

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE ESCHOOLS PROJECT BOARD HELD ON
WEDNESDAY 3RD MARCH, 2010 10.00AM AT
BOARDROOM, C2K HEADQUARTERS, ASHFIELD BOYS HIGH SCHOOL, HOLYWOOD ROAD, BELFAST**

PRESENT:

Barry Mulholland	(WELB) (Chairman)
Roy Beattie	(eSchools Project Director)
Bruce Fitzsimons	(DE)
Karen McCullough	(DE)
Jack Ringland	(C2k)
Jimmy Stewart	(C2k)
Catherine Barr	(C2k) (Secretary)
David Cowan	(C2k)
Owen Harkin	(WELB)
Pat O'Connor	(SEELB)
Barry O'Rourke	(ETI)
Gordon Jackson	(BELB)
Gerry Byrne	(ESA)
Austin Millar	(Ballyclare High School)

155. APOLOGIES

Cyril King (SEELB)

156. MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

The minutes of the last meeting were reviewed and agreed as an accurate account of the meeting.

157. MATTERS ARISING

Minute 132

An ETI member nomination has been received for the BCWG, however the name of the nominee is still outstanding. Mrs Barr has contacted Mr O'Rourke for an update. Mr. Rourke will confirm a nominee before the next meeting of the Business Change Working Group, provisionally scheduled for 25th March, 2010.

Minute 151

DE to provide an update on Effective Use of Data. Ms. McCullough advised that the Effective Use of Data Action Plan has been submitted to the Education Minister and is under review. Ms. McCullough hopes to provide a status update at the next Project Board meeting.

158. IMPLEMENTATION UPDATE

Mrs Barr presented an overview of the current implementation status. The key areas discussed were:-

- School Report Pack (non examination reports)
- Examination Reports
- Power User Access
- Power User Reports
- EMS Integration
- Census
- Roadmap

Ms O'Connor queried how schools currently access eSchools reports. Mrs Barr advised that a desktop icon is used to access the eSchools portal, where both validation and monthly report packs are available for download by authorised users in the school.

Mrs Barr requested that two power users from each ELB be identified as soon as possible. These users will assist with power user report testing. Ms O'Connor nominated Cyril King as one of the SEELB power users.

ACTION: Mrs Barr to email Senior Education Officers, to request power user nominations.

Ms McCullough reminded members of the Code of Practice for Official Statistics and will review the guidelines in relation to eSchools power user access.

Ms O'Connor highlighted the emergence of potential data quality issues, resulting from the ongoing EMS UPN update process. It was recognised that an extensive data quality exercise is required upon completion of the UPN update, to compare data held within SIMS and EMS. UPN updates in EMS are expected to be completed by the end of March 2010. Schools will be notified of any differences via the weekly validation process.

Ms O'Connor also requested notes outlining the technical aspect of the EMS data extraction process.

ACTION: C2k to issue technical documentation to Ms O'Connor

Mr Stewart enquired if an additional parallel SIMS and eSchools census development would be required for 2011. This is currently under review.

Mr Mulholland asked if the monthly report packs contained references to special and Irish medium units. Ms McCullough also asked if nursery units were included in the reports. Mrs Barr explained stated that information relating to nursery, special and Irish medium units was not currently included in the initial versions of the monthly report packs. She undertook to conduct research with a view to inclusion in future reports.

ACTION: Mrs Barr to investigate the possible inclusion of information relating to Nursery, Special and Irish Medium units in future reports.

Mr Mulholland enquired if it was possible to quantify the usage of the monthly report packs by school.

ACTION: C2k to provide a usage report at the next Project Board meeting.

159. PROJECT PLAN

Mrs Barr went on to deliver a high level overview of the eSchools Project Plan, highlighting the key activities scheduled between March – June 2010.

Mr Beattie outlined the intended approach of the OGC Gateway 5 Review and Post Project Evaluations procedures.

It was suggested that a meeting between DE and eSchools should be arranged to review DFP requirements in relation to Post Project Evaluation. Furthermore, Mr Stewart stated that it would be helpful to also include C2k in these discussions.

ACTION: Mr Beattie, Mr. Stewart and Mr Fitzsimons to arrange a meeting to review Post Project Evaluations

160. RISK REGISTER

Mr Beattie presented the latest version of the eSchools risk register (version 2.6) with suggested updates for approval. The agreed updates are as follows:-

- Risks 3, 4 and 10 have now been removed.
- Risk 2 was updated to include a reference to the proposed Convergence Strategy. The degree of impact for Risk 2 was increased from 1 to 3, giving a current risk status of 15.
- Risk 5 was amended to reduce the likelihood to 2 and the risk management actions will also be updated.
- Risk 11 will be reviewed by the ELBs, with a view to removal at a later stage.
- Risk 12 was amended to reduce the likelihood to 3 and the degree of impact to 4, giving a current risk status of 12.

ACTION: Mrs Barr to update and issue Risk Register v2.7 to the group

Mr Stewart delivered an update in relation to the electronic transfer of the UPN between Primary to Post Primary. He identified the following 3 areas designed to support this transfer:-

1. C2k Support Programme under development for Primary and Post Primary schools. This will provide guidance to schools in relation to the UPN transfer and C2k support staff will personally visit every primary school
2. Updating of UPN related DENI circulars to include reference to the Primary to Post Primary electronic UPN transfer process
3. Future embedding of the electronic UPN transfer process into any new transfer process that may develop out of the proposed Convergence Strategy.

161. FINANCIAL REPORT

Mr Ringland tabled an Estimated Outturn Report. He referred to the remaining milestones to be signed off. Milestone 9 related to Full Release acceptance testing with a payment of £36K due on satisfactory sign-off. The eSchools Team had indicated that this was expected to be signed off before the end of the financial year. Quickly following this, Milestone 10a (solution fully operational) was then expected to be signed off and this would trigger achievement of contractual Service Commencement and payment of the monthly service charge from April. He confirmed that following on from the previous meeting, where it was flagged that Milestone 10b Contract Performance Point may not to be signed off by the end of the financial year, the associated funding of £745k had been released back to DE by WELB with a request that this be reinstated as an inescapable commitment in 2010/11. This was currently with DE to confirm that the funding would be reinstated in 2010/11.

Mr Ringland went on to refer to the impact of delay in relation to Milestone 10a (Service Commencement and the fact that the payment of the monthly charge had not yet commenced, meant that a revenue surplus of £400k had accrued. However, as the monthly charge was payable for 5 years from the Service Commencement Date, equivalent funding would be required in the last financial year of the contract. This had already been discussed with DE, in light of the fact that DE treated the revenue allocation for both eSchools and C2k as a single allocation, and DE had confirmed that the surplus funding could be retained to meet needs within the wider C2k budget. The required funding could then be released from the C2k budget in the final year of the eSchools contract. The delay in moving to the operational phase had also resulted in an underspend on service enhancements which contributed to the overall revenue surplus.

162. DATA SHARING PROTOCOL

Mr Beattie reported that the Chief Administration Officers had all signed up to the Data Sharing Protocol on behalf of the 5 Education and Library Boards. Members agreed that the 2003 Education Order entitles the education service to use the data as defined in the DENI Circular. Mr Beattie expressed the view that the Data Sharing Protocol strengthens the position of the service in terms of effectively implementing good practice when sharing information and asked the Department to give due consideration as to whether or not the protocol was appropriate in their case.

It was agreed that a meeting should be arranged between ELBs and DE, to review existing data transfers between education stakeholders.

ACTION: Ms McCullough to arrange the ELB and DE security meeting

ACTION: Mr Mulholland to liaise with Chief Executives, to propose Nigel McCosker as the ELB representative at this meeting.

163. GATEWAY 4 REVIEW 4

Mr Beattie updated the group in relation to Recommendation 7 of the Gateway 4 Review which was conducted during the summer of 2009.

Recommendation 7 states **“The Project Board consider the possibility of holding more than one Gateway Review 4 (Readiness for Service) at key points during the next phase. (Recommended)”**

Mr Beattie suggested that further Gateway 4 reviews could be held at key points during future eSchools development phases. The decision to hold further Gateway 4 reviews would be taken by the eSchools Project Board at an appropriate time, based upon the nature of the development. This approach was supported in principle by the Project Board.

164. ANY OTHER BUSINESS
None

165. DATE OF NEXT MEETING
Date to be agreed.