

Since the Minister's announcement on 22 November 2005, a Programme Management Board has been established within the Department to oversee the implementation of the review and a core team has been established. A number of project teams have been set up to take forward key work areas and the Department has invited the Boards/Staff Commission to identify staff within their organisations with specific expertise who would be able to assist with each of the projects. The project teams are:

- Procurement and Delivery for the Schools' Estate;
- Employing Authority;
- HR and Communications;
- Governance and Accountability;
- DE Internal Review;
- Youth Services;
- Review of Advice/Education Advisory Forum;
- Monitoring/Advice/Research; and
- Legislation.

Consultees highlighted the benefits of using the JCF as a mechanism to assist with the involvement/engagement of the community/voluntary sector in the process. Consultees have indicated that, whilst equality needed to be mainstreamed into all these work themes, they would be keen to explore how the equality dimension would be addressed in the overall process and when screening/impact assessments would be conducted.

### Youth Summit

NICEM and the Runnymede Trust have been appointed by OFMDFM to undertake a project to support the implementation of the Racial Equality Strategy by running a scoping exercise on the six shared aims of the Strategy. The objective is to bring together 100 young people (15-25) to discuss their priorities for Government in the context of this strategy. The event is being organised in close co-operation with the five Boards who will select and support the young people participating. The summit is planned for the 4 May 2006. Further information is available from Patrick Yu, Executive Director, NICEM email: [patrickyu@nicem.org.uk](mailto:patrickyu@nicem.org.uk) Tel: 028 9031 9666.

### DATE FOR NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the JCF will be agreed in consultation with the speakers and will be notified to you as soon as possible.

Joint  
Consultative  
Forum

Education Sector

## Quarterly Update

Update from Steering Group  
February 2006

### English as an Additional Language Provision

The Department of Education anticipates that a centralised EAL support service will be operational on an inter-Board basis within the next six months.

It has also advised that, in terms of the development of an EAL policy, intensive consultations have taken place with principals and teachers in schools across Northern Ireland. Meetings have also been held with the Boards and NICIE and further meetings are proposed. The Department has advised that further consultation, facilitated by an organisation with the Department actively involved, will be held with:

- Parents;
- Children; and
- NGOs.

It is envisaged that this consultation phase will conclude at the end of April, feedback will be analysed and a policy issued for public consultation.

An Education and Training Inspectorate survey on EAL provision is also awaited as it will provide recommendations which will be considered during the development of the policy. The Department is keen to conclude this consultation phase prior to the summer. If this does not prove possible it will defer the public consultation to the autumn. The Department will avoid consultation on this issue over the summer months (July/August).

## Public Private Partnership Programme

Pre-screening consultation has commenced on the following Public Private Partnership Programme:-

### South Eastern Education and Library Board

*(announced by the Minister in 2002)*

**Tor Bank Special School**

**Lagan College**

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Pre-screening consultation for the Western and North Eastern Boards' P P P Programmes will commence shortly.

### Western Education and Library Board

*(announced by the Minister in April 2004)*

Belmont House Special School, Londonderry

Devenish College, Enniskillen

Erne Special School, Enniskillen

Limegrove and Glasvey Special Schools, Limavady

Strabane Grammar School

### North Eastern Education and Library Board

*(announced by the Minister in April 2004)*

Ballymoney High School, Ballymoney

Rainey Endowed School, Magherafelt

The Steering Group was provided with an overview of the PPP process and an outline of the South Eastern Board's PPP Programme.

The following concerns emerged during discussion of the South Eastern Board's programme:-

- the level of control in terms of after/out of school activities;
- the ability of the schools to respond to demographic changes i.e., increase of migrant workers/children in the local community;
- the quality of the building and whether in the longer term it would be 'fit for purpose';
- cost of build – annual repayments over a 25 year period which have first call on the Public Authority's budget;
- timescale involved, PPP takes considerably longer from approval to project completion; and

- the possibility of a two tier workforce.

At the next meeting presentations will be provided on the Western and North Eastern Boards' PPP Programmes.

In regard to the issues which emerged and discussion around how best to build equality considerations into the PPP process, it was decided that a more comprehensive discussion was required. It was agreed that at the next JCF meeting the

- Department of Education, Education and Library Boards and CCMS
- Trade Unions
- Community/Voluntary Sector
- Equality Commission

should be invited to contribute to this debate. For this reason it is requested that all consultee groups make a special effort to attend.

## Resource Allocation Plans

Concern and frustration was expressed by consultees about the outcome of the screening process on the RAPs for the period April 2005 – March 2006, in particular, the perceived lack of acknowledgement of equality impacts.

Consultees emphasised the need for screening and consultation to take place on the RAPs for the period April 2006 - March 2007 and expressed the preference that an inter-Board approach be adopted to ensure consistency and make engagement in the process easier.

At the time of writing this leaflet the position in each Board is as follows:-

Board	Total Shortfall in Budget
Belfast Education & Library Board	£6.6 m
North Eastern Education & Library Board	£4.2 m
South Eastern Education & Library Board	£4.3 m
Southern Education & Library Board	£1.2 m
Western Education & Library Board	£2.0 m

Supplementary information will be issued when policy decisions on the RAPs have been taken by the Boards

## Review of Public Administration

The Department of Education has been invited to address the next meeting of the Forum on its vision for the future of education administration and the implications of the Review for the education sector.