

Strategic Investment Board

Chief Executive's Report – September 2013

PROGRAMMES AND PROJECTS

DESERTCREAT COLLEGE

STRATEGIC WASTE PROGRAMME

SUPPORT TO DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

The Department has asked SIB to augment our existing 'Business Case' team within DE. This currently comprises John Adamson and two Associate Advisers (ASAs). The request is for two additional ASAs.

I am meeting Paul Sweeny, DE Permanent Secretary, next week to discuss our work with the Department and will brief the Board at the meeting.

MLK // PbcRC

REGIONAL STADIUMS PROGRAMME

The appointment of David Martin as Deputy President of the IFA has put at risk DCAL's funding for the new stadium at Windsor Park. DCAL has now indicated that future public funding provided to the IFA may be put in jeopardy, stating: *"The recent changes to those seeking election to senior positions was a retrograde step and potentially breaches existing funding agreements between the Department and the IFA for development costs associated with the redevelopment of Windsor Park. The Department will... apply appropriate measures to protect any current and future public funding provided to the IFA."*

SOCIAL HOUSING REFORM

The appointment of four senior staff to the Social Housing Reform team was approved by the Remuneration Committee, subject to approval by OFMDFM. It later transpired that such approval was not required. We also notified SpAds, DFP and DSD of our intentions. Three letters of offer have now been issued but we await DSD clearance in relation to the NIHE Transition Director post, (see also H/AMU's report).

UNITED COMMUNITIES

I will brief the Board on changes that have been made in respect of the management of this programme.

REGENERATION SUPPORT TO DSD

Wesley Emmett is in discussions with DSD to jointly determine the best way for SIB to support DSD's regeneration work in the period up to and after the implementation of the RPA. The latter will transfer responsibility for most regeneration work to local councils. SIB is currently assisting with the Colin project, but DSD have asked us to consider establishing a support unit capable of working on a programme of regionally significant projects.

CULTURE COMPANY

Building 80/81 – the venue for the Turner Prize exhibition – was completed on time and within a revised budget. This was a result of exceptional work by SIB's project manager, Martin Turner, who had to deal with both a late start and the constantly changing requirements of a demanding client. Martin is now supporting Ilex by managing the construction of an underground car park at Ebrington.

The Culture Company Board has, at the direction of Derry Council, determined that the Company will be wound up on 31st March 2014. Our contribution to the project will, however, end on 31st December 2013, when Fiona Kane will end her secondment and our funding for the Project Director post in DCC will cease.

E-CARS

The question of who should fund the e-car infrastructure once central government support ends has been unanswered since the project's inception. The total subvention required is some £60-100,000 pa. The most desirable option would be for the Utility Regulator to agree that NIE could include the infrastructure within the latter's regulated asset base (RAB). This would enable the costs to be socialised across all consumers in the same way that the extra costs of renewable energy are shared out. However, the Utility Regulator is opposed to this approach on the grounds that (a) the relevant legislation does not permit it, and (b) it would be wrong to socialise a charge that is of benefit to such a few, mainly better off, drivers.

For the present DoE and DRD will share the ongoing costs as to do otherwise would risk central government clawing back the grants used to install the infrastructure.

MEETING WITH the NI Environment Agency (NIEA)

I met Terry A'Hearn, the new Head of the NIEA and discussed ways in which SIB and the Agency could work together more effectively. Terry indicated that his intention is to focus the work of his staff more closely on supporting delivery and that he is determined that it will be seen as an 'enabler' rather than an 'impediment'.

NIEA has asked SIB to consider providing a project manager for a project at Dunluce Castle and for assistance with its commercialisation work.

MEETING WITH DHSSPS

I met Andrew McCormick, Permanent Secretary at DHSSPS and discussed the Primary Health Programme and Desertcreat (see above). He has some concerns that the improved availability of capital undermines the case for using the 3PD procurement method for new health centres. His Minister remains committed to the approach, however, on the grounds that it frees up capital for use elsewhere.

RESEARCH & OTHER STUDIES

INFRASTRUCTURE AUDIT // REVIEW OF COMMISSIONING AND PROCUREMENT

The first drafts of both the *Infrastructure Audit* and the *Review of Commissioning and Procurement* are on the agenda for discussion at the September Board meeting.

INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT SEMINAR

The Economic Pact jointly announced by the Prime Minister, FM and dFM contained a commitment to run an 'Infrastructure Investment Seminar'. This is to be organised by Infrastructure UK from London, but DFP have asked SIB to provide local input and assistance. Leo McKenna will lead on this, with support from Carol Magill. I will keep the Board informed as the project develops.

GOVERNANCE, FINANCE & ADMINISTRATION

ASSEMBLY QUESTIONS

Since April 2013 SIB has received twenty-five Assembly Questions. Fourteen of these have been from Mr Jim Allister MLA (TUV) of which six have been laid this month.

MOVE TO CARLTON HOUSE

The move to Carlton House was successfully completed over the weekend of 7/8 September. There were none of the teething problems with IT and telephones that were a characteristic of the move to Clare House. My first impressions are that staff think the relocation will be good for the organisation.