

Integrated Progress Report on Action Plan for the Department of **Education and Skills (NCSE)**

TO BE RETURNED NO LATER THAN 2nd May 2012

1. Summary of Main Progress Achieved in the 12 Month Period 1 April 2011 to 31 March 2012

- NCSE Programme of Research further Progressed
- NCSE Policy Advice and Review Programme further progressed
- Nationwide service to schools and parents delivered and changes in allocation parameters delivered
- New strategic plan in place and being implemented in line with Memorandum of Understanding with DES
- Critical and essential functions maintained within reduced staffing and budgets

Public Service Agreement 2010-2014 (Croke Park Agreement) Integrated Progress Report

2. Detailed Progress Report for the 12 Months – 1 April 2011 to 31 March 2012

| 1. Better human resource management | | | |
|--|---|--------------------------------|--|
| <p><i>To include, for example, actions around the reduction of staff numbers; the redeployment of staff to areas of greatest need; the restructuring/reconfiguration of service delivery; changes to work practices; revisions in attendance arrangements; absence management; performance management etc.</i></p> | | | |
| Terms of the Public Service Agreement 2010 – 2014 | Action | Target Date for Implementation | Current Position |
| 4.4 | NCSE will review, develop and implement work practices, management and organisational arrangements having regard to strategic priorities, essential functions and policy changes. | Q1 2012 and thereafter | <p>NCSE has reviewed and put in place a new Strategic Plan for the period 2012-16. This Plan takes account of priority functions and available resources. A Memorandum of Understanding is agreed with the Department of Education and Skills. NCSE work plans are being implemented in accordance with the Strategic Plan and the agreed MoU.</p> <p>NCSE has continued to consult with staff and management and is committed to providing information to staff on reorganisation issues arising from the ECF and other policy changes. This is continuing and through IR, and partnership/management processes.</p> <p>NCSE staff and management are implementing various change processes to identify critical functions and priorities and to ensure their delivery.</p> |

| Terms of the Public Service Agreement 2010 – 2014 | Action | Target Date for Implementation | Current Position |
|---|---|--------------------------------|--|
| 4.3, 4.17 | NCSE will adhere to ECF limits and will implement agreed redeployment arrangements for the civil and public service | End 2012 and thereafter | NCSE has reduced its staffing in 2011 in line with ECF limits. Satisfactory progress is being made to ensure that the further ECF reductions in 2012 will be met. |
| 4.10, 4.11, 4.12 | NCSE will implement required new civil service staff conditions and management procedures. | 2012 and thereafter | This process is progressing in line with the civil service generally. The new sick leave procedures have been introduced. New PMDS procedures are being implemented. NCSE is continuing to ensure effective implementation of PMDS for all staff during 2011 and 2012. Arrangements for new underperformance management are being implemented in accordance with central guidelines and further training will be provided. |

2. Better Business Processes

To include, for example actions to increase efficiency and productivity; rationalise core structures, business processes, accommodation requirements etc; establish shared service approaches, establish cross-functional teams/ new work structures, optimise the potential of new technology to streamline operations and generate efficiencies etc.

| Terms of the Public Service Agreement 2010 - 2014 | Action | Target Date as per Current Action Plan | Current Position |
|---|--|--|---|
| 4.15 | NCSE will consider and implement suitable shared services options currently being developed in the civil service where they contribute to more efficient and effective provision of essential specialised corporate supports needed by NCSE. | 2012 and thereafter | <p>NCSE has migrated its payroll to a shared service in the Department of Finance resulting in an annual budget saving of €15k. NCSE will consider other financial shared service when available.</p> <p>NCSE is participating in the civil service HR shared service project due to go live in 2013 and has satisfactorily progressing preparatory actions in this regard. Existing shared services in training, pensions, HRMS, occupational healthcare are being utilised.</p> |
| 4.4 | NCSE will review and continue to develop its system of internal financial controls in line with organisational needs and governance requirements | 2012 and thereafter | <p>This process has progressed satisfactorily. New monthly grant draw down arrangements have been implemented which are intended to ensure that the NCSE holds the minimum level of State funding necessary to operate in its account</p> |
| 4.4 | NCSE will implement a new financial system and further consider shared service options | 2012 and thereafter | <p>NCSE financial system change at end 2011 was successfully planned and migrated from MYOB to Sage in line with urgent requirements and is being currently implemented. Shared services options in civil service and DES will be considered further when available.</p> |

| Terms of the Public Service Agreement 2010 - 2014 | Action | Target Date as per Current Action Plan | Current Position |
|---|---|--|--|
| 4.16 | NCSE will continue to maintain and develop its systems of on line banking, EFT payments and for on line staff expense claims. | 2012 and thereafter | On line banking System in place and being maintained and developed in line with needs. All staff now paid electronically on Department of Finance Core pay system. All payments to suppliers now paid electronically. On line staff expense claim System in place. |
| 4.15 | NCSE will participate in the development and implementation of the Civil Service Shared Service initiative | End 2012 | NCSE is participating in this initiative. |
| 4.15 | NCSE will continue to develop and further implement the human resources management system including pension administration modules in co-operation with CMOD. | 2012 and thereafter | NCSE is implementing the civil service HRMS system. Pension modules further developed and statements issued electronically to all staff. NCSE staff records verified and being maintained. NCSE inputting into CSSIP (portal for monitoring process for post utilisation across the civil service on a monthly basis). Central shared services for HR under development at Central level. NCSE is participating in this initiative |
| 4.13, 4.15 | NCSE will review, develop and implement its service delivery and attendance management policies and procedures including its electronic time and attendance systems | 2012 and thereafter | Electronic systems in place for staff on flexi time. Further review and development for other staff ongoing. |

| Terms of the Public Service Agreement 2010 - 2014 | Action | Target Date as per Current Action Plan | Current Position |
|---|--|--|--|
| 4.4 | NCSE will continue to appropriately develop and maintain its governance procedures in line with the governance code | 2012 and thereafter | Corporate Governance Procedures in place. Review and development ongoing. . Report made to C&AG annually. Whistleblower charter developed. Risk policy reviewed, agreed and being implemented. Guidelines and procedures being reviewed for new Council to be appointed end 2012 |
| 4.13, 4.14 | NCSE will develop operational budgets in line with its reduced provision in 2011 and ensure in so far as possible the maintenance and development of essential and priority services in line with its corporate procurement plan and risks | 2012 and thereafter | Operational budget for 2011 developed and implemented within prescribed limits 2012 budgets agreed and being implemented |
| 4.13 | NCSE will continue to develop and maintain its ICT systems and to establish and review out sourced arrangements to ensure efficient and effective delivery of high quality ICT supports for its services. | 2012 and thereafter | ICT system continued to operate effectively. Further developments being pursued to ensure and improve efficiency and effectiveness. |

3. Delivering for the Citizen

To include, for example, actions to enhance service delivery to the public, including changes to the technology used, more online services, service integration, efforts to reduce information burdens on citizens through better data management/sharing of data, including around identity etc

| Terms of the Public Service Agreement 2010 - 2014 | Action | Target Date as per Current Action Plan | Current Position |
|---|---|--|---|
| 4.4 | NCSE will continuously review and adjust service delivery arrangements to ensure that services to schools for children with SEN continue to be delivered on a nationwide basis to the highest possible standard with resources available notwithstanding reduction in staffing and vacancies. The NCSE will endeavour to maintain a national local service to all schools and parents, in particular where the SENO post is vacant on a short or long term basis. This will be achieved through the flexible redeployment of SENOs on a temporary basis, to cover such vacancies. | 2012 and thereafter | The parameters attached to the delivery of services to schools altered during the course of the year. In this context the NCSE adopted a flexible approach to ensure that the resource allocation process was effected and that a nationwide local service to schools and parents was maintained. |

| Terms of the Public Service Agreement 2010 - 2014 | Action | Target Date as per Current Action Plan | Current Position |
|---|--|--|---|
| 4.4 | NCSE is required by EPSEN to conduct research in SEN. The NCSE will continue to produce quality focused output at current level within available staff and budget resources through review and project management of commissioned work and conducting research internally as appropriate and feasible. | End 2012 | The research budget was reduced in line with our non-pay budget reduction but we will maintain our planned research programme through reductions in overall project costs. |
| 4.4 | NCSE is required by EPSEN to develop and provide advice in regard to SEN policy. A Framework for the Development of Policy Advice 2010-2012 and a programme for the issuing of such advice for 2012 has been agreed by Council. It is intended that this programme will be developed and delivered by NCSE within the agreed timeframe within available staffing and budgetary resources | End Q.1 2012 | Key objectives set out in the Policy Development Framework for period end Q1 2011 to end Q1 2012 were met. Additional work was also undertaken and delivered in the form of five submissions which were not anticipated in advance and which were delivered within the specified time-range, with no additional staffing allocations. |