipt of correspondence from the Committee for the Administration of Justice (CAJ) on the issue of NITB's 'policy' on bilingual interpretation signage. Information pertaining to the '*basis, scope and lawfulness*' of the policy, in particular in relation to '*compatibility with human rights law relating to non-discrimination on grounds of language*' has been sought by the CAJ.

Legal Advice

Recommendation

6. The Department considers that NITB should respond along the lines of the approach outlined [REDACTED] above.
7. In doing so, it will be important that NITB can clearly articulate the justification and rationale behind your current policy approach to bilingual interpretive signage.
8. NITB will also need to be able to demonstrate this approach has been subject to the necessary equality screening measures. Further, in view of the legal advice obtained, [REDACTED] I understand your legal advisers have indicated they will support you in this and, while NITB has responsibility for its equality functions, you can also access advice through the Department's Equality & Diversity Unit – stephen.wilson@detini.gov.uk.

Mike Thompson

MIKE THOMPSON

CC David Sterling (DETI)
David Thomson (DETI)
Kathryn Thomson (NITB)
Laura McCorry (NITB)
Aine Kearney (NITB)

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

From:

Sent:

[REDACTED]

25 October 2012 08:51

To:

private.office@dcalni.gov.uk

Subject:

DCAL COR Case 316/2012 re: BI – Lingual Signage – St Patricks Trail Signature Project.

Attachments:

COR 437 Cleared Part Input.docx

I refer to request for DETI part input to DCAL COR Case 316/2012 re: BI – Lingual Signage – St Patricks Trail Signature Project.

Please find attached part input.

[REDACTED]

Private Office
Department of Enterprise, Trade & Investment
Netherleigh
Massey Avenue
Belfast, BT4 2JP
Tel: 028 9052 9222 (ext: [REDACTED])
Textphone: 028 9052 9304
Web: www.detini.gov.uk

The new website for the European Sustainable Competitiveness Programme for NI is now available - visit www.eucompni.gov.uk



www.ni2012.com

Please consider the environment - do you really need to print this e-mail?

DETI PART INPUT DETI COR 437/2012 TO DCAL COR CASE 316/2012

1. The scope and basis of the Tourist Board's approach is based upon the Department of Regional Development's signage Policy. This policy provides that signs should be in English only except where the facility in question is known in another language such as Irish. An example of this is the Cultúrlann. The Tourist Board adopts this approach.
2. In addition NITB is keen to ensure that all tourist interpretation and signage is clear, not confusing and assists the visitor in understanding the importance of the destination.

[REDACTED]

From:

Sent: 25 October 2012 08:54
To: OFMDFM Private Office (ps.ministers@ofmdfmi.gov.uk)
Subject: OFMDFM COR Case 487/12 re: BI – Lingual Signage – St Patricks Trail Signature Project.
Attachments: COR 458 Cleared part input.docx

I refer to request for DETI part input to OFMDFM COR Case 487/2012 re: BI – Lingual Signage – St Patricks Trail Signature Project.

Please find attached part input.

[REDACTED]

Private Office
Department of Enterprise, Trade & Investment
Netherleigh
Massey Avenue
Belfast, BT4 2JP
Tel: 028 9052 9222 (ext: [REDACTED])
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DETI PART INPUT DETI COR 458/2012 TO OFMDFM COR CASE 487/2012

1. The scope and basis of the Tourist Board's approach is based upon the Department of Regional Development's signage Policy. This policy provides that signs should be in English only except where the facility in question is known in another language such as Irish. An example of this is the Cultúrlann. The Tourist Board adopts this approach.
2. In addition NITB is keen to ensure that all tourist interpretation and signage is clear, not confusing and assists the visitor in understanding the importance of the destination.



Mark

Thank you for me.

Re 2 (a) Bob McMillan,
Stephen Bell + I did
meet NMTB - did we do
a tour?

A. 30/1

northernireland

discovernorthernireland.com/convention

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Telephone: (028) 9023 1221 Chairman: Howard Hastings
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