

DETI DEPARTMENTAL BOARD (DB) MINUTES
MONDAY 11 AUGUST 2008

Present:- Stephen Quinn (Chairman);
Ian McMorris (Independent Board Member);
David Sterling;
Philip Angus;
Noel Cornick;
Fiona Hepper;
Mike Bohill;
Graeme Hutchinson;
Trevor Cooper;
Jenny Pyper;
Ann Williamson (Item DB7/18)


Apologies:- Noel Lavery

In Attendance: Jo Kane (Secretariat)

The Board began the meeting by declaring any interests. Ian McMorris declared that he was a director for ERINI.

Agenda Item	Actions Arising from Discussion	Action Owner and Current Position (to be completed prior to next Board meeting)
DB 7/1 Action points from 12 May 2008 meeting.	It was noted that under the Tourism Delivery Agreement (TDA) D Sterling would now be the Senior Responsible Owner (SRO) for the main targets within PSA 5 and not NITB as currently drafted. G Hutchinson confirmed that INI were in discussions with him on the feasibility of an Invest NI target on reducing job losses. T Cooper is to follow up progress on Letters of Offer for the Energy from Waste projects with INI.	T Cooper Actioned. Invest NI reverted with update following DBM. Current position In relation to Invest NI offers is that as at 31 October [REDACTED] Renewable Energy Offer has not issued. Invest NI indicate that this will issue shortly.

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	<p>M Bohill is to follow up on enhanced security action taken following the recent break-ins at Avenue House.</p> <p>F Hepper gave an update on the letters of appointment to the NISP Board. She assured Board members that SPD officials will review the appointments process from first principles.</p> <p>It was noted that DB minutes would in future be placed on the Department's Internet site.</p>	<p>M Bohill</p> <p>, grills have been installed on first floor windows and the site boundary has been restored through the finalisation of an adjacent building. All identified additional security measures now in place.</p> <p>P Angus This is now standard procedure following Board approval of minutes at next meeting.</p>
Performance		
<p>DB7/2 Divisional Reports (to include PSAs and Corporate Plan and Op Plan Targets by exception)</p>	<p>D Sterling gave an update on the revised monitoring procedures introduced at each Oversight & Liaison meeting. He provided a summary of the reported status as at 30 June 2008. He advised members that it is difficult to predict final outturn from Q1 returns, and suggested it would be better to await Q2 returns. A request for Q2 returns, which would seek commentary on the setting of the red, amber, green (RAG) status, would issue in September 2008. The Board briefly discussed the economic environment and the implications this may have for a variety of PSA targets. It was agreed the targets would now be more challenging but that there were no grounds as yet to revise them.</p>	

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<p>DB7/3 Divisional reports – key issues and forward look</p>	<p>G Hutchinson advised that a paper on the Q1 returns would be sent to DFP.</p> <p>N Cornick advised that responsibility for tourism's PSA targets had been revised to everyone's satisfaction.</p> <p>SPD- F Hepper gave an update on the good progress being made on all the telecoms projects. All EU projects had now received casework, DFP and Ministerial approvals. In addition the InterReg matched funding for project Kelvin had been agreed with DCENR and the letter of offer has been received from SEUPB.</p> <p>The Enterprise Framework Strategy is running to schedule.</p> <p>HR&CS – P Angus advised that an EO1 promotion board was underway – run by the NICS Personnel Branches. The G7 promotion board is expected to proceed in late September 2008, subject to the HR Connect vacancy procedures being in place. P Angus will provide more detail on timing when known.</p> <p>It was noted that the payroll system is to move to HR Connect soon. Meanwhile the pay award will be made in the August pay run, excluding any performance bonuses which will not be paid until November 2008.</p> <p>P Angus will provide an update on data security actions taken by the NDPBs.</p> <p>BRD – M Bohill advised that the first meeting of the Petroleum Licensing Board, of which he is Chair, has met. A senior official from Customs & Excise had attended and follow up work was now taking place as a result of the meeting.</p>	<p>P Angus Unclear at time of preparing this update I will update the Board verbally.</p> <p>P Angus Paper as a substantive item.</p>

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	<p>Energy Division – J Pyper advised that the Regulator (NIAUR) was in discussions with electricity and gas providers about rising costs.</p> <p>Energy Division are involved in discussions with the Fuel Poverty Taskforce being led by Minister Ritchie. This is likely to generate a substantial body of work in the immediate future. J Pyper is to prepare a paper for the Minister, with input from relevant DETI Divisions, on the fuel poverty issue.</p>	<p>J Pyper Paper outlining main recommendations contained in DSD's Fuel Poverty Taskforce Report sent to Minister Foster on 2 September. A draft Executive Paper entitled 'Tackling Fuel Poverty' was circulated to Departments on 15 September. As a result of no Executive meeting taking place Ministers Dodds, McGimpsey and Ritchie met on 25 September and agreed an action plan to try and move the issue forward. Minister Foster has been invited to attend future meetings – next meeting scheduled for 3 November. Following NIE tariff review process in September, electricity prices increased by 33.3%. This drew widespread criticism of NIAUR who, with the Minister's support appointed Douglas McIlldoon to review the process.</p>

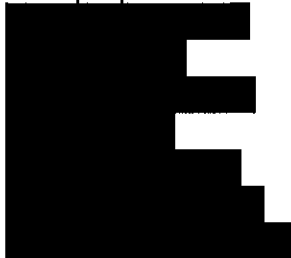
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	<p>Finance and EU Programmes – T Cooper highlighted that:</p> <p>DETI had migrated to Account NI on 7 July 2008;</p> <p>DETI had laid unqualified Resource Accounts with the Assembly within the faster closing timelines;</p> <p>TALE – N Cornick advised that the National Trust's application to Planning Service for Giant's Causeway Visitor Facilities was under consideration. It was noted that if the Executive did not reach a decision on the Titanic Signature Project at its 18 September meeting then it would be important to be clear on the latest critical decision dates for the project to proceed. N Cornick will apprise the Minister accordingly.</p> <p>It was noted that 8 new board members have been appointed to the NITB.</p> <p>N Cornick provided an update on NSMC – both trade and tourism sectoral meetings had met on 29 May 2008 and the next trade sectoral meeting was scheduled for October 2008. He advised members that work was to begin on the second tourism Strategic framework for Action (SFA2). He explained this was essential to bring coherence to NI tourism. S Quinn asked N Cornick to add hotel accommodation and planning to the agenda for the next meeting between Ministers Foster and Wilson.</p> <p>Economists – G Hutchinson provided an update on the Research Agenda, current casework and EDF. He informed board members that a resource issue on the casework side had been extremely busy. S Quinn asked G Hutchinson to pass on his thanks to officials on the casework side during this period.</p>	<p>N Cornick Update on Titanic sent to Executive Ministers on 22 September; draft papers circulated in October and final Executive paper submitted 24 October; request for decision under urgent procedure submitted 30 October.</p> <p>N Cornick Planning constraints on tourism development were raised at the Minister's meeting with Mr. Foster and have been followed up with a paper from NITB.</p> <p>G Hutchinson Actioned.</p>

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DB7/4 Absence Statistics	P Angus gave an update on DETI absence figures which continue to be lowest among all NICS Departments. S Quinn asked that the good work be continued and that return to work interviews be actioned on the first day of return. I McMorris acknowledged the work the Department had put in to reduce absence figures.	All
DB7/5 AQ performance	P Angus advised that 90% of AOs were cleared on time against a target of 90%. The Board discussed how this could be improved. P Angus was asked to examine the statistics quoted for Energy Division.	P Angus Figures discussed with J Pyper.
DB7/6 Legislation Update	It was noted that Energy Division was taking advice from OLC on how best to progress the 2 Gas Bills. J Pyper confirmed that Energy legislators were drafting a domestic Gas Bill while working on harmonisation issues.	
Private Office Cases	S Quinn asked all HODs to ensure that they maintain quality control on all submissions to top management and the Minister.	All
Oversight/Monitoring of NDPBs		
General Points	S Quinn re-affirmed the need for the minutes of the O&L meetings to record that conflicts of interest were canvassed before agenda items are discussed. He asked that Chairs of O&L meetings make this the first point of discussion.	All Board members with liaison units.
DB7/7 Minutes and key issues from Invest NI	D Sterling reported that this meeting had been very productive and had helped in bedding in the performance monitoring procedures. There was an update on a number of issues including RPA, the Varney Review and various areas of casework.	
DB7/8 Minutes and key issues from InterTrade Ireland	N Cornick reported that the Chairman of InterTradeIreland Board had instigated a review within ITI, amongst other things, to ensure there was effective coordination with Invest NI. S Quinn asked that D Sterling liaise with the SpAd regarding InterTradeIreland issues that could	D Sterling ITI Sectoral meeting scheduled for 22 October was postponed. NSMC to advise of new date.

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	potentially be raised at the next NSMC meeting scheduled for October 2008.	ITI Strategic Review currently under consideration by various stakeholders.
DB7/9 Minutes and key issues from NITB	Following a discussion on PSA targets at the O&L meeting it was agreed that D Sterling should be overall SRO for the key PSA 5 targets on visitor spend and numbers. It was noted that there was no reference to staff absence management statistics in the last minutes and that this should be a standing item on the NITB O&L agenda.	D Sterling Actioned.
DB7/10 Minutes and key issues from TIL	The Board accepted the TIL minutes as read.	
DB7/11 Minutes and key issues from HSENI	M Bohill to give the Board an update on the data security measures in Avenue House. It was agreed an accommodation vulnerability scoping study should be conducted on other DETI occupied buildings.	M Bohill All laptops are now  There were no complaints or follow-up correspondence. P Angus Covered in paper on substantive item on Security of Data.
DB7/12 Minutes and key issues from GCCNI	The Board accepted the GCCNI minutes as read.	
DB7/13 Minutes and key issues DETI/NI Science Park Liaison Committee	The Board accepted the NI Science Park Liaison Committee minutes as read. F Hepper provided an update on how Matrix is developing.	

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Policy and Cross Cutting Issues (Oral Updates)		
Varney II	DFP have drafted a reply on behalf of the Executive. This has yet to be cleared.	
	<u>Review of Invest NI</u> – The draft Terms of Reference remain to be finalised and preliminary work will commence on the identification of potential panel members. The aim is to start the review in September 2008.	D Sterling/ G Hutchinson ToRs now finalised. Minister considering Panel composition.
Research Agenda	The closing date for expressions of interest is 15 August 2008. G Hutchinson indicated that the Department has received the report on the Review of ERINI and a response is currently being drafted.	
EDF Update	A strategic review of the EDF has been carried out by DETI Economics Branch. Recommendations from the Review have been agreed by the EDF plenary and, as a consequence, EDF standing sub-groups have been stood down and will be replaced by ad hoc groups. The next meeting of EDF is scheduled for late September and agenda items include a forecast on the local economy; an update on the Varney 2 Report; and a progress report on MATRIX.	
Matrix Report	MATRIX is working to finalise an agreed set of top-level recommendations. The MATRIX final plenary workshop will take place on 29 August and the report will be submitted to the DETI Minister on 12 September. Issues include cultural change across Business Government and Academia; focus on moving away from “Technology Push” towards “Market Pull” with R&D increasingly focused on genuine market demand; and a “joined up” strategic approach to the provision of education, skills and research which focuses on the needs of high-technology and knowledge based firms.	

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Assembly/Committee Issues – by exception	The ETI Committee Forward Work Plan for DETI business is being finalised and agreed with the Committee Chairperson, to ensure timely progress of departmental business to the Executive and Assembly. It was noted that for some of the GCCNI issues which could be raised, timescales were very short and it was agreed that M Bohill should liaise with D McCune on any practical matters.	M Bohill/D McCune Actioned.
Finance and Personnel		
DB7/14 Finance- 07/08 Provisional Outturn and 08/09 issues	<p>The Board noted the provisional outturn for 07/08.</p> <p>T Cooper confirmed that Final Outturn was due with DFP by 19 September 2008. NITB figures would not be available until end August. Invest NI's final outturn showed underspending of £2m greater than provisional – detailed background was being sought prior to briefing being submitted.</p> <p>It was noted that September monitoring is currently underway and HODs were reminded to maintain a close watch on Admin spend and forecasts and to report any easements to Finance Branch at the earliest opportunity. The Board was reminded that there should be no assumption on the availability of future EYF.</p> <p>A Budget stock taking exercise covering 09/10 and 10/11 will be commissioned by DFP in the Autumn.</p>	All HODs
DB7/15 NICS Data Protection Review Update	<p>The Board noted the progress on the separate 90 data action plans on data protection in the Department and NDPBs.</p> <p>It was agreed to explore the need for inclusion of data protection statements in contracts for external consultants handling DETI information.</p> <p>It was agreed to speak to DFP about giving some consideration to passing on best practice to the Department's TPOs on data protection.</p>	P Angus Paper as a substantive item.

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Corporate Governance		
DB7/16 Quarterly Assurance Statements & Risk Management	<p>The Board was given assurances that:</p> <p>Upon receipt of a revised submission from Invest NI, advice would be forthcoming on the revised Invest NI report on EU compliance;</p> <p>resource pressures identified in paragraph 10 could not have been foreseen and will be reflected in September monitoring;</p> <p>the risk mentioned in paragraph 11 would be re-examined to confirm status; and</p> <p>the status of the risk in paragraph 12 will remain as stated until the contract is awarded.</p>	<p>T Cooper Actioned. Advice issued to Perm Sec. BSP general compliance report has also issued to Commission auditors, together with a report on progress on trigger point compliance issue.</p> <p>J Pyper Actioned – Reduced Requirements in EU Comp. Interreg and CIF Budgets put forward in September monitoring.</p> <p>J Pyper Actioned – status confirmed.</p> <p>F Hepper No further action required at this stage.</p>
DB7/17 Minutes of May and June DACs	The Board accepted the DAC minutes as read.	

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Media Strategy Issues		
DB7/18 Media Strategy	The Board accepted the media analysis paper as read. A Williamson stated that media coverage to date had been mostly positive. She asked all HODs to be aware of Purdah Guidance which has been issued as a result of the Minister standing in the Fermanagh Council by-elections. Any pending media events should be discussed with her and if possible re-scheduled until after purdah.	
Any Other Business – none		

Jo Kane