

Irish Draft (2 April)

### **Position of the Irish Language in Northern Ireland**

In relation to the position of the Irish language in Northern Ireland, in furtherance of the general principles of parity of esteem and equality of treatment, it is agreed that the same degree of support and status be given to the Irish language as to Welsh in Wales. This will involve

- the grant of official status to the language, recognising its particular cultural importance and providing a basis for its use in official business;
- further support for the development of education through the Irish language, with criteria for school recognition which take account of the needs of these schools and internationally-accepted best practice with regard to minority language education. This would include financial support for a coordinating body for Irish language schools, similar to that at present provided to the CCMS in relation to maintained schools and to NICIE for the integrated sector;
- support for Irish language broadcasting, and facilitation of the availability of Telefís na Gaeilge; and
- enhanced budgetary support for Irish language and culture.