

EONI MANAGEMENT BOARD MEETING

THURSDAY 21 AUGUST at 11.00AM

CONFERENCE ROOM 1ST FLOOR

MINUTES

Members:

Chief Electoral Officer (CEO)
Assistant Chief Electoral Officer (ACEO(R))
Assistant Chief Electoral Officer (ACEO(E))
Head of Corporate Services (HoCS)

In attendance:

PA to CEO
HR Officer (item 6)
Finance Assistant (item 7)

Apologies: Head of Information Services (HoIS),

		<u>ACTION</u>
1.	<p><u>Matters arising – Action Points</u></p> <p>Action points were reviewed – matters arising, on going actions and new action points have been recorded on the Board Action Point report.</p>	Board Members
2.	<p><u>Progress against targets</u></p> <p>CEO gave a summary on the progress against targets report as outlined in the Business Plan for 2008/09. The targets were discussed and reviewed.</p> <p>Target 2 – the CEO advised he had received a comprehensive report from CCMS. This will be forwarded to the appropriate staff to action.</p> <p>Target 5 – the CEO advised he has a meeting with NIO on 26 August for further discussions on anonymous registration.</p> <p>Target 14 – the ACEO(R) advised a paper outlining the options for production of EIC will be brought before the September Board. [Now scheduled for November.]</p> <p>Target 17 – the ACEO(E) advised that</p>	Board Members CEO ACEO(R)

	<p>consideration has been given to the possibility of issuing passes for those eligible to attend the court. There was discussion on how this could be actioned.</p> <p>Target 20 – HoCS advised the contract with B’Fast is up for renewal in February 2009 and put forward her proposal. After discussion it was agreed that the ACEO(E) would sign of the extension of the contract for a further year.</p> <p>Target 22 – the ACEO(R) advised that this had slipped due to staff shortages. She will make contact with Cable and Wireless to secure a completion date.</p> <p>Target 25 - there was discussion on AEA membership. The ACEO(E) advised she had spoken with John Turner and had been advised that the new year for members started in July. It was agreed that actions should now be taken to get all new members registered. It was also agreed that all new entrants should be advised of the AEA qualification.</p>	<p>ACEO(E)</p> <p>ACEO(R)</p> <p>ACEO(E)</p>
<p>3.</p>	<p><u>Schedule of future Business</u></p> <p>The schedule of future business was reviewed and updated. Board member should notify PA to CEO of any future business to be brought before the Board.</p>	<p>PA to CEO</p>
<p>4.</p>	<p><u>Management Information</u></p> <p>The management information was discussed and noted.</p> <p><u>Registration</u> – the registration statistics were discussed and noted by the Board.</p> <p><u>Media</u> – activities being carried out by various Area Offices were reviewed. It was noted that some offices are making good use of the local media.</p> <p><u>Other Public Contacts</u> – it was noted that hits on the website had reduced in July after a peak in June. After discussion it was agreed that this was most likely due to the recruitment exercises in</p>	

	<p>June that had closed by July.</p> <p><u>Office Visits</u> – it was noted that some Area Offices are not entering the required statistics on the Management Information sheets. The ACEO(R) will issue a reminder to all Area Offices.</p> <p><u>Complaints</u> – complaints were reviewed and noted.</p>	ACEO(R)
5.	<p><u>Review of Initiatives</u></p> <p>The CEO reported on comments made on the evaluation of initiatives undertaken by the AEOs. He said it was apparent that money is being spent on initiatives that do not produce results. The next initiative will be the schools visits to take place from early September. Comparison will be made on the costs of this initiative across the offices.</p> <p>The ACEO(R) reported that the mini canvass had still to run in a number of constituencies. Once all mini canvasses have been completed she will produce a report outlining the results.</p>	ACEO(R)
6.	<p><u>Personnel Report</u></p> <p>The personnel report was discussed and noted.</p> <p><u>Sick Absence</u> – the HR Officer reported on the sick absence levels and advised that the sick absence level was going up due to long term sick, although it is still better than the same period last year. One member of staff on long term sick has been offered part time hours, confirmation of acceptance is outstanding.</p> <p><u>Training</u> – the HR Officer asked the Board to approve the 2008/09 Training Plan which outlines all PDP requirements and applications for Adult Further Education. She advised that in order to ensure all training can be undertaken an additional £4k would be required. After discussion the Board approved this subject to the money being available. The ACEO(R) and HoCS will meet to discuss budget implications.</p> <p>The Board asked the HR Officer to complete a comparison with other Agencies on what they</p>	<p>ACEO(R)/ HoCS</p> <p>HR Officer</p>

	<p>spend on their training budget. This should assist with the EONI budget bid for the following year.</p> <p><u>Recruitment</u> – the HR Officer advised the Board on the recent recruitment and subsequent appointments. The only vacancy yet to be fill is at the Newtownabbey office.</p> <p>The HR Officer advised that she will be attending a seminar at which she will give out information on EONI job opportunities. She outlined the difficulties she had with the upper age limit on certain posts. After discussion the Board agreed that the upper age limit should be removed for those applying to be election or casual staff.</p>	
7.	<p><u>Finance Report</u></p> <p>The HoCS took the Board through the Finance Report up to July 2008. She explained that overall there had been an overspend on salaries. This was due to the increase in casual staff to assist with the mini canvasses and also the increase in the number of permanent staff.</p> <p>After discussion the CEO said that it was unlikely that the number of casual staff being used would be reduced between now and Christmas. It was agreed that the ACEO(E) and ACEO(R) would meet to discuss and agree the requirement for casual staff across the Area Offices. It was noted that the reallocation of budgets must be journalled and completed before the budgets are devolved to individual budget holders.</p> <p>It was agreed by the Board that when the budgets have been devolved only the individual budget holders will have the authorisation to sign off monies from their budget. A system needs to be put in place to ensure this happens. The need to scan vouchers was discussed. The Finance Assistant will take forward preliminary enquiries with FSD and consider how this can be made operational using TRIM.</p> <p>The CEO advised that there could be another potential pressure on the budget if EONI have to conduct a survey on the comprehensiveness and accuracy of the register. This is normally funded by the Electoral Commission. The CEO will</p>	<p>ACEO(E)/ ACEO(R)</p> <p>Finance Assistant</p> <p>CEO</p>

	formally advise ACEO(R) of this potential pressure.	
8.	<p><u>Audit Update</u></p> <p>The HoCS took the Board through the draft Strategic Internal Audit Plan, the Audit Needs Assessment Terms and the Audit Strategy. After discussion it was agreed that further work needed to be carried out. The CEO will circulate his further comments out of Board for comment.</p> <p>The HoCS advised that the Northern Ireland Audit Office will commence in Headquarters on Monday 15 September.</p>	
9.	<p><u>AOB</u></p> <p><u>Free Prize Draw</u></p> <p>The CEO advised that the first free prize draw was held on 14 August. One of the winners of the 3rd prize had agreed to receive the prize from a representative from EONI. This happened at the Banbridge Office on 22 August. A photograph and caption was sent to the two local Banbridge newspapers and two Downpatrick newspapers.</p> <p><u>AEO Meeting</u></p> <p>The CEO advised that a change in the way EONI deals with registration applications was discussed at the AEO meeting. The AEO in the Ballymena Area Office has been piloting a different approach. Discussions are ongoing.</p> <p><u>Information Commission Report</u></p> <p>The CEO advised that a report had been received from the Information Commissioner on a new scheme called the Model Publication Scheme. This document gives a comprehensive guide on what documents should be published on organisations websites. The Information Officer is currently working on this document and will submit her recommendations to the September Board.</p>	Information Officer
10.	<u>Next Meeting</u>	

	Next meeting – Thursday 18 September 2008 at 10.00am	
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The meeting concluded at 12.25pm