

Strategic Advisory Group

Minutes of 10th Meeting of Strategic Advisory Group

Dunadry Hotel – 28 November 2005

Present:

Chairperson
Members

Secretariat

Apologies

Chairman's Introduction

1. The Chairman welcomed members to the 10th meeting of the Group and also apologised for the cancellation, at short notice, of the meeting scheduled for 6 October. The Chairman noted that, sadly, _____ had passed away on 16 October. His contribution will be missed by the group.

Minutes of previous meeting

2. A member of the group felt that previous minutes did not take into account their strong feelings expressed regarding financial planning and logistics. The Chairman advised that the key points of the views expressed were agreed on the day of the meeting and included in the notes of the discussion. However, any member who felt their views were not included could send them in writing and these would be appended to the minutes.

Entitlement Framework Guidance Vol 2

3. _____ gave a brief background to this guidance, stating that it is still a work in progress and that a draft had been circulated round the education partners for comment.

pointed out that the first guidance, issued in June, dealt with the principal of the Entitlement Framework, whereas this guidance deals with some off the practical aspects of its implementation.

A conference regarding the delivery of the Entitlement Framework is being organised for January 2006. The Chairman asked SAG members for their comments on the conference.

Detailed comments on both the guidance and the conference are attached at Annex A

Implications of Demographic Change

gave a short presentation on the Impact of Demography.

Details of the discussion that followed are attached in Annex B

Review of Public Administration

4. talked briefly about the RPA proposals, the advice sought from SAG was how we ensure that the progress of the e2s reforms are not slowed down during this time of transition.
Details of key discussion points are attached in Annex C

Future Business

5. The possible future issues in Paper 10.5 were noted and some further additions were made. Please see Annex D for details

Schedule of Future Meetings

6. Members were advised that meetings for the new year would be organised in the near future.

Chairperson_____ Date_____

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Guidance on the Entitlement Framework: draft of second tranche

Please find the attached draft of the second set of guidance on the implementation of the Entitlement Framework, which we plan to issue to schools early in the New Year. This guidance has been circulated both within DE and amongst our education partners (including the SEOs of the ELBs, CCEA, CCMS, LSDA, C2K, RTU and DEL) for comment and we hope to further refine its content before issue.

The case studies outlined in the guidance will be a particularly important element in starting schools' thinking on the practical aspects of co-operation and collaboration. We are currently expanding the existing case studies and hope to add additional examples, including more material on e-learning; School/FE collaboration material from the North Down & Ards Institute and the Newry Institute; and material from the Limavady Learning Partnership and the Fermanagh Skills Enhancement Programme.

Preliminary work has also started with the Regional Training Unit (RTU) on a "Delivering the Entitlement Framework"-themed Conference, currently scheduled for 31 January 2006 at the Hilton Hotel, Templepatrick. Through a mix of speeches, presentations and discussion groups, with contributions from schools and colleges involved in innovative practice, participants will have the opportunity to identify the opportunities and challenges for pupils and schools in implementing the Entitlement Framework and begin to develop ways of addressing these challenges. Places at the conference will be reserved for Principals and Senior Leaders from all post-primary schools and for Officers from the education partners, the FE sector and the Teachers' Unions.

At the conference, breakout sessions will be organised which will focus on different issues relating to the delivery of the Entitlement Framework, such as e-learning and aspects of school/school and school/FE co-operation. These sessions will enable participants to hear about existing good practice, to discuss

issues arising and to begin the process of applying these ideas to their own school's situation and it is hoped to tie these sessions to the case studies in the Entitlement Framework Guidance as a way of "bringing them to life".

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Review of Public Administration

- The announcements on RPA were made on 22 November and members will be aware of the forthcoming changes to the structure of education administration.
- The target date for implementation is April 2008
- Members advice is sought on best to ensure the continuing implementation of the e2s programme during this period and in particular the following elements:
 - The revised curriculum
 - The Entitlement Framework
 - The Vocational Enhancement Programme
 - The roll-out of specialist schools
 - The strategic planning and development of the schools estate
- For information, a timeline of the key e2s milestones is set out in the enclosed copy of the Autumn 2005 edition of the e2s newsletter.

Discussion:

- **The legislative process for RPA shouldn't be allowed to create a hiatus on other issues, eg Entitlement Framework**
- **The pace of progress on other education reforms should not be allowed to slow down, though, it has to be recognised that it is difficult in a time of uncertainty.**

- **It should be clear that there will be a consistency of support for schools in implementing the new arrangements.**
- **We should appreciate the difficulties that will be ahead, both for individuals and for organisations, who are already working in difficult circumstances.**
- **Certainty is required, but this is difficult as details have yet to be worked out.**
- **Boards will inevitably be required to cut back on services.**
- **Many of the changes will be beneficial for education.**

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SAG Business in 2006 (provisional dates indicated where possible)

Proposal for a draft Education Order (Jan/Feb)

Pupil Profile update (CCEA) (Jan/Feb)

Resources – next spending review (Jan/Feb)

EF – facilitating, developing and supporting collaboration
Including conference outcomes (April/May)

Communications (June)

Admissions regulations (Autumn)

ICT and new post-primary arrangements (tbc)

Strategic Planning for the Schools Estate (tbc)

Capital Programme - Procurement and delivery (tbc)

Discussion:

- **The implications for transport (and supervision) need to be discussed; this could potentially have a huge impact on resources.**
- **When will we examine the financial position, including costing of the reforms?**
- **Curriculum implementation, its roll-out, training etc.**
- **Roll-out of RPA.**
- **Spending Review discussion will set financial parameters until 2010; if money for implementation is not provided, efforts to date will have been wasted.**
- **No model exists showing how 24/27 will work, or predicting the likely financial cost. Such a model is essential.**