

Public Service Agreement 2010-2014 (Croke Park Agreement) Action Plan

TO BE RETURNED NO LATER THAN Tuesday 11TH October 2011

Department/Office/Agency: National Council for Special Education

1. Summary of Main Progress Achieved in the Six Month Period April 2011 to September 2011

- Highlighted Item 1 : NCSE programme of research further progressed
- Highlighted Item 2: NCSE policy review and advice programme further progressed
- Highlighted Item 3; Nationwide service to schools and parents delivered and changes in allocation parameters delivered.
- Highlighted Item 4: ECF staff limits currently on target.
- Highlighted Item 5: Plans being further progressed for the identification and delivery and enhancement of essential functions and services in the context of ECF limits, budget constraints and policy changes

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2. Detailed Progress Update for the 6-months – April to September 2011

1. Better human resource management <i>Actions to include under this heading include reductions in numbers, redeployment, reconfiguration of service delivery, revisions in attendance arrangements, better attendance and absence management, etc.</i>			
Terms of Agreement 2010 – 2014 <i>(refer to all relevant paragraphs)</i>	Action	Target date as per current Action Plan	Current position
4.4	NCSE is a developing statutory agency of the Department of Education and Skills within the civil service which is required to implement policies determined by the Minister. NCSE will review, develop and implement work practices, management arrangements and priorities as necessary on an ongoing basis having regard to statutory requirements and policy changes.	2011 and thereafter	<p>Review and adjustment of work practices and priorities continued to ensure essential functions and services are delivered and developed within the reduced NCSE ECF limits 2011-2014 and 2011 budget.</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. This includes planning and implementing changes in the NCSE payroll and financial systems, in reviewing IT systems, supports and infrastructure.</p>
4.3, 4.17	NCSE will adhere to the terms of the ECF and will co-operate fully as necessary with and implement agreed redeployment arrangements for the civil and public service	End 2011 and thereafter	Current indications are that NCSE will fully meet its ECF target for 2011.

4.10, 4.11, 4.12	NCSE will adopt and appropriately implement and develop all new staff conditions and management procedures including sick leave, work sharing, merit based promotion, use of open recruitment, work experience and PMDS. NCSE will implement new sick leave reporting and recording arrangements in line with Circular 9/2010.	During 2011 and thereafter	This process is progressing in line with the civil service generally. The new sick leave procedures have been introduced. Plans and arrangements for the new PMDS procedures wef 2012 are being rolled out. NCSE is continuing to ensure effective implementation of PMDS for all staff during 2011. Arrangements for new underperformance management are being implemented in accordance with central guidelines and further training is being provided.
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2. Better Business Processes <i>Actions under this heading would include efficiency measures including procurement, revisions to business process, reconfigurations and other changes to service delivery options, including sharing of service, revisions to regulatory/inspection actions, and so on.</i>			
Terms of Agreement 2010 – 2014 (refer to all relevant paragraphs)	Action	Target date as per current Action Plan	Comment
4.15	NCSE will avail where possible of shared services (such as Finance, Payroll, HR, Pension) currently being developed in the civil service where this will contribute to more efficient and effective provision of essential specialised corporate supports needed by NCSE.	2011 and thereafter	<p>NCSE currently engaging with DPER and Education & Skills on shared payroll and financial service options. This may lead to annual budget saving of €15k per annum with some upfront cost.</p> <p>HR shared services being developed. Existing shared services in training, pensions, HRMS, occupational healthcare are being utilised.</p>
4.4	NCSE will review and continue to develop on an efficient and effective basis its system of internal financial control in line with organisational needs and governance requirements		New monthly grant draw down arrangements are being developed and implemented which will reduce cost of state borrowing on unnecessary surplus balances. This will give rise to state savings of €10-20k pa
4.4	NCSE will review and make appropriate arrangements to replace its current financial system as required		Specifications being developed. Shared services options in civil service and DES being considered.
4.16	<p>NCSE will continue to develop its systems of on line banking and EFT payments</p> <p>NCSE will continue to maintain and develop its systems for on</p>		System in place. All staff now paid electronically with e-payslips. Majority of suppliers now paid electronically. Ongoing development

4.16	line staff expense claims.		System in place. 80 travelling staff with annual budget of €250k. Ongoing development and improvement as appropriate.
4.15	NCSE will continue to develop and further implement the human resources management system including pension administration modules in co-operation with CMOD.		System in place. Ongoing development. NCSE works closely with CMOD. Pension modules being further developed. NCSE staff data up to date 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 will participate 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		Electronic systems in place for staff on flexi time. Further review and development to take place for other staff.
4.4	NCSE will continue to appropriately develop and maintain its governance procedures in line with the governance code		System in place. Ongoing development. Report made to C&AG annually. Whistleblower charter to be developed. Risk policy recently agreed
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 risk policies	2011 Q1 and thereafter	Operational budget agreed for 2011 and being implemented within budget limits. 2012 budgets being prepared.
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.	2011 and thereafter	ICT system in place. Further developments being pursued to ensure and improve efficiency and effectiveness.

3. Delivering for the Citizen *Actions under this heading would include efficiency measures and improvements to the processes by which your Department/body delivers its services to the public, including changes to the technology used, better data management, including around identity, and so on.*

Terms of Agreement 2010 – 2014 (refer to all relevant paragraphs)	Action	Target date as per current Action Plan	Comment
4.4	<p>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 nation wide basis to the highest possible standard with resources available notwithstanding short term and long term vacancies.</p> <p>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.</p>	2011 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.
4.4	<p>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.</p>	2011 programme of research and subsequently as planned	The 2011 programme continues as planned and is on target. Research costs are currently under review with a view to reducing project costs, while maintaining the same level of output for future work programmes
4.4	<p>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 2011 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</p>	2011 programme of advice and subsequently as planned	NCSE policy advice programme in 2011 is continuing to be developed and delivered within available resources. Policy Advice on the future role of Special Schools and classes has been published.

