

## Strategic Advisory Group

### **Minutes of 7th Meeting of Strategic Advisory Group**

**Armagh City Hotel, 28<sup>th</sup> February 2005**

#### **Present:**

Chairperson

Members

Secretariat

DEL

Apologies

#### **Chairperson's Introduction**

The Chairman welcomed all members to the 7<sup>th</sup> meeting. The aims of the day were outlined.

#### **Minutes of the previous meeting**

The minutes of the 6<sup>th</sup> meeting of the 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2004 were agreed.

There were no matters arising.

#### **Update**

Members noted the paper (7.2) updating the group on progress to date on implementing the new arrangements.

Members generally welcomed the specialist schools pilot.

It was the overall view that an effective and ongoing communication strategy was needed to keep the system up to date on developments, counter misinformation and provide reassurance that momentum is being maintained. A regular newsletter was seen as particularly useful to this end.

### **Delivering the Entitlement Framework**

from ANIC gave a presentation on the future role of the FE sector and the strategic issues facing it. and of the North-East Institute of Further Education outlined the progress to date on the Vocational Enhancement Programme pilot and the lessons learned.

Members welcomed the presentation as encouraging and made a number of points in terms of school/FE collaboration in delivering the Entitlement Framework, including the following:

- An agreed policy should be developed for the allocation of resources across the sectors.
- An “academic = schools, vocational = FE” division should be avoided;
- The vocational courses offered by schools/FE must have relevance to the local economy.
- There should be “two-way” traffic between the schools and FE sectors.
- External/independent advice for pupils will be important.

### **Entitlement Framework – Phasing**

Members considered the paper on the proposed phasing of the Entitlement Framework (Paper 7.3). Consideration should be given to whether all schools required the same level of substitute teacher cover.

Overall, members were content with the proposed phasing, detailed comments are attached at Annex A.

### **Entitlement Framework – Guidance to schools**

Members considered the proposed outline content of the guidance to schools. Members were content with the proposed content and detailed comments are attached at Annex B.

## **ANNEX A**

### **Paper 7. 3 Phasing Discussion**

#### **Role of the SMAs**

- SMAs have a role and it is important that schools are working in the right context.
- SMAs are being asked to make sure that the development proposals are “Costello compliant” and SMAs need strategic direction.
- DE should bring all SMAs together to work strategically – particularly in the absence of the area groups
- Timeline is very demanding – bit that is missing is the what if – what is the motivation to bring everyone in line with the timescale – what about those who will not be able to make it? SMAs will need to be very involved
- SMAs will need resources to manage this process

#### **General**

- Communication strategy needs to be broader – need to interface with DEL
- What about the local area groups? – should schools be working within these partnerships?
- Guidance should demonstrate that there is ample time to allow the changes to take place
- BOGs and the ELBs will be reconstituted within this timeframe
- Should be looking at the “Shared Futures” Document – needs to be referred to in the guidance
- Need to take account of the political context
- 24 and 27 are considered to be big school solutions – need small steps – small improvements
- Need to learn the lessons from the pilots and provide incentives to allow schools to move towards the delivery of the Entitlement Framework
- There should be an academic stream for those who can benefit from it; important that academic and vocational are equally valued.

## **ANNEX B**

### **Paper 7.4 Guidance to Schools Discussion**

#### **Audit**

- Audit is a good idea –should be an on-going process within schools
- Should there be some sort of external verification for the audit?
- Teachers should be involved in the initial audit – a proper development plan which consults downwards to all teachers and possibly to the pupils

#### **Content and Consultation**

- Needs to include reference to the communication strategy including who and how the key messages will be delivered to the key audiences
- Should be included in the school development plan
- ICT could be used – template for schools
- Pupils should be consulted
- Link to the self evaluating school process – learn the lessons
- Should involve ETI and CASS
- Introduction should include timescale involved
- Tranche 2 should involve young people
- Trail consultation with other groups in the first guidance
- Language is very important – the use of words vocational/applied then moving to the use of applied.
- When do we involve primary schools?