

**Department for Employment and Learning Board Meeting**

**4 November 2010**

**Board Room, Adelaide House**

**Present:** Alan Shannon (Chair<sup>1</sup>)

Catherine Bell

Andrew Hamilton

Russel Griggs

Brian Scott

**In attendance:** Beverley Harrison

Trevor Connolly

Nuala Kerr (for item 1 – 3.3 only)

Victor Dukelow (for item 1 – 3.3 only)

Dave Rogers (for item 1 – 3.3)

June Ingram (for item 1 only)

Mary McIvor (for item 1 only)

Iain Greenway, DFP (for item 1 only)

Jim Lennon, DFP (for item 1 only)

Stanley Goudie, ETI (for item 3.1 only)

John Baird, ETI (for item 3.1 only)

Deirdre Gillespie, ETI (for item 3.1 only)

Barry O'Rourke, ETI (for item 3.1 only)

Roger Arneill (Minutes)

**1. Presentation on Geographical Information (GI)**

---

<sup>1</sup> Alan Shannon and Catherine Bell were unable to join the meeting until item 3.1. Andrew Hamilton chaired the meeting to this point.

- 1.1 Mr. Hamilton welcomed Mr. Greenway and Mr. Lennon to the meeting recording apologies from Mr. Shannon and Mrs. Bell who would be late due to attendance at a Ministerial engagement.
- 1.2 Mr. Greenway gave an overview of the function of GI and the benefits it can bring to the public sector in improving service delivery. He also gave information on the NI GI Strategy 2009 – 19 which has been endorsed by the Executive.
- 1.3 Mr. Lennon then gave examples of how GI has been used to inform policy decisions in the public sector and highlighted areas in which there may be potential for DEL to engage with GI.
- 1.4 Following discussion of the areas on which GI could be useful to DEL, Mr. Lennon confirmed that, at the Department's request, he could allocate a GI consultant to work with the Department to develop a study on a specific policy area.
- 1.5 Mr. Hamilton suggested that members of the Senior Management Team could consider where GI may be helpful to the Department and discuss with Mr. Lennon as appropriate. He concluded by thanking Mr. Greenway and Mr. Lennon for their presentation.

**Action: Senior Managers to consider potential for engagement with GI.**

## **2. Declaration on Conflicts of Interest / Minutes and Matters Arising from Board Meeting on 11 October 2010**

- 2.1 No conflicts of interest were declared.
- 2.2 The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed subject to two minor amendments.
- 2.3 There were no matters arising from the previous meeting.

**Action: Secretary to amend and publish the minutes of the previous meeting.**

### **3. Policy**

#### **3.1 Education and Training Inspectorate's Annual Report to DEL: as a subset of the Chief Inspector's Biennial Report (2008/10)**

- 3.1.1 Mr. Baird gave an overview of the work carried out by the ETI in relation to FE Colleges, Work Based Learning Providers and Steps to Work Providers.
- 3.1.2 Ms. Gillespie and Mr. O'Rourke gave detailed information on inspection outcomes and key themes emerging for FE Colleges and Training Providers respectively<sup>2</sup>.
- 3.1.3 The Board discussed benchmarking against past performance and the performance of colleges / training providers in other regions. The Inspectorate also highlighted the sharing of best practice between organisations.
- 3.1.4 Mrs. Kerr noted that the report has become an important piece of evidence when the Department considers re-contracting training providers adding that; as DEL sets the price for delivery of training, the consideration of contracts is driven by quality and the need for organisations to demonstrate their ability to deliver at least a satisfactory standard.
- 3.1.5 Mr. Goudie concluded by thanking the Board for the opportunity to provide an update on the annual report.

#### **3.2 Delivering Success Through Excellence: An Analysis of the Quality and Performance of DEL Programmes and Provision**

- 3.2.1 Mr. Dukelow gave a presentation to the Board which highlighted the key points from the 'Delivering Success Through Excellence' report.

---

<sup>2</sup> Mr. Shannon and Mrs. Bell joined the meeting during this presentation.

- 3.2.2 Professor Griggs suggested that the report could be enhanced by developing information on the challenges the report identifies. Mr. Dukelow responded saying that the report was quantitative, the qualitative information will be developed as a next step.
- 3.2.3 It was agreed that Professor Griggs should discuss the provision of qualitative information with Mr. Dukelow and Mr. Rogers as this analysis is developed further.

**Action: Secretary to arrange a meeting between Professor Griggs, Mr. Dukelow and Mr. Rogers.**

### **3.3 Annual Report from Quality and Performance Branch**

- 3.3.1 Mrs. Whiteside and Mr. Reynolds gave an overview of the findings of Quality and Performance Branch's inspection activities.
- 3.3.2 The Board discussed the key challenges in improving the quality and performance of colleges and training providers going forward, particularly emphasising the focus on quality to training providers and the bedding down of the new structures in further education.
- 3.3.3 Mr. Shannon thanked Mrs. Whiteside and Mr. Reynolds for their ongoing work and the presentation to the Board.

### **3.4 Consideration of a Draft Consultation Document on the Development of a Higher Education Strategy for Northern Ireland**

- 3.4.1 Mr. Devitt introduced the Draft Consultation and sought a view from the Board on the structure and balance of the document.
- 3.4.2 The Board discussed the document and gave several suggestions which Mr. Devitt and Mr. Hamilton will consider. Subject to these considerations, the Board approved the Draft Consultation for presentation to the Minister.

**Action: Mr. Hamilton and Mr. Devitt to consider the Board's suggestions and submit the Draft Consultation to the Minister for approval via Sir Graeme Davies.**

### **3.5 DEL Information Security and Assurance Review**

3.5.1 Ms. Harrison gave an overview of plans to conduct a formal and informal review of the Department's compliance with Information Assurance legislation and good practice.

3.5.2 The Board agreed to the review proposed and noted the Information Security and Assurance Report.

## **4. Finance and Human Resources and Corporate Services Report**

### **4.1 Budget 2010 and the Finance Report**

4.1.1 Mr. Hamilton updated Board Members on the in-year financial position, highlighted the current financial risks and the action being taken to manage financial pressures.

4.1.2 The Board discussed the latest information on the next year's budget allocation and the challenges this may present.

4.1.3 Mrs. Bell and Mr Hamilton provided an update on the Risk Register.

4.1.4 All other finance papers were noted without further discussion.

### **4.2 Human Resources and Corporate Services Report**

4.2.1 The Human Resources and Corporate Services Report was noted without further discussion.

## **5. Formal Notings**

5.1 The papers presented were noted without further discussion.

**6. Any Other Business**

6.1 No further items were raised.