

**Department for Employment and Learning**  
**Senior Management Team Meeting**  
**26 November 2009**  
**Board Room, Adelaide House**

**Present:** Catherine Bell (Chair)  
Andrew Hamilton  
Patricia McAuley  
June Ingram  
Fergus Devitt  
Nuala Kerr  
Beverley Harrison  
Trevor Connolly  
John Baird  
Mary Mclvor

**Apologies:** Lucy Marten

**In attendance:** Angela McAllister (for item 2.1)  
Victor Dukelow (for item 2.2)  
Chris Andrews (for item 4.3)  
Roger Arneill (Minutes)

**1. Minutes and Summary Action Sheet from Senior Management Meeting on 29<sup>th</sup> October 2009**

- 1.1 The Minutes of the previous meeting were agreed.
- 1.2 The actions arising were agreed and progress was noted.

## **2. Policy**

### **2.1 Review of Tuition Fees and Student Support**

2.1.1 Mr. Devitt introduced Ms. McAllister to the meeting, thanking her and her team for their work on this review to date. He informed the meeting that the Independent Chair of the Review, Joanne Stuart, will meet the Minister and DEL Committee in December with a view to publishing the full report in February 2010 and subsequent public consultation.

2.1.2 Ms. McAllister outlined the options which had been considered, the recommendations which would be made to the Minister and the rationale for those.

2.1.3 The Senior Management Team discussed the potential impact of these recommendations.

2.1.4 Mrs. Bell thanked Angela for her work on the review and her presentation to the Senior Management Team.

### **2.2 Performance on PSA 2 indicators 5 and 7**

2.2.1 Mr. Dukelow highlighted that the targets set out in these indicators are:

- increase the proportion of the working age population who are qualified at skill level 2 and above to 80% by 2015;
- increase the proportion of the working age population who are qualified at skill level 3 and above to 60% by 2015.

He then reflected on current performance, making the point that the current trajectory was not sufficient to achieve these targets. In concluding his presentation, Mr. Dukelow highlighted a draft action plan which had been established by a sub-group of the Senior Management Team, which

- analyses the work which can be done to boost the current trajectory of attainment and sought the Senior Management Team's view on this.
- 2.2.2 The Senior Management Team discussed various groups the Department could target to upskill the working age population and boost attainment of level 2 qualifications.
- 2.2.3 Mrs. Bell thanked Mr. Dukelow, Mr. Hamilton and members of the Senior Management sub-group who had established this action plan and added that this is the beginning of a piece of work for the Department.
- 2.2.4 It was agreed that this item should be discussed at an Senior Management Meeting early next year to review progress and consider further.

**Action: DEL Secretariat to add this item to the SMT forward planner for February / March 2010.**

### **3. Finance and Corporate Service Reports**

#### **3.1 Finance Report**

- 3.1.1 **Risk Register:** Mr. Connolly invited relevant Directors to provide an update on risks within their division. Following discussion, it was agreed that a second page should be added to the risk register which details risks associated with achieving PSA targets.

**Action: Mr. Connolly to liaise with Directors to establish an additional risk register which details risks associated with achievement of PSA targets.**

- 3.1.2 **Issues Log:** No issues were reported.

- 3.1.3 **October Management Accounts:** Mr. Connolly updated the Senior Management Team on the October Management Accounts. The Team

discussed funding of back pay and how this will impact on each division. It was agreed that Mr. Hamilton, Ms. Harrison and Mr. Connolly would meet to establish estimates and report back to Directors.

**Action: Mr. Hamilton, Ms. Harrison and Mr. Connolly to meet and establish estimates of the effect of back pay on each division.**

### **3.2 Corporate Services Report**

3.2.1 Ms. Harrison invited Directors to raise any queries on the paper provided.

3.2.2 Following a question about the training use of the Centre for Applied Learning training budget, Ms. Harrison clarified that training is paid for at the beginning of the financial year, therefore no additional costs will be incurred by increased uptake in training courses.

3.2.3 The team discussed blended learning. Dr. McIvor, Ms. Harrison and Mrs. McAuley agreed to meet outside the meeting to share information on common problems in establishing a blended learning programme.

## **4. Papers and Formal Notings**

4.1 Dr. McIvor introduced Mr. Andrews to the meeting. Mr. Andrews gave an overview of Paper 4.3 – New FE Lecturer’s Qualification, this sets out the implementation arrangements for the Post Graduate Certificate in Education (Further Education) which has been introduced by the Department. Mrs. Bell stated that this was an excellent piece of work and noted credit to everyone who had been involved in establishing this qualification. She also informed the SMT about a similar piece of work which was being taken forward by Angela Whiteside (Quality and Performance Branch) with the University of Ulster for tutors in the work based learning sector.

4.2 Approval was given by the Senior Management Team to the roll out of the Careers Resource Centre in Ballymena subject to approval of the business case (ref: Paper 4.4 – Careers Resource Centres).

**5. Any Other Business**

5.1 Mrs. Bell informed the Senior Management Team that she had recently met with a panel including the First Minister, deputy First Minister and the Finance Minister to discuss PSA monitoring and recorded her thanks to everyone who was involved in providing briefing for this meeting.