

**MINUTES OF THE C2K PROJECT BOARD MEETING HELD AT  
C2K HEADQUARTERS  
THURSDAY 25<sup>TH</sup> MARCH 2010**

**Present:**

Mr B Mulholland	WELB (Chair)
Mr J Stewart	C2k
Mr G Byrne	ESA ICT
Mr R Hanna	CCEA
Mrs S Lawlor	DE
Mr E McArdle	GTCNI
Dr S Lucey	BECTA
Mr F Devenny	CCMS
Mr P Monaghan	St Oliver Plunkett Primary School
Mr J Wilkinson	Dromore High School

**In Attendance:**

Mr J Ringland	C2k Contracts & Finance Manager, C2k
Mrs G Hall	C2k (Secretary)

**Apologies:**

Mr Paddy Mackey	WELB
Ms Alice Lennon	SEELB
Dr R Harper	NEELB
Ms A Conaty	DE

**813 MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 4<sup>TH</sup> MARCH 2010**

The minutes of the last meeting were reviewed and with regard to Minute 794 Mrs Lawlor asked, on behalf of Mr Morrow, for the following sentence, 'A version of this letter had already been signed by DE' to be changed to, 'A copy of this report had been made available to DE at the end of February'.

**814 MATTERS ARISING**

**Minute 795**

**InCAS**

Mrs Lawlor informed the Chair that a letter will be sent to WELB very shortly, informing them that, after taking on board the recommendations agreed between CCEA and DE, WELB/C2k should proceed to extend the InCAS contract for another two years. The Director proposed that a joint exercise, involving CCEA and C2k, would be helpful in terms of moving the negotiations with CEM forward.

Some discussion ensued on the issues affecting the quality of the service from CEM.

Mr Hanna reported that DE had established a working group, chaired by Professor John Gardner from QUB, to look at the impact of the errors from last year on the system. He noted that the group has met once to date and it is expected that it will publish a report of its findings in the near future. The Chair was keen to have sight of the report, noting that the confidence of schools has been adversely affected by the errors.

**Action 1: Mrs Lawlor to report back to the Project Board as to when publication of the report can be expected.**

**Minute 795****User Management Service**

Mrs Lawlor confirmed that Article 40 of the Education (NI) Order 1998 makes no provision for the GTCNI to supply information to the Boards.

Mr McArdle referred to the agreement already in place between the WELB and GTCNI on data transfer and he offered to write out to teachers in relation to sharing their data with C2k.

The Director noted that the reason for the approach to DE was to try to avoid the need to write to every teacher but he confirmed that he would be content to move forward on this basis and thanked Mr McArdle for his cooperation.

**Minute 796****Unique Learner Number**

The Director stated that he would follow this up with Mr Mullen at a future meeting.

**Minute 798****Contingency issues**

Mr Byrne acknowledged acceptance of the contingency arrangements by ESAICT.

**Minute 806****User Satisfaction Survey**

The Director proposed that the user satisfaction surveys be considered as a substantive agenda item at the next meeting.

For information, the current user satisfaction surveys and associated documentation will be available to access within the C2k Intranet.

**Action 2: Secretary to circulate usernames and passwords to members for the Project Board area on the C2k Intranet.**

**Minute 809****Sparklebox**

The Chair reported that the Sparklebox report was completed and sent to DE and would be with the Minister today. He noted that the report would be made available to members of the Project Board following clearance by the Minister. He noted that it had been firmly established within the report that at no time were children in NI at risk from any material published on the Sparklebox site.

**815 FINANCE REPORT**

Mr Ringland reported on two aspects of the C2k resource budget – the provisional out-turn figures for the 2009/10 year and the revenue expenditure forecast for the 2010/11 year, which he circulated to members. He explained that C2k has to account on an accruals basis so there is some final reconciliation to be completed in April. He did not, however, expect that this would substantively change on the figures presented today. Mr Ringland reported that there would be a relatively small maximum overspend of £23,000, assuming there are no contract service credits for the final month of the financial year. Mr Ringland drew attention to the final position with regard to the eSchools revenue surplus, which DE had confirmed can be retained for use within the C2k allocation for the year. This was taken account of in the expected out-turn assessment.

Mr Ringland reminded members that at the last meeting he had given an undertaking to provide an indication of the likely funding requirement that C2k would have for the coming year. Although no allocations have yet been made to Boards for 2010/11, his

assessment of funding need, of £48.778M, was based mostly on the contractual charges due (including eSchools revenue) and costs already committed to in previous financial years and which would be accrued to the new year. He advised that there would be no Lot 7 service costs, although the figures do include Lot 7 external advisers' charges in line with the figures included in the Advisers' Business Cases.

Mr Ringland reminded members that this time last year, C2k presented a two year forecast which showed reduced costs primarily associated with the fact that the extension services were costing C2k less than the original contract term costs. It showed that C2k was able to release funds back last year and in effect was doing so in this forecast, bearing in mind the baseline figure previously identified by DE for 2010/11. Mr Byrne welcomed the fact that this information was documented.

## **816 PROCUREMENT UPDATES**

### **Advisers' procurements**

Mr Ringland reminded members that he had provided an update on the Advisers' procurements at the last meeting, adding that the appointment of Advisers is vital in allowing C2k to move forward with the Lot 7 procurement. The non-monetary and monetary evaluations were being progressed separately and Mr Ringland reported that with regard to the Strategic/Financial/Technical Advisers' procurement, the non-monetary evaluation panel met yesterday and carried out the major part of the moderation exercise which agreed and consolidated a set of scores. The panel will convene again next Thursday to finalise and consolidate a set of consensus scores for the non-monetary evaluation, after which the WELB Purchasing Officer who had been doing the monetary scoring, will consolidate and produce a final outcome score which will enable C2k to determine the preferred bidder. Mr Ringland hoped to have the preferred bidder identified for the Strategic/Financial/Technical by next Thursday, after which the normal process could be invoked around the Alcatel 'standstill' period. Mr Ringland stated that there could then be a contract award subject to the ratification of the appropriate WELB Committee.

With regard to the Legal Advisers' procurement, which was running in parallel, Mr Ringland stated that the evaluation panel will meet tomorrow, after which he expected that C2k would be in a position to combine the financial and non-financial scores and have the preferred bidder identified by next week. Again, there will be an Alcatel 'standstill' period in advance of final ratification of the recommendation by the appropriate WELB Committee as soon as possible thereafter.

### **Further update on SoR**

Parallel to the work on appointing the Advisers, Mr Ringland advised that preparatory work was also progressing on the development of the Statement of Requirements for Lot 7. He circulated a document on the evolution of the SoR, through each stage of the procurement process, noting that it was still a work in progress and that the next steps would be to complete the refinement work and then present the document to the workstream groups, the Project Board and the Senior User Forum.

Mr Ringland noted that, once the Technical Advisers are appointed in April, they will be asked to conduct an expert technical quality assurance exercise to ensure that the SoR working draft is still consistent with the key objectives of the OBC and its fitness for purpose as a procurement document.

Mrs Lawlor then asked if the SoR would go before the WELB for approval.

The Director stated that this would not be normal practice.

Mr Ringland reminded members that the SoR was a technical document while the Outline Business Case, which set out the key objectives and the rationale for providing the service, had already been through a process of sign off by ESA, DE and DFP.

#### **Lot 7 Stage 2 PID (Procurement Stage)**

Mr Ringland referred to the draft PID which had already been presented to the Project Board and was in the process of being updated for the Gateway Review health check and for presentation to the next Project Board meeting. He explained that the project management arrangements are in accordance with the PRINCE2 project management methodology. He presented an extract from the PID that set out the role of the Project Assurance Team (PAT), which would normally consist of individuals nominated by the Project Board and be chaired by a member of the Project Board. Mr Ringland advised that the purpose of the PAT, as defined in PRINCE2 methodology, is to take, on behalf of the Project Board, an independent monitoring view on the conduct of the Project to ensure that it adheres to the objectives of the Business Case, that it is appropriately resourced and that it is conducted on a proper basis.

The Director welcomed a steer from the Project Board as to a potential chair for the PAT along with an indication of the groups that members would like to see represented within the PAT.

Following extensive discussion it was agreed that there should be a Project Assurance Team and that it should consist of a small group, with possible representation from CPD, including an expert user in terms of schools, a senior Finance Officer and Chief Auditor of one of the ELBs. The PAT will report directly to the Project Board on the conduct of the procurement.

The Chair then invited nominations for the Chair of the PAT. Mr Paddy Mackey was proposed and the Chair will take that forward with him.

**Action 3: Make up of the PAT to be agreed at the next Project Board meeting.**

#### **817 ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

There was no other business.

#### **818 DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The following schedule of meetings was proposed:

Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> May;

Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> June;

Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> September;

Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> November; and

Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> January 2011.

The meeting concluded at 3.30pm.