

**MINUTES OF THE C2K PROJECT BOARD MEETING HELD AT C2K HEADQUARTERS
THURSDAY 7TH APRIL 2011**

Present:

Mr B Mulholland	WELB (Chair)
Mr P Mackey	WELB
Mrs A Conaty	DE
Mr R Harper	NEELB
Mr R Hanna	CCEA
Mr F Devenny	CCMS
Mr J Mullen	ETI
Mr B FitzSimons	DE
Mr J Wilkinson	Dromore High School
Mr M Hewitt	BELB

In Attendance:

Mr J Stewart	C2k Director
Mr J Ringland	C2k Contracts and Finance Manager
Mrs G Hall	(Secretary)

Apologies:

Mrs S Lawlor	DE
Mr E McArdle	GTCNI
Mr P Monaghan	St Oliver Plunkett Primary School
Mr G Byrne	ESA ICT

862 MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 27TH JANUARY 2011

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

863 MATTERS ARISING

Minute 854

Replacement of Senior Managers

The Director confirmed that Avril Allen has been appointed to the post of Service Delivery Manager and Tim Matchett as Integration and Development Manager.

Minute 855

VC Festival

The Director reported that the VC Festival took place the week of 21st February, during which a wide range of video conferencing events was held, involving schools from across the province. It was a very successful event which the Director noted was designed to be the final phase of the implementation process that would allow C2k to evaluate the potential uses of the video conferencing solutions for schools. He has therefore commissioned an evaluation report which he will share with members.

The Director expressed his thanks and appreciation to the North Eastern Education and Library Board and the NEELB TV service who contributed significantly to a number of the VC events.

Mrs Conaty reported that the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment who were involved in the VC launch, found it very worthwhile.

Minute 860

ESA ICT Programme Board

The Director noted that he is still awaiting the first meeting of the ESA ICT Programme Board though there is a meeting scheduled for next week.

864 HIGHLIGHT REPORT

In advance of the meeting, a copy of the Highlight Report had been made available in members' secure area of the Intranet. The Director referred to the last item on the report, under Risk, which he advised has been mitigated and closed. He explained that during the upgrade of C2k Exchange to Sharepoint 2010 there was a period of time when the eForm capability was lost which resulted in a manual process having to be put in place. eForms are used extensively in schools to transfer information on changes in the service to C2k. This happened at a time when WELB was involved in an electronic survey which was interrupted as a result of the migration to the new software. The Director asked for his apologies to be recorded to WELB for disruption to the service. He advised that the eForms capability is now up and running in the new Exchange environment and schools are able to communicate with C2k in terms of any changes.

There were no questions or comments from members.

865 PROCUREMENT UPDATES

Mr Ringland tabled a summary paper providing an update on procurement status.

- **InCAS**

Mr Ringland reported that since the last Project Board meeting, the InCAS extension services agreement has been put in place (signed on 19th February 2011) covering the period up to 31st January 2012.

- **Lot 3 extension**

Mr Ringland reported that since the last Project Board, the Lot 3 Extension Business Case has been approved and the contract, covering the period up to 17th November 2011, signed with Northgate IS.

- **Lot 5 extension**

Mr Ringland advised that the extended Lot 5 contract expires at the end of June 2011. A further extension needs to be in place to accommodate the timescales around the EN(ni) procurement to avoid a gap in services. A Business Case had been submitted to DE in early February, seeking approval for extension of the Lot 5 contract up to at least December 2011 or through to March 2012 depending on the transition requirements. Mrs Conaty stated that queries and clarifications sought from DE had been addressed by C2k but understood that the Business Case had not yet been sent from DE to DFP. It was noted that approval is required to the Business Case from DE and DFP before the extension contract can be signed and that approvals would need to be obtained by the end of June.

Mr Ringland reported that although an indicative figure had been received from HP in terms of extension cost, which had been used for the purposes of the Business Case submission, commercial discussions are ongoing with HP to finalise the cost of the extension. Part of those discussions will also be around transfer and exit arrangements in transitioning to the new EN(ni) contract.

The Chair highlighted the tight timescales with regard to Lot 5 extension sign off, noting that the Business Case, which had been with the Department since February, needs to be signed off by WELB in the second week in June. Mrs Conaty advised that she would follow this up with the Business Compliance Unit and with DFP.

- **Lot 6 Replacement**

Mr Ringland informed members that approval was obtained on 24th March, from DE and DFP, of the Primary (Lot 6 replacement) Strategic Outline Case which provides C2k with authority to proceed to Outline Business Case development stage. He advised that it has been necessary to produce an internal business case to seek the approval from WELB to call off services from the existing Strategic, Financial and Technical consultancy framework to assist with the development this Outline Business Case. Subject to members' approval, the internal business case will be submitted to WELB for their consideration. Once WELB approval is in place, advisers will be instructed to proceed with the development of the Outline Business Case which Mr Ringland stated, is targeted for completion by the end of May 2011. Approval to proceed was granted by the Board.

Mr Ringland reported that the scope of the EN(ni) procurement has the potential to accommodate an option to assimilate the Lot 6 requirement into the EN(ni) contract in the event that this is the approved preferred option. Mrs Conaty confirmed that DFP was content for the Lot 6 Replacement Business Case to be subsumed into the EN(ni) Full Business Case should these conditions prevail.

- **EN(ni)**

Mr Ringland detailed the progress to date with regard to the EN(ni) procurement. The three bidders who had successfully progressed from the Outline Solutions stage submitted Detailed Solutions and indicative pricing in February. The Evaluation Team then assessed those detailed proposals and confirmed that all three bidders were deemed capable of delivering the required services. On the basis of the evaluation all three bidders were invited to progress in the continuation of the detailed dialogue phase. Mr Ringland reported that the dialogue meetings were very productive, with substantial solution improvements being achieved and pricing reductions expected in the final tenders.

Mr Ringland reported that he expects that all substantive discussions will have taken place by 15th April 2011 with a target date of 6th May 2011, subject to the team being satisfied with the status of the project agreement and schedule drafting, for formal closure of the dialogue phase and issue of invitations for submission of final tenders. The target date for submission of final tenders is 3rd June 2011 and they will be evaluated by the Technical, Financial and Legal Evaluation Teams in parallel, during June, with a view to identifying the preferred bidder by the end of June. This recommendation will be brought to the Project Assurance Team in advance of the Project Board meeting at the end of June. Mr Ringland stated that if the recommendation is acceptable to the Project Board, the Appointment Business Case will be developed and submitted to DE by the end of July. Once approval is obtained for the Appointment Business Case, it is expected to move

forward to Final Business Case approval and contract award by mid- November.

There were no questions or comments from members.

The chair thanked Mr Ringland for his report.

866 FINANCE REPORT

▪ Interim End of Year Report

A copy of the Interim End of Year Report had been made available in the members' secure area of the Intranet. It was noted that the provisional figures showed a potential overspend of £6k. Mr Ringland noted that the out-turn figures will remain provisional until such time as WELB closes their accounts in May but advised that the provisional out-turn figures in the interim report were not expected to change substantially. The final out-turn figures will be presented at the next Project Board.

There were no queries or comments from members.

▪ Change Control report

A copy of the Change Control report had been made available in the members' area of the Intranet and any updates added since the last Project Board have been highlighted. Mr Ringland advised that there were no major changes since the last meeting and none over the threshold requiring Project Board approval.

There were no queries or comments from members.

▪ Budget 2010 paper

Mr Ringland circulated the C2k/eSchools Budget Allocation 2011/12. He advised that the C2k budget has just been received and is confirmed as £40.157M (including eSchools and allocations to other Boards). A Budget Plan will be produced as part of the Business Plan for approval at the next Project Board meeting.

867 VOLUNTARY SEVERANCE IMPLICATIONS

The Director provided an update on the voluntary severance implications for C2k. He confirmed that eighteen members of staff had volunteered for severance and fourteen of those applications were accepted, with four still outstanding. The Director advised that he is working on partial restructuring with a view of moving towards the final structure outlined in the Business Case.

Mr Hanna queried why two senior appointments had been made against the present structure. The Director advised that these posts were substantive management posts, outside the voluntary severance programme, that will ensure continuity of management into the future.

There were no further queries or comments from members.

868 UPDATE ON STRATEGIC STOCKTAKE

A copy of the updated Strategic Stocktake Action Plan had been made available in the members' area of the Intranet. The action plan was submitted in response to the joint

WELB/DE internal audit report on the governance of C2k which was carried out in the autumn of 2010 and which produced a number of recommendations for C2k. The Director provided an update on the C2k related issues actioned and ongoing.

Reference 2 recommended that C2k put in place a more structured approach to governance around change control expenditure within C2k and the Director noted that reporting on change control is now in place as a standard agenda item at each Project Board meeting.

Reference 3 was in relation to attendance by members at Project Board meetings and the Director pointed out that attendance at meetings is now increasing.

Reference 4 was in relation to the use of Ad-hoc stakeholder groups to support the work of the Project Board which the Director noted has commenced and is underway with, for example, the Stakeholder User Forum, which is a group of senior school staff who meet under the auspices of GTCNI and regularly review the delivery of services by C2k. The Director stated that there are also stakeholder groups that have been formed as part of the ongoing EN(ni) procurement process with particular reference to the development of the Statement of Requirements. He advised that there is also stakeholder representation on the procurement Evaluation Team. The Director noted that where other stakeholder groups are seen to be necessary there are mechanisms whereby they can be convened.

Reference 5 relates to communications with the broader stakeholder community and communications with the Project Board. In terms of communications with the broader stakeholder community, the Director referred to the use of C2k Exchange, which is a secure environment through which C2k has access to all teachers across the service, and which is used extensively by DE, CASS and other stakeholder communities to communicate with teachers. The Director advised that C2k is content to maintain this service as a facility that other stakeholders can use. C2k also aligns with the communication strategies of other groups and regular contributions are made, by C2k, to Union newsletters, GTCNI and WELB publications and Linked.

With regard to communication with Project Board members, the Director indicated that C2k makes every effort to release documentation in advance of meetings and has been using the C2k Intranet as a means of doing so. This prevents large emails being circulated around the system on a regular basis and ensures the security of commercially sensitive material. The Director noted that it also allows C2k to maintain a retrospective document library as all previous meeting documentation continues to be held and made available for reference.

The Director noted that where members experience difficulty accessing the Intranet from their corporate networks, due to firewall restrictions, they should inform C2k who will work with their IT Officers to resolve the problem.

There were no further queries or comments from members.

869 AOB

Procurement of next generation of Computer based Assessments

Mr Hanna updated members on the CCEA procurement of the next generation of computer based assessments. He reported that CCEA has secured the services of the

Central Procurement Directorate (CPD) as the procurement vehicle for the new assessment software and he expects to advertise for expressions of interest in early May with award of contract anticipated in late September.

There were no queries or comments from members.

Group overseeing school closures

Mr FitzSimons reported for members' information that there was a group set up under the auspices of DE to review the approach being taken to communicate with parents in the event of school closures due to inclement weather. He advised that a text service may be required to facilitate this and noted that a report is due out at the end of this month.

Mr Ringland advised that an alerts service is part of the EN(ni) service requirement and bidder solutions are expected to cover DE needs in this area, but it will not be in place for next winter. It was noted that some schools are currently purchasing such a service for themselves.

870 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The Director proposed to change the date of the next meeting from Tuesday 21st June to **Tuesday 28th June**, to accommodate the approval process around the EN(ni) contract. It was agreed that if a meeting is deemed necessary in advance of that date, an emergency Project Board meeting will be called.

The meeting concluded at 3.05pm.