

**EONI MANAGEMENT BOARD MEETING**  
**THURSDAY 18 SEPTEMBER 2008 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 5)  
Finance Officer (item 6)  
Information Officer (item 7&8)

Apologies: Head of Information Services (HoIS),

		<b><u>ACTION</u></b>
<b>1.</b>	<p><b><u>Matters arising – Action Points</u></b></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> <p>Action 2 – Banbridge has been granted planning permission for signage. The AEO will now go back to the contractor to erect the signs.</p> <p>Action 4 – the ACEO(R) advised the trial on video conferencing options will be taken forward as part of the IT Systems Refresh and Replacement.</p> <p>Action 7 – ACEO(E) advised there were now 24 staff undertaking the AEA Foundation Programme.</p> <p>Action 9 – the ACEO(R) advised that a reminder had been issued to AEOs requesting statistics and completion of evaluation sheets for the mini canvasses. There are still some canvass forms to be processed. The CEO advised he would need the statistics as soon as possible because he would be reporting on the outcome of the mini canvasses to the Assembly Parties Panel on 7 October.</p>	<b>Board Members</b>



	<p>he would stop.</p> <p>Target 11 – there was a discussion on the timing of election training and when it would be best held to maximise its benefits. The ACEO(E) asked if a brief session to raise awareness of the main changes in the legislation could be included on the agenda for the staff away day in December. The CEO will devise a draft programme and will give consideration as to whether this training can be included. In the interim the ACEO(E) will produce a plan for the more detailed election training to be delivered in 2009 for consideration by the Board.</p> <p>Target 22 – the ACEO(R) advised due to the IT staff shortages insufficient pressure had been exerted on the contractors to complete on time and that completion was a few weeks late. She will supply the exact date for completion of work. There continues to be a problems with the Banbridge office and quotations are being obtained for a 4 mg line.</p> <p>Target 23 – the HoCS advised that budget training should be completed by the end of next week. Once this has been completed she would then meet with the ACEOs to ensure all issues had been covered.</p> <p>Target 27 – the CEO asked that the HR Officer produce a report on all actions that have been taken as a result of last year’s staff survey. This report will be circulated out of Board for consideration. If there is no staff event in January the Board agreed that next year’s survey will be circulated to the staff at the December training day.</p> <p>As a result of the report from the Information Commissioner’s Office on the Model Publication Scheme (item 7) it was agreed that the Progress Against Targets report will be put on the EONI website. The Information Officer devised a new version which is more user friendly for the lay person. After discussion the Board agreed that this format should be used in future to prevent duplication of work.</p>	<p><b>CEO</b></p> <p><b>ACEO(E)</b></p> <p><b>ACEO(R)</b></p> <p><b>HoCS</b></p> <p><b>HR Officer</b></p>
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<p>3.</p>	<p><b><u>Schedule of future Business</u></b></p> <p>The schedule of future business was reviewed and updated. Board member's should notify the PA to CEO of any future business to be brought before the Board.</p>	<p><b>PA to CEO</b></p>
<p>4.</p>	<p><b><u>Management Information</u></b></p> <p>The management information was discussed and noted.</p> <p><u>Registration</u> – the registration statistics were discussed and noted by the Board. The ACEO(R) highlighted that registration figures were up 3,000 on the same period last year.</p> <p>The CEO reported that there were varying levels of performance across the Area Offices. It was agreed that a table should be produced showing the number of transactions per Area Office/constituency since the management information statistics commenced.</p> <p><u>Marketing</u> – noted.</p> <p><u>Media</u> – activities being carried out by various Area Offices were reviewed. It was noted that one Office had not been able to secure any media coverage. The ACEO(R) will take this forward with the AEO.</p> <p><u>Other Public Contacts</u> – noted.</p> <p><u>Staff</u> – the CEO commented on the number of casual staff being used and thought this was unlikely to reduce before Christmas.</p> <p><u>Complaints</u> – complaints were reviewed and noted. The CEO advised that the Annex E letter is currently being revised as a result of the complaints received. Once the consultation with AEOs is complete the new Annex E will come into effect on 1 October.</p> <p>The HoCS suggested that the recent Fermanagh by-election could be used to test the accuracy of the register. It was agreed a letter would be sent to all addresses from which poll cards had been</p>	<p><b>ACEO(R)/ PA to CEO</b></p> <p><b>ACEO(R)</b></p> <p><b>CEO</b></p> <p><b>HoCS/ ACEO(R)</b></p>

	<p>returned as undelivered. This letter will give a 14 day notice for removals and include registration forms.</p>	
<p>5.</p>	<p><b><u>Personnel Report</u></b></p> <p>The personnel report was discussed and noted.</p> <p><u>Sick Absence</u> – the HR Officer reported on the sick absence levels. She advised that it is better than the same period last year and remains at under 4%.</p> <p><u>Training</u> – the HR Officer advised that the £4k, requested at the last Board meeting, had been secured to cover the cost of proposed training.</p> <p>As requested the HR Officer carried out a comparison with other organisations on spend on training budgets. This work confirmed that EONI spent less per staff member than comparable organisations. In light of this, and the additional training to be delivered next year, the Board determined to strive to increase the training budget by a minimum of £5K.</p> <p>The CEO said that he felt EONI was under funded for training. He stated that new staff should be properly trained on EROS, by Halarose, within 3 months of commencing employment. In discussion it was proposed that another, more cost effective option might be considered for supplying this training: to use a current member of EONI staff who is a trained trainer. It was thought this person could deliver both EROS and TRIM training to new entrants. It was agreed that the ACEO(R) would approach the member of staff to ascertain if they would be willing to undertake this role. The Board will be notified of the decision and further consideration will be give to this option. (This has since been agreed).</p> <p><u>Recruitment</u> – the HR Officer advised the Board on the recent recruitment and subsequent appointments.</p> <p>After discussion it was agreed that the trawl for Systems Analyst, due to run at the end of September, will not proceed at this time.</p>	<p>ACEO(R)</p>

<p><b>6.</b></p>	<p><b><u>Finance Report</u></b></p> <p>The Finance Officer took the Board through the Finance Report up to August 2008. He drew attention to some pressures and warned that this overall figure might be greater due to the way in which NIO had treated non-cash costs. Further he had asked NIO to check their figures for staff costs which appeared to be understated. The Board noted the position and will continue to monitor it closely as the autumn monitoring round approaches.</p> <p>In response to a question from the CEO, HoCS agreed to investigate the inclusion of Assembly election expenditure in the BC report.</p> <p>The Finance Officer said there are still monies set aside for IT work. The ACEO(R) advised that tenders had been received and once they have been considered she will advise him of the contract cost for the IT work. The CEO stressed that no IT contract is to be awarded until he is satisfied that it is affordable.</p> <p>The CEO stated that budget holders need to transfer monies between budget codes to deal with easements and pressures. Only if this is done on a regular basis is it possible to have an informed view of the overall position. The Finance Officer will issue an email to budget holders regarding this. He advised that the Finance Assistants are available to give guidance as needed.</p> <p>The CEO advised that budget holders should now start building their bid for 2009/10 having regard to their best estimate of the work to be undertaken and using a realistic inflation figure of 5%. Preliminary findings should be reported by the next Board meeting.</p>	<p><b>HoCS</b></p> <p><b>ACEO(R)</b></p> <p><b>Finance Officer</b></p> <p><b>Budget Holders</b></p>
<p><b>7.</b></p>	<p><b><u>New Publication Scheme</u></b></p> <p>The Information Officer reported that the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) had produced a report on a Model Publication Scheme which has to be implemented throughout all organisations by the end of the year. She</p>	

	<p>outlined what this would mean for EONI and what work would have to be undertaken to implement it. It was noted that most of the required information was already posted on the website. After discussion the Board agreed to adopt the ICO Report.</p> <p>The Board then discussed the implications of the report and agreed the necessary actions to be taken. The CEO highlighted that care would need to be taken by all staff preparing records that will be uploaded on to the website and that names should not be used.</p> <p>After consultation with key staff the CEO reported that some of them had reservations about having their photographs on the website. It was agreed that only those giving consent would have their photograph on the website and that a shadow photograph should be used for those who do not wish their photograph to be shown. Written consent must be obtained from the necessary staff members.</p> <p>The HoCS will provide the Information officer with all the necessary finance summaries and reports for the past two years.</p> <p>The Gifts and Hospitality Policy is currently being reviewed. It was agreed that the HoCS should issue a reminder to all staff about the need to update the Gifts and Hospitality register. A reminder should also be sent to all staff every 6 months.</p> <p>The Information Officer will issue a note to all staff advising them of the policy and reminding them of care to be taken when preparing paper that will be added to the website.</p> <p>It was agreed that a system will have to be put in place for notification to be given to the Information Officer about any changes to documents that are on the website.</p>	<p><b>Information Officer</b></p> <p><b>HoCS</b></p> <p><b>HoCS</b></p> <p><b>Information Officer</b></p> <p><b>Information Officer</b></p>
8.	<p><b><u>Draft Call Recording &amp; CCTV Policy</u></b></p> <p>The Information Officer reported that after consultation with key staff everyone seemed content with the draft Call Recording and CCTV</p>	

	<p>Policy. She advised that the only concern that was raised was about outgoing calls being recorded. After discussion it was agreed that the Policy should be amended to include that access will not be permitted to record outgoing calls as no warning that they are recorded can be given. Before finalising this the Information Officer will contact the NIO to ask how they deal with this issue.</p> <p>The Board agreed this policy subject to the discussed amendments.</p>	<p><b>Information Officer</b></p>
<p><b>9.</b></p>	<p><b><u>Good Relations Strategy</u></b></p> <p>The ACEO(E) outlined the reasons behind the Good Relations Strategy and the attached action plan, and also what it would mean for EONI.</p> <p>The Board discussed the findings of the internal survey and agreed it was appropriate to conduct an external survey to have a view of how third parties believed EONI performed in equal opportunities and good relations. One possible option is to use the mystery shoppers as different groups of people to carry out their work. The CEO has a meeting today with their representative and will discuss the possibility of this with her. (Since agreed).</p> <p>After discussion the Board agreed to adopt the strategy and action plan subject to the agreed amendments. It was note that it will go to formal consultation with all stakeholders during the autumn.</p>	<p><b>CEO</b></p> <p><b>ACEO(E)</b></p>
<p><b>10.</b></p>	<p><b><u>Business Plan Timetable</u></b></p> <p>CEO advised that EONI should again start planning for the next year's business plan. Over the next few weeks the CEO will circulate, out of Board, his first attempt at developing the mandatory targets, objectives and planning assumptions.</p> <p>The Business Plan is usually discussed at the January training event. If this is cancelled the CEO will discuss the draft plan at an AEO meeting and allow time for AEOs to discuss it with their staff and feedback the results. A similar</p>	<p><b>CEO</b></p> <p><b>CEO</b></p> <p><b>AEOs</b></p>

	opportunity would be provided for HQ staff.	
<b>11.</b>	<p><b><u>Risk Register Update</u></b></p> <p>The Risk Register was discussed and reviewed. New risks were identified. The CEO will update the Risk Register with the new risks and circulate out of Board for approval. (Since done).</p>	<b>CEO</b>
<b>12.</b>	<p><b><u>AOB</u></b></p> <p><u>Excess Flexi</u> – following concerns raised by AEOs excess flexi was discussed. It was agreed by the Board that from now until 30 November should be regarded as a registration period for all Area Office staff. Under the policy AEOs can authorised carry forward of excess hours during a registration period. The HR Officer will advise staff.</p> <p><u>Hillsborough Event</u> – the NIPSA rep raised the issue of offices closing early on 29 September. It was agreed that having regard to H&amp;S considerations this would be necessary in most cases. The CEO will issue a note to staff (since done).</p> <p>The HoCS asked if it would be possible to obtain a list of staff who will be attending. The PA to the CEO will get this list of the NIO and circulate it. (Since done).</p>	<p><b>HR Officer</b></p> <p><b>CEO</b></p> <p><b>PA to CEO</b></p>
<b>13.</b>	<p><b><u>Next Meeting</u></b></p> <p>Next meeting – Thursday 16 October 2008 at 10.00am</p>	

The meeting concluded at 1.15pm