

**Communicating Change Consultative Group, 4th Meeting, NEELB Antrim
Board Centre, Antrim, 17 September 2008**

Present: Richard Bullick (SELB)
Patricia Ward (WELB)
Frances Donnelly (NICIE)
Micheál O Duibh (CnaG)
Daryll Kenny (NEELB)
Frances Logue (CCEA)
Sarah Lowe (SEELB)
John Martin (BELB)
La'verne Montgomery (CCMS)
Emma Hegarty (CCMS)
Patricia Weir (Staff Commission)

Apologies: Carole Johnston (RTU)
David Guilfoyle (YCNI)

In attendance: Mary Scullion (DE)
Robert Shilliday (ESAIT)
Michael Henderson (DE)
Eve Stewart (DE)

The meeting commenced at 10.30am.

1. Robert Shilliday welcomed everyone to the meeting. Introductions were made.
2. The minutes from the meeting on 18 June 2008 were agreed.
3. Robert Shilliday spoke about the Actions Arising from the meeting on 18 June 2008.
 - It was confirmed that should a 'Web alert' function be added to the ESAIT website, those signing up for alerts would have to do it individually, the website was not equipped to deal with corporate sign up.
 - The feedback from the Principals' focus groups will be part of the forthcoming 'RPA News' and will also be posted on the ESAIT site at time of publication.
 - Information on the next steps on developing Service Delivery Models will be included in Issue 3 of the ESAIT Update, with more detailed information to follow.
 - The 2nd Tier structures are not yet published.
4. Robert Shilliday took the group through an update from the ESAIT Project.

Work is progressing in a number of key areas including: the branding audit and roll out plan, an initial communications model for ESA, Day One planning, the ESAIT Update and RPA News. An RPA related article will also be included in the forthcoming DE Headlines news letter going out to all schools in the near future.

Robert also informed the group that a second round of Communications Research was now scheduled for Feb 9 – 20, 2008.

Robert invited Michael Henderson to speak to the group regarding a review of communications across the education sector that DE was leading.

5. Michael took the group through the aims of the review and the work that would be carried out in the coming months. A key aspect of the work will be a joint DE/ESAIT strategy for communications up to and after the launch of ESA. The group were informed that they would be asked to comment on early drafts of this strategy.

He also informed those present that DE's 'Headlines' magazine would issue to schools in hard copy format in the coming weeks. This edition includes an article by Gavin Boyd on the establishment of ESA and has key messages for schools on how the change will be managed and service continuity assured.

6. Robert then took the group through a summary of main points from research commissioned by the Public Service Commission (PSC) into the RPA in Health. Robert undertook to ensure the full and final report was made available to the organisations when it was published later in the autumn.

Robert provided an update of work in the wider ESAIT project.

During the autumn ESAIT will develop an initial location strategy for ESA accommodation. Deloitte has been contracted to identify and gather the full range of information required to enable decisions to be made on location. Work commenced in August and Deloitte is due to report back by the end of September 2008. ESAIT has written to Chief Executives and key contact points have been identified within each of the organisations.

A discussion paper, setting out proposals for the senior management structure in ESA, has been sent to DE for consideration. Following discussions with DE over the coming weeks, a final paper with firm proposals will be submitted to DE for approval.

During the summer, ESAIT has been drawing up existing service delivery models with input from service managers and developing new models for service delivery, drawing on information from the workshops.

Work will continue to develop the full range of new service delivery models over the next few months. ESAIT will continue to engage with DE and colleagues in the various service areas as the models are developed

ESAIT is working on a draft Recruitment, Re-deployment and Voluntary Severance Strategy in consultation with the HR Managers of the current organisations and trade union side.

The draft strategy covers key issues such as: recruitment of the ESA Senior Management Team through a competence based approach; voluntary severance arrangements for those in “at risk” groups; and re-deployment of staff in “at risk” groups who have been unsuccessful in securing positions, but who wish to be part of ESA.

The OBC for the RPA in education sets out the costs, benefits and savings associated with setting up the Education and Skills Authority (ESA). DFP has now indicated its approval of the OBC.

Approval of the OBC gives ESAIT the green light to proceed towards the full implementation of the planning activities associated with establishing ESA, subject to legislation and the subsequent presentation of the Full Business Case (FBC).

The HR project has been divided into 2 areas: the Workforce and Industrial relations project will be managed by John Curran and covers areas such as industrial relations, the DE workforce review, recruitment scheme for principals and vice principals, and job evaluation.

The Human Resources project covers HR Principles and Policies, recruitment, staff transfer, capacity building, performance management, terms and conditions and voluntary severance.

A project manager for this area will be appointed in the near future. In the interim Programme Director Mark Browne will cover this role, working closely with Jill Dowie and Mairead Morgan to ensure momentum is maintained.

In October two new support officers will join the Financial Planning project: Gail Flavell – seconded from SELB; and Martina McGuigan seconded from WELB

Gavin Boyd has written to Chief Executives requesting nominations to an Education Estates Consultative Group

Working with ESAIT project manager Bill Reid, the group will provide a reviewing panel and ‘sounding board’ for any service delivery issues being proposed for the management of the educational estate.

7. During the update a number of points were raised by the group.

Pat Ward commented that WELB had just completed a staff survey that showed concern over the lack of clarity over RPA. At a recent all staff briefing WELB Chief Executive had indicated to staff he was passing on all the information he had, but that little new was coming forward.

8. A number of members indicated that better communication on the Outline Business Case could help to ease the fears of many staff regarding job losses, particularly those staff at lower grades.

9. Micheál O Duibh asked that a message came back from the group that clarification was needed on progress towards key issues such as structures and the redundancy and severance scheme.

10. A number of group members indicated that confidence in the ability to actually make the change happen in the timescale was reducing.

11. There was also feedback from around the group on how such messages could be delivered as widely as possible. Suggestions made included video links, podcasting and face to face meetings.

It was also noted that tailored messages would need to go to the bodies such as GMI schools and Irish medium school.

12. Mary Scullion then briefed the group on progress on the next edition of RPA News.

The planned articles are as follows:

- Legislative Process
- Legacy Wind up guidance
- Day 1 'Business as Usual'
- Principals focus groups feedback
- Make up and remit of ESA local delivery units
- Next steps following service delivery workshops

After some discussion it was agreed that the wind-up guidance was not required but an update on progress against the roadmap (included in the previous version) would be useful.

The number of copies to be provided to be considered in the light of the numbers to be produced for 'Headlines'.

Mary Scullion provided an overview of the legislative process. The draft article for RPA news on this topic is enclosed.

13. Robert Shilliday then updated the group on progress towards an ESA Communications Model, explaining the first part of this process was to check that we had fully understood the models currently in place in the existing organisations.

Robert undertook to circulate a discussion paper to the group for comment. This will be issue in the next few days.

It was agreed that the group would meet again on Wednesday 22 October, 10.30 am at the Antrim Board Centre.

Robert Shilliday closed the meeting by thanking all present for their attendance and constructive input and reminded them that ESAIT is still keen to meet face to face with staff and that we would be keen to work with each individual organisation in setting up such events.

The meeting finished at 12.35pm.

Action point	Assigned to	Due by
5(i) Circulate to group discussion paper on ESA communications model	Robert Shilliday	Done Group to provide feedback by Friday 17 October 08
6(i) PSC research on Health RPA to be shared with group	Robert Shilliday	As soon as it becomes available – likely late October
12(iv) Number of RPA News hard copies to be considered in light of the number produced for 'Headlines'	John McCourt	End October 08
12(v) Article showing progress as set against the 'Roadmap to ESA' to be included in next edition of RPA News	Mary Scullion	End October 08