

Department for Employment and Learning Board Meeting

5 August 2010

Board Room, Adelaide House

Present: Alan Shannon (Chair)
Catherine Bell
Andrew Hamilton
Fred Gray
Brian Scott

In attendance: Beverley Harrison
Sian McCleave (for item 2.2 only)
Roger Arneill (Minutes)

Apologies: Trevor Connolly

1. Minutes and Matters Arising from the Board Meeting held on 1 July 2010

- 1.1 The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed without amendment.
- 1.2 Dr. Scott suggested that the Board receive a regular update on the work the Department is taking forward on sustainable energy. Mrs. Bell agreed to establish a timeline for bringing this to the Board.

Action: Mrs. Bell to establish a timeline for updating the Board on the Department's work on sustainable energy.

2. Policy

2.1 Response to CSR: Options to Reduce Expenditure

2.1.1 Mr. Hamilton gave Board members information on the budget bids submitted to DFP for the next CSR period. He highlighted that bids fell in to the three main areas:

- Maintenance of Existing Services
- Increasing Productivity and Enhancing Skills
- Addressing Barriers and Supporting People

2.1.2 Mr. Hamilton also presented information on areas identified to consider reducing expenditure, but highlighted that these considerations were at a very early stage; options would be refined and presented to the Minister in due course.

2.1.3 The Board discussed various aspects of the bids, the options to reduce and the impact these reductions could have.

2.2 STEM Strategy

2.2.1 Miss. McCleave gave an overview of the work to date on establishing a strategy for the promotion of STEM subjects and careers. This has culminated in the Government Strategy – ‘Success through STEM’. She highlighted the key areas the Strategy considers and the proposed delivery structures which will incorporate both business and government interests. The Strategy was agreed by the Executive at its meeting on the 22nd of July; the next step is to launch a public consultation in late August.

2.2.2 The Board discussed the role business needs to play in promoting STEM and Miss. McCleave noted that a number of recommendations included in the Government Strategy refer to this. Mrs. Bell pointed out that there is an onus on businesses to make careers in their companies and industries attractive to students. She also noted that as part of the implementation of the Strategy, the NI Adviser on Skills would be asked to work with employers to increase the number of STEM placements available.

3. Finance and Human Resources and Corporate Services Update

3.1 Finance Report

- 3.1.1 **Risk Register** - Mr. Hamilton and Mrs. Bell gave an update on risks relevant to their areas of responsibility.
- 3.1.2 **June Management Accounts** – Mr. Hamilton gave an update on the June Management Accounts.
- 3.1.3 **Budget 2010 Update** – The content of this paper was covered at item 2.1.
- 3.1.4 **Account NI: Prompt Payment Performance** – This paper was noted without further discussion.

3.2 Human Resources and Corporate Services Update

- 3.2.1 The Board discussed the figures presented on attendance management and common trends in the types of illness reported. DEL has set an interim target against which performance will be measured until official targets are received from DFP. Current figures show the Department is meeting this interim target.
- 3.2.2 Updates on Workforce Planning and Learning and Development were noted without further discussion.

4. Formal Notings

- 4.1 The following papers were noted without further discussion:

- Customer Standards Monitoring Report Quarter 1 2010/11
- Information Access Requests during 2009/10 and Quarter 1 2010/11

- Central Management Branch Report on Departmental Performance
- Economic and Labour Market Brief

5. Any Other Business

- 5.1 A draft procedure for the Board to approve a paper by written procedure was tabled at the meeting. The procedure was agreed by the Board.