

Shaun Quinn  
Chief Executive



4 February 2013

Mr Ted Mc Enery  
Clerk to the Committee  
Committee of Public Accounts  
Leinster House  
Dublin 2



Dear Mr Mc Enery

I refer to your letter of 24<sup>th</sup> January regarding recent developments at the Suffolk Street Tourist Information Office (TIO). The amalgamation of Dublin Tourism with Fáilte Ireland in January 2012 has required an on-going integration of the former Dublin Tourism tourist offices into those of our national TIO network. This has resulted in a number of efficiency gains for the taxpayer to date.

Please find answers to your specific questions as follows:

**1) The reason for this decision**

Based on changing visitor behaviour and international benchmarks, the Suffolk Street Tourism Information Office, as is currently configured, is not delivering the type of visitor information or assistance which our international competitors are providing in their capital cities. As seven out of ten of all our international visitors pass through Dublin, it is imperative that we provide a tourism information service that matches (and competes with) best international practice elsewhere.

Accordingly, we are actively exploring two possible options regarding Suffolk Street operations, one is to relocate, and the other is to invest in refurbishment and reconfiguration of the existing site. Either of these options will necessitate the withdrawal of the concession desks in Suffolk Street.

**2) The level of consultation that took place with affected third parties prior to the decision.**

We provided notice of our intention to terminate these arrangements at least three months in advance - with each third party body being consulted with during 2012 and informed that we would not be entering into a new commercial licence agreement with them in 2013. Further written confirmation was provided where requested.

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**the gathering**  
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[the.gatheringireland.com](http://the.gatheringireland.com)



**Fáilte Ireland**

National Tourism Development Authority

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***3) Whether there is a potential loss of revenue to Fáilte Ireland and whether any jobs have been put in jeopardy by this decision.***

Tourism in Dublin generates €1.2bn in revenue and supports thousands of jobs in the accommodation, hospitality and retail sectors. Future revenue and the sustainability of such employment are very much dependent on the capital city competing aggressively with other international competitor destinations – including the way we provide our visitor services. We need to ensure that we provide a more appropriate experience for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century visitor, incorporating greater digital media and consumer interaction.

We very much appreciate that the traditional concession desks provided a sales channel for those select third party bodies concerned, but please be assured that Fáilte Ireland is in a position to provide alternative channels for them and we will promote and sell all their approved tours through our e-ticketing platform where feasible.

I trust this clarifies the position.

Yours sincerely,

Shaun Quinn,  
Chief Executive.