SUMMARY OF DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION DEPARTMENTAL BOARD MEETING

23 November 2017

5th Floor Conference Room, Rathgael House

Attendees: Derek Baker, Chair
           Noelle Buick
           Tommy O’Reilly
           Gary Fair
           John Smith
           Joan McEwan
           Fiona Keenan
           Anne Breen

In attendance: Debbie Mingout (Board Secretary)
               Ricky Irwin (Item 5&6)
               Chris Bradley (Item 10)

Apologies and Conflicts of Interests

There were apologies from Fiona Hepper. The Chair advised that Ricky Irwin would be presenting papers 4 and 5 and Chris Bradley, paper 9.

The Chair introduced and welcomed the new Non-Executive Board Member, Joan McEwan. Joan will also Chair the Department’s Audit and Risk Assurance Committee.

No conflicts of interest were declared.

HR Report

Anne Breen presented the HR Report to the Board. She updated members on recruitment and promotion, sick absence and performance management. Anne also updated the Board on the progress to develop the NICS HR Strategy. The Board was pleased to note the good response rate to the People Survey.

Action Points:

- Derek Baker to issue a note to staff to recognise the improvement in completion of Return to Work interviews.
- Directors are to encourage the completion of outstanding End and In-year Reviews.
**Director of Finance Report**

Gary Fair spoke to his paper. He walked members through the net forecast Resource position for 2017-18, members noted the position and discussed the figures outlined.

In relation to the Education Authority (EA) Resource Allocation, Gary flagged the ongoing significant risk of a further overspend by EA this year due to unfunded pressures.

Gary also updated the Board on Earmarked Allocations; the Internal Audit draft report on the review of EA’s systems, the 2017-18 Capital Budget review, prompt payment performance and contracts.

**DE 2017/18 Corporate Risk Register & Risk Management**

Ricky Irwin updated the Board on risk management since the last meeting on 12 October 2017. He highlighted minor changes to risks 2, 4, 6 and 10 and informed members that the score for risk 11 had reduced to reflect the decreased risk of an underspend in the capital budget.

Members agreed to the inclusion of a new risk in the Corporate Risk Register to reflect the impact the ongoing industrial action by teaching trade unions is having on the delivery of services.

**Action Point:**

- Risk scores for risks 10 & 12 need reviewed.

**Business Planning in 2018/19**

Ricky Irwin advised the Board that the 2018/19 Business Planning process for the Department and its NDPBs had commenced and outlined the timetable. The Board were content with the approach outlined.

**Action Point:**

- Draft version of the 2018/19 DE Business Plan to be presented to the Board for consideration at its February 2018 meeting.

**Report from ARAC Meeting on 25 October 2017**

Gary Fair updated the members on the key areas discussed at the ARAC meeting held on 25 October 2017. The Board noted the update.
Performance Efficiency Scrutiny Committee (PESC) Review

Gary Fair presented the paper on the review of PESC which was commissioned to review the options for its future as a lot of the planned PESC activity could now be described as ‘business as usual’. He presented three options. After discussion amongst members it was agreed that Option 3 was the best option - PESC disbands and a broad based transformation programme, to address the many challenges facing education in both policy and efficiency terms over the coming years, is put in place.

Action Point:

- Tommy O’Reilly is to make a presentation to the Board at its January 2018 meeting on the transformation programme structure.

Impact of the UK Leaving the EU on Education in NI

Chris Bradley updated members on the current position on the impact of the UK’s withdrawal from the EU. Members noted the update.