

**MINUTES OF THE C2K PROJECT BOARD MEETING HELD AT C2K HEADQUARTERS
THURSDAY 23TH SEPTEMBER 2010**

Present:

| | |
|-----------------|---|
| Mr B Mulholland | WELB (Chair) |
| Mr P Monaghan | St Oliver Plunkett Primary School (Chair) |
| Mr R Hanna | CCEA |
| Mrs S Lawlor | DE |
| Mrs A Conaty | DE |
| Mr G Byrne | ESA |
| Mr J Mullen | ETI |

In Attendance:

| | |
|---------------|--------------------------------------|
| Mr J Stewart | C2k Director |
| Mr J Ringland | C2k Contracts & Finance Manager, C2k |
| Mr H Crossey | PwC |
| Mrs G Hall | (Secretary) |

Apologies:

| | |
|--------------|-------|
| Dr R Harper | NEELB |
| Mr F Devenny | CCMS |
| Mr E McArdle | GTCNI |

834 MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 24TH JUNE 2010

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

Mr Monaghan chaired the meeting for the first half hour.

835 MATTERS ARISING

Minute 823

Customer Satisfaction Survey

The Director gave an update on the Customer Satisfaction Survey which has now been completed on the basis of contract performance aspects only and the analysis to develop the Satisfaction Index is underway. The results of this analysis will be presented to the Project Board at the next meeting.

Minute 824

Project Assurance Team

The Director advised that the PAT has been established with Mr Pat McGuigan and Mr Pat Hughes, under the chairmanship of Mr Paddy Mackey and the initial meeting takes place on 5th October. On behalf of Mr Mulholland, the Director invited further nominations from the Project Board which should go to Mr Paddy Mackey.

Minute 824

ETI Report on Learning Platforms

The Director advised that the ETI review of its Report on Learning Platforms has now been published and is on the ETI website. He noted that he will publish it to the members' secure area of the C2k Intranet for members' information and for review at a future meeting. The Director stated that the report was largely positive in respect of LearningNI development work undertaken by Hewlett Packard. Mr Mullen reported that he had spoken to the Director about a school (Wallace High School) for C2k to work with and this will be

progressed by Mary Kane as part of ongoing engagements with stakeholders. The Director noted that, in the meantime, work which has been ongoing with Methodist College will continue.

836 Strategic Outline Case (SOC) FOR LOT 6 REPLACEMENT

The Director welcomed Mr Crossey, strategic advisor to the EN(ni) procurement process, and invited him to present on the current draft of the SOC for Lot 6 replacement which had potential implications for the EN(ni) service. The Director explained that Lot 6 is the service for Primary schools which delivers local infrastructure and services and the contract, which is with Northgate, expires in November 2011. He was keen, therefore, to progress options to replace the contract for those services.

Mr Crossey presented a range of options to members. (His presentation is published on the members' area of the C2k secure intranet). He noted that these should undergo a high level assessment in preparation for the development of an Outline Business Case OBC.

Some detailed discussion took place on the options as presented by Mr Crossey. Mr Hanna queried the affordability of each option. Mr Crossey advised that the value for money and affordability assessment will be part of the OBC process and the purpose of the SOC was to obtain approval to proceed on the basis of business need and to identify those options to undergo more detailed OBC assessment.

Ms Conaty questioned if bigger contracts would discourage smaller businesses in NI from bidding. The Director highlighted the broad scope of the EN(ni) service requirement and its flexibility to give local suppliers the opportunity to provide sub-contracted services or 3rd party products that can be integrated into the service. The chair felt that it was important to be aware of what small businesses can offer.

The Director asked members to review the published draft of the SOC and to feed back their comments to him. In the interests of obtaining authority to proceed to the OBC stage, bearing in mind the timescales and the need to have a strategy underway well in advance of the expiry of the initial term of the Lot 6 contract in November 2011, he would, in parallel, formally submit a copy of the SOC to DE for consideration. It was agreed to review any members' comments on the SOC at the next meeting. This way forward was agreed by members.

Action 1: The Director to communicate to all members of the Project Board that the SOC is available for their review in their secure area of the Intranet.

Mr Mulholland arrived at the meeting and resumed as chair.

Mr Crossey left the meeting at this point.

837 HIGHLIGHT REPORT

A copy of the C2k Highlight Report had been circulated for members' information. The Director provided a further update to members on the following areas:

Curricular Services

The Director reported that LNI developments undertaken as part of the Lot 5 extension are now almost complete. To complement that work, a programme of LNI support activities, particularly with the Primary sector, to help raise awareness and levels of usage, will take

place over the coming months.

MIS

The Director reported that the DE Census software is installed in schools and ready for use.

The Director advised that C2k will be working with schools in the autumn to benchmark and identify what usage is currently being made of the Personnel module to support a RAP Target issued to all ELBs. The Director stated that, at present, the eSchools data warehouse collects teaching information from the SIMS system so it is likely that schools would be extensively using the module to record information about their teaching staff but eSchools does not collect information on non-teaching staff at present.

Development of Help Desk services (online)

The Director reported on a new development in online Help Desk services, which will allow online logging and monitoring of calls by users. The Director hoped this would be a substantial enhancement of the Help Desk service and noted that its impact on schools will be monitored.

Enhancement of VC services

A rollout planned for autumn is the enhancement of the video conferencing suite, with the Marratech virtual classroom being replaced by an equivalent service from Elluminate. The Elluminate service uses less bandwidth and so the restrictions that are currently placed on schools in terms of the number of video conferences that can be run concurrently will be removed.

In answer to a query from Mr Monaghan, the Director stated that as Marratech had been purchased by Google no further development path or maintenance programme was available. HP, therefore, had proposed the new product on the basis that it will provide a maintained solution. The Director advised that there are no additional costs to the service but there would be some resource implications for retraining.

Retirement of Senior Managers

The Director reported that there are two senior managers at C2k who have retired or indicated their intention to retire: Mr Roy Beattie, Integration and Development Director, retired at the end of August and Mr Paddy Maguire, Service Delivery Manager, intends to retire at the end of October. The Director indicated his intention to progress the replacement of these managers within the terms of the Vacancy Control process.

General

Mrs Conaty requested that, where possible, dates be included against activities targeted for completion within any reporting period.

Mr Mullen requested an update on the testing of Apple Macs. The Director stated that Apple Macs can be integrated with the C2k system at present in terms of connection to the service and accessing the internet. There is also software available for the Mac which allows it to be run in parallel with the Windows Operating System. The Director advised that C2k is currently exploring with Northgate developments which would allow the service provider to offer a Mac as a Managed Service product as opposed to a connected device.

838 FINANCE REPORT

- **Quarterly update**

Mr Ringland circulated a copy of the C2k Resource Budget 2010/11 Monitoring Report. He reported that this was the first external Financial Report this year following approval of this year's Finance Scheme as the Western Board had not requested an update until the meeting of 6th October. He stated that there was not much change against the original expected spend. He drew attention to the InCAS monies that were recouped from CEM following last year's errors. Because of retirements, etc, there should be a saving in salary costs and some small savings in other areas with a potential overall saving in the region of £80,000. Mr Ringland expected that this would contribute to the Lot 3 extension in terms of putting much-needed additional storage in place and after discussions with Northgate are complete, Mr Ringland would expect to put a firm position to the Project Board at the next meeting. He expected that C2k would be on budget this year.

- **Change Control Report**

Mr Ringland noted that the consensus at the previous Project Board meeting was for a list of all approved change controls to be viewed by the Project Board. He circulated a list of all change controls that have been approved for this financial year. He noted that as none were in excess of £50,000 they had not needed Project Board approval. Mr Ringland noted the substantial costs associated with school moves (which would include new schools, school mergers, major changes to premises, etc) and that these costs were inescapable and reduced scope for real service enhancement.

Mr Ringland indicated that there was a detailed change control note and rigorous internal assessment and approval behind each listed change control. He pointed out that there was not necessarily a correlation between these change control costs and the change control costs in the Monitoring Report due to timing of delivery and accrual accounting treatment.

The Director noted that the information would be added to members' secure Intranet area for review and any further information needed could be provided at the next meeting. He also asked members if they would prefer the information in a different format or lay out.

Mr Hanna was content with the layout and felt the information at that level of detail was very helpful. He questioned if a cumulative change control could exceed the threshold. Mr Ringland stated that there would be no intention to split change controls and offered to provide another level of detail for any on the list.

Mrs Conaty also found the change control information very helpful.

The chair thanked Mr Ringland for the update.

Mrs Lawlor left the meeting at this point.

839 PROCURMENT UPDATES

- **InCAS**

The Director provided an update on the InCAS contractual position. Following the errors in the software in the 2009 assessment, and subsequent recommendations from a KPMG report and Working Group, it had been agreed with DE and CCEA to put in place an initial three month Licence Agreement extension from July 2010, to enable CCEA to conduct a trialling exercise with 13 schools and to seek a number of assurances from CEM regarding software testing and quality assurance. During this period, C2k and CCEA would continue to engage with CEM with a view to further extending the contract on a Services Agreement

basis, incorporating the recommendations particularly in relation to service levels, quality assurance and independent audit. Any extension beyond October 2010 would be dependent on a successful outcome to the trialling exercise and CCEA having received assurances sought.

The Director stated that the most recent discussions with CEM have suggested that they do not feel that they are ready to sign up to a service agreement in time for the deadline of 19th October. Therefore, the position that is currently being discussed with CEM, having been agreed in principle by CCEA and DE and subject to a successful outcome to the trialling, is to extend the Licence Agreement for a further three months whilst terms are agreed for Services Agreement for the remainder of the permitted extension period (until July 1012 at latest). Mr Ringland pointed out that this is not the strategy that was agreed with CEM in July but CEM now feel that they do not have sufficient time to put a services agreement in place, even though there has been engagement on key terms since May and draft contract documentation has been with them since July. He expressed concern that CEM's recently declared position with regard to the need for higher QA, auditing, etc, of the service, would require a bespoke team at CEM and the estimated license cost is £705,000 per year, which is a 70% increase on the per annum cost of the original licensing agreement for a two year extension. He advised that it might be difficult, therefore, to retain those non-negotiable requirements which arose from the Working Group and the KPMG report around what should be put into a service agreement at a reasonable cost.

Mr Ringland reiterated that going forward with the further extension in October depends on the successful outcome of trialling and adequate assurances being received by CCEA. In discussion, CCEA, DE and C2k had agreed that, there should be a stipulation in the further three month extension that payment would be in arrears and with an option for early termination, should failure arise, with payment on a pro-rata basis up to the point when the failure arose. This was being pursued with CEM.

Mr Monaghan questioned if CEM felt that the options presented to them were very narrow in terms of flexibility. The chair questioned if CEM accept that their failure last year has dented confidence in their service in schools. Mr Hanna noted that CEM accept that there were errors in the software last year.

Mr Monaghan asked if NfER was used as a computer based assessment. He was of the view that alternative systems should be reviewed in light of the InCAS errors last year. The chair advised that NfER is used in a number of schools in the Western area but this may not be the case in other board areas. Mr Hanna pointed out that DE has specified InCAS as the assessment tool for NI.

Mr Hanna advised that he wrote to DE raising with Katrina Godfrey the urgent need to progress the procurement of the next generation of computer assessment tools and the need for a CoPE to be identified to take forward the procurement process on behalf of CCEA and DE. He noted that CCEA has drawn up the assessment specification for procurement in preparation for this and that DE were progressing an internal business case. He stated that it would not be possible to deliver a new computer based assessment tool along with training and support within the timescales for 2011. Mr Ringland advised that the extension can only run to July 2012.

- **EN(ni)**

Mr Ringland presented a status report on the procurement of EN(ni) to the Project Board. He reported that the Pre-qualification stage is complete with five prospective bidders having met the criteria to proceed to the next stage. Requests to submit outline proposals were issued on 2nd September with submissions expected by 15th October. Clarification

meetings with the prospective bidders are underway. He noted that the revised timetable indicates that award of contract will be in autumn 2011.

Mr Ringland then gave an overview of the existing contracts timeline. The Capita MIS licence runs through to March 2012, which should provide some scope for transition if a new MIS solution is procured. As already discussed, the Lot 6 initial contract expires in November 2011, with a two year extension option. The SOC for Lot 6 replacement, which is being taken forward, is evaluating options for the ongoing provision of these services. The scoping of EN(ni) OJEU will enable Lot 6 to be assimilated into the new contract should that be the preferred way forward agreed at the OBC approval stage.

- **Lot 3 extension**

Mr Ringland indicated that EN(ni) covers the services provided under Lot 3 (Post Primary Schools' LAN Services), Lot 5 (WAN Services) and MIS. With regard to Lot 3, Mr Ringland indicated that the extension is in place until November 2010, with further extension being necessary to facilitate the completion of this procurement. He indicated that the technical and commercial discussions for the extension are already well advanced with Northgate and the only change that will need to be made to the Lot 3 service in order to maintain the quality of the service and service levels, etc, is to upgrade the storage capacity within the local network solution within Post primary and Special schools. He advised that the expectation in the commercial discussions with Northgate is that the upgrade will be put in place within the funding that is already in the budget for this year and then it will revert to a lower service charge for the remainder of the extension in the next financial year.

With regard to Lot 5, Mr Ringland advised that the extension is in place until June 2011, when a further short extension is likely to be required to facilitate completion of EN(ni) procurement and discussions have already been initiated with HP.

Mr Ringland left the meeting at this point.

840 DE/WELB STRATEGIC STOCKTAKE OF C2K

A paper was circulated to members which covered a summary of actions that came out of the strategic stocktake of C2k undertaken by WELB Internal Audit and DE. It looked at the governance arrangements around the C2k services.

With regard to the actions specific to C2k, the Director reported on the following:

Action 7.4 Procedures to monitor change controls have already been agreed with the Project Board and put in place.

Action 7.6 It was agreed that the chair should bring to the attention of Project Board members the matter of attendance at meetings. Mrs Conaty also undertook to raise this at DE Governance and Accountability meetings at a future date.

Action 2: The chair to communicate to Project Board members the importance of attendance at Project Board meetings.

Action 7.10 The Director referred to the establishment of the Senior User Forum and a number of ad hoc user groups established particularly to support the EN(ni) procurement. He stated that the Project Board will continue to monitor that need and will create groups as appropriate. Mr Monaghan asked if it would be worthwhile for User Groups to give presentations to the Project Board and the Director agreed with this proposal.

Action 7.17 The Director noted that C2k will review its communications strategy and report to the Project Board.

Mrs Conaty referred to Recommendation 6 for DE and questioned if there was any requirement on the C2k Service Providers to ensure that the system was easy to use. The Director referred to the Lot 3 and Lot 5 customer satisfaction survey which looked at usability issues. He advised that with regard to the payment mechanism in EN(ni), options will be explored to place a responsibility for service uptake on the Service Provider.

Mr Mulholland left the meeting at this point and Mr Monaghan resumed as chair.

841 STORAGE OF SCHOOL DATA IN THE EVENT OF CLOSURE

The Director had circulated a paper in respect of an issue that was raised within C2k around who owns data that results from school closures or mergers and that has no longer got a relevant data owner in the school system.

Mr Byrne noted that he met yesterday with Mr Chris Stewart at DE, who has responsibility for Data Protection, and he highlighted the need for clarity on this issue also.

The Director recommended that C2k could create a more secure holding space for this data (at present it is held on DVD). He also undertook to write to Joint Legal Services for advice on the matter.

Action 3: The Director will seek clarification and advice from Joint Legal Service regarding data ownership in the event of school closures or mergers. He will copy in Mr Chris Stewart at DE.

842 SECURITY UPDATE

The Director referred to an issue raised by Mrs Lawlor at the end of August in respect of a security breach in the system where a Primary school was able to get unfiltered access to the internet and teachers were able to access Sparklebox. This occurred before the start of the new term on 26th August. The Director explained that the breach was caused by a Microsoft software failure. He advised that the vulnerability is now closed and it is not something that could occur again even if the software failed. HP checked their records for the past year and did not identify any other occurrence of this issue.

Grey Filtering

The Director advised that there are certain internet sites that teachers would like to access but that are blocked at present. He noted that the Amber category allows access to sites at the discretion of schools. The Director noted that there were increased requests for access to gaming sites and some other social networking sites, some of the requests in the context of the requirements for CCEA, Edexcel and others, who were putting in place new Exam regimes and were therefore, encouraging the school to explore gaming sites. The Director noted that there are issues around some gaming tools and in the past gaming was always in the Red category. C2k is now working with CCEA and other authorities so that when a school requests the unblocking of a website for use by pupils, that request should be supported by the identification of a sponsor, for example, CCEA, as part of the request.

To facilitate teacher access C2k has, recently, run a Grey Filtering pilot with a number of schools to open up sites such as uTube for access by teachers. The Director sought the Board's approval to offer this enhanced service to all schools provided they are prepared to sign up to an enhanced Acceptable Use Policy.

Mr Monaghan was content with this proposal as it was a service restricted to teachers. The Director noted that the Minister has a particular interest in child protection and he would, therefore, want the Minister to be comfortable with any change in filtering policy.

Members indicated that they were content to explore the grey filtering proposal and extend it to all Post primary schools. The Director indicated that he would convey this recommendation to the Department to inform the Minister.

Action 4: The Director will advise Sharon Lawlor of the views of the Board on extending the Grey Filtering functionality to all post-primary schools.

843 AoB

There was no other business.

844 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The Director asked to change the date of the next meeting from **25th November to 2nd December.**

Action 5: Secretary to send notification of new meeting date to members.

The meeting concluded at 4.45pm.