FROM: David Ferguson

DATE: 7 September 1998

TO: Party Representatives

**CONSULTATIVE MEETING ON 7 SEPTEMBER 1998** 

1. At its inaugural meeting on 1 July the Assembly resolved that "the First Minister (Designate) and Deputy First Minister (Designate) [should] consider and, after consultation, make proposals regarding the matters referred to the Assembly under Section 1(2) of the Northern Ireland (Elections) Act 1998 and any other matter connected with the future business of the Assembly and report to the Assembly by 14 September

**PS/First Minister** 

Mr Sweeney

Mr Campbell Mr Logue

**PS/Deputy First Minister** 

CC:

1998".

- 2. The matters referred to the Assembly were:
  - basic structures, including agreement on the number of Ministerial posts and the distribution of Executive responsibilities between those posts;

 preparations for establishing the British-Irish Council and the North/South Ministerial Council and associated implementation bodies;

- the resolution of Standing Orders and working practices; and
- the establishment of the 'consultative Civic Forum'.
- 3. The Assembly has set up a committee to look at standing orders. Separately, the First and Deputy First Ministers have been considering the other matters which have been referred and have received from officials the attached papers on Departmental structures, North/South cooperation, the British-Irish Council and the Civic Forum to assist their deliberations.

4. The First and Deputy First Ministers have not formed any views, individually or jointly, on any of the material, so it should not be construed as necessarily reflecting their position on the various issues under consideration. Before reporting to the Assembly, however, they felt it would be useful to use the papers as the basis for consultation and discussion on the matters referred, in accordance with the resolution on 1 July. The papers are attached accordingly.

David Ferguson

DAVID FERGUSON Head of Support Office of the First and Deputy First Ministers (Designate)