

Waterford and Wexford Education and Training Board

MINUTES

Meeting Held 10th November 2020

*Held via Microsoft Teams,
Tuesday, 10th November 2020 at 4.00p.m.*

Waterford and Wexford Education and Training Board

Minutes of Meeting held 10th November 2020 at 4.00p.m.

Board Members in attendance: Cllr. Barbara-Anne Murphy (Chairperson presiding); Cllr. Joe Kelly, Mr. Senan Lillis, Cllr. Eddie Mulligan, Cllr. Kathleen Codd-Nolan, Ms. Sandra Fogarty, Cllr. Leonard Kelly, Cllr. Garry Laffan, Ms. Kate Miskella, Ms. Mary Ryan, Ms. Finola Walsh, Mr. Richard Byrnes, Cllr. Pat Nugent, Mr. Pat Rath, Cllr. Fiontán Ó'Súilleabháin, Cllr. Mary Farrell, Cllr. Susan Gallagher.

Also in attendance: Mr. Kevin Lewis, Chief Executive; Dr. Karina Daly, Director of Organisation Support and Development; Mr. Owen O'Mahony, Finance Manager; Ms. Eimear Ryan, Director of Schools; Mr. Ken Whyte, Director of Further Education and Training; Mr. Michael O'Brien, Innovation and Development Manager; Mr. Fintan O'Reilly, Corporate Services Manager.

Apologies (including those unable to attend due to technology-network issues/conflicting meetings):
Cllr. Lola O'Sullivan (Deputy Chairperson), Cllr. Aidan Browne, Mr. Larry O'Brien.

The meeting was conducted remotely using Microsoft Teams due to COVID-19 restrictions and advised to the Board in advance.

101120.01 WELCOME AND GENERAL

- (a) The Chairperson welcomed newly appointed Board Member Cllr. Susan Gallagher to the meeting and Board of Waterford and Wexford Education and Training Board following her nomination by Waterford City and County Council (Item 101120.05(a) also refers).
- (b) Following the Board's permission the Chairperson proceeded with the meeting in the order of items requiring adoption and approval (rather than listed order), to facilitate attendance of a number of Councillors at a statutory local authority meeting. The Board were reminded of the usual meeting protocols before the meeting commenced, including procedures around the issue of press releases and communications.

101120.02 DECLARATION OF INTEREST – CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Conflict of Interest Declaration Forms were circulated to the Board for signature and return *{in order to fulfil requirements as set out in CL0002/2019 Code of Practice for the Governance of Education and Training Boards}*. No conflicts of interest were declared.

101120.03 MINUTES

The Minutes of Waterford and Wexford Education and Training Board Meeting held on the **15th September 2020** were adopted: proposed Cllr. Joe Kelly; Seconded Cllr. Mary Farrell.

101120.04 FINANCE

- (a) **Finance Report:** The Finance Manager began by reviewing the Financial Statement for the third Quarter of 2020 (Ref. pages 40-41 of CE's Report) which consisted of Receipts totalling €93.5m to the end of September, Department of Education and Skills funding of €32m, SOLAS funding of €54m in addition to extra grants from both funders to WWETBs Covid-19 response. He advised that the closing bank balance at the end of September totalling €21.7m primarily arose due to lower activity as a result of the COVID-19 lockdown and timing of tranche funding. Budgeting at year end requires careful monitoring and processing of required expenditure by year-end. The process for 2021 to commence with service managers to cost requirements.
- (b) **2019 Audit of Annual Financial Statements:** The Audit was conducted remotely by the Office of the Comptroller and Auditor General led by Senior Auditor Mr. Christy Haughton and team. The Finance Officer notified the Board of the completion of WWETB Audit of Accounts and Financial Statements 2019 and subsequent approval by the Comptroller and Auditor General on the 6th November 2020 and signature by the Chairperson and Chief Executive. He commended the Audit Co-ordinator and all who contributed to a positive audit outcome. The CE thanked the Finance Manager for his exceptional management of this year's process and for the last number of years. The Chairperson added her thanks on behalf of the Board.

101120.05 CORRESPONDENCE

The following correspondence was brought to the attention of the Board and noted:

- (a) Correspondence confirming **Cllr. Susan Gallagher's** election by Waterford City and County Council at their meeting held 17th September 2020 for appointment to the Board of Waterford and Wexford Education and Training Board in order to fill vacancy following the resignation of Cllr. Breda Brennan (Ref. Section 37(1)(a) of the Education and Training Boards Act 2013). (Item 101120.01 also refers)
- (b) Notification from Music Generation of Department of Education and Skills sanction for **funding for Music Generation** Waterford and Wexford, October – December 2020.
- (c) Irish Public Bodies Insurance: **Music Generation Musical Instrument Fund** - sponsorship to all 16 Education and Training Boards for the three year period, 2020-2022.
- (d) Update regarding the Technological University of the South East of Ireland Project (**TUSEI**) dated 23rd September 2020 from their Communications Team was circulated.

101120.06 GOVERNANCE

- (a) **Finance Committee:** Report of meeting held 20th October 2020 was circulated and noted.
- (b) **Approval/Renewal of Leases:** Agenda item heading to have indicated **Purchase of a Site** was clarified to the Board by the CE and involves permission to purchase 2.07 acres of land at Knockenpower Lower, An Rinn, Co. Waterford. The site presented for sale is adjacent to Meánscoil San Nioclás and the design proposals for additional accommodation at the school are progressing well. The CE provided details of the site in question and the location which is advantageous due to proposed extension plans for the school. He responded to queries from Cllr. Eddie Mulligan on cost and Cllr. Joe Kelly regarding site value in a rural location. The CE assured the Board that a strict process is in place and carefully managed by the Department of Education and Skills in terms of the evaluation process and location can be a determining price factor in some cases. He confirmed the proposed purchase price to the Board and requested confidentiality due to the commercially sensitive nature of the information.
The Board approved the purchase of site as outlined to the Board; Proposed Cllr. Eddie Mulligan; Seconded Cllr. Kathleen Codd-Nolan.
- (c) **Governance Training:** Proposed ETBI Training in Governance for Board Members to be held on the 8th December 2020 and follows correspondence previously issued to Board Members in order to establish their availability for the training. The CE stressed the importance of this session for the Board in understanding the complexities of Board Members' role in membership of WWETB. This Governance Training has been well received by other ETBs and he strongly encouraged as many members as possible to attend.

101120.07 MEMBERSHIPS TO BOARDS OF MANAGEMENT AND WWETB COMMITTEES

A document was circulated to Board Members setting out vacancies on the Finance Committee, Youthreach Committee; Boards of Management at Bridgetown College, Enniscorthy Vocational College, St. Paul's Community College, St. Declan's Community College, Kilnamanagh Community National School and South Wexford and Waterford City and County Area Committees (a short Sub-Group meeting was held immediately prior to this meeting to discuss vacancies).

The Chairperson listed vacancies and invited nominations from those interested in serving on the various Boards and Committees. The following appointments were made:

| | |
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| <i>Youthreach Board of Management:</i> | Cllr. Leonard Kelly Proposed Cllr. Mary Farrell; Seconded Cllr. Joe Kelly. |
| <i>Finance Committee:</i> | Mr. David Doyle Proposed Cllr. Pat Nugent; Seconded Cllr. Mary Farrell |
| <i>St. Paul's Community College:</i> | Cllr. Susan Gallagher Proposed: Cllr. Joe Kelly; Seconded Cllr. Pat Nugent. (Cllr. Gallagher to liaise with the Principal and Chair of St. Paul's Community College re. meeting times) |
| <i>St. Declan's Community College:</i> | Cllr. Pat Nugent |

Kilnamanagh Community School:

Proposed Cllr. Eddie Mulligan; Seconded Cllr. Kathleen Codd-Nolan.

The Director of Schools outlined Primary School Board of *National* Management formation and membership make-up which includes the Principal and a second teacher at the school and listed the nominees (one remaining Board of Management nominee to be confirmed at a later date). The following appointments were made (*Previous appointments noted - Cllr. Mary Farrell and Mr. Pat Rath*):

Ms. Fiona O Dowd
Mr. Éamon McKenna
Ms. Bróna Kenneally
Ms. Jamie Lee Somers
Ms. Emer Swords

Proposed Cllr. Mary Farrell; Seconded Cllr. Garry Laffan.

Waterford City and County Area Committee:

Cllr. Susan Gallagher

The remaining Boards of Management and Committee vacancies (Bridgetown College, Enniscorthy Vocational College, South Wexford Area Committee) to be filled at a later date.

The Chairperson thanked Ms. Theresa Curtin-Byrne, Manager, Kilnamanagh Community National School in her position as Manager at Kilnamanagh Community National School since its inception. The CE on behalf of Executive thanked Ms. Theresa Curtin-Byrne for her support during the school start-up both to the Principal and the executive during her tenure.

101120.08 CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT

- (a) The Chief Executive's Report was circulated for information and the CE and Directors gave updates for their respective areas after the Presentation.
- (b) **Presentation:** Coronavirus/Covid-19 – 'WWETB Board Up-date' was shared on-screen. The CE gave a brief overview and the Directors gave an account under each of their areas of responsibility.

Further Education and Training

'Maintaining FET Provision and Service in the Pandemic': The Director of FET gave an overview of the Further Education and Training area which included responses and additional measures to combat and deal with Covid-19 going forward.

- A Response Plan is in place supported by guidance notes.
- He referred to management of Instruction and Apprenticeship Training and reported that the Return to work for Learners has progressed well with Declaration Forms and Inductions completed.
- The Covid-19 group chaired by the Innovation and Development Manager meet bi-monthly.
- Openings and Return to Work for Staff have gone well with no centre closures to date despite some confirmed and suspected cases. Good co-operation was reported overall and responses had been made to issues raised by Lead Worker Representatives (LWRs).
- He extended his gratitude to the Innovation and Development Manager and Team of COVID-19 Managers for their assistance and efforts in protecting learners while also completing their day to day work. This was endorsed by the Chairperson.

Schools

'Sustaining the Re-opening of WWETB Schools': The Director of Schools confirmed provision remains in place to help mitigate against Covid-19 arising in schools and provided some updates on measures in place which included the following.

- Concerns, issues and challenges still remain and priorities were listed and included supporting very high risk students. Contingency Planning being undertaken and reference was made to a departmental circular around the need to have teaching/learning platforms in place in the event of a school closure. One Wexford school was impacted due to staff absences and required a contingency plan for one day.
- There has been a low up-take of students sitting examinations from the class of 2020.
- Wellbeing: Return to work following mid-term was reported as stressful for principals and staff due to the requirement to meet Covid-19 government guideline standards while simultaneously maintaining regular normality in schools. WWETB schools were not impacted by the national recall of some PPE. Regular principal and deputy principal meetings for updates and information taking place on a weekly basis.
- Kilnamanagh Community National School received a positive oversight report following a recent Inspection as part of a Pilot Phase (Item 101120.08(f) also refers).
- A software solution being piloted at Bridgetown College investigated options for holding parent-teacher meetings on-line and the overall positive feedback was shared with other principals.

Organisation Support and Development

The Director of OSD was pleased to report a safe re-opening of schools and centres. She thanked Lead Worker Representatives, Managers, Principals, Co-ordinators and all involved on the successful re-opening of buildings safely to date and efforts continue to ensure safety (Lead Worker Representatives-listed on page 38-39 of Chief Executive's Report for information).

- Appreciation was extended to Board Members for their participation and support of the on-line interview process.
It is anticipated that some face-to-face interviews will take place in December with the Interview Board meeting together (socially distanced and guidelines permitting) and candidates being interviewed remotely.
- No product recall was required in the organisation following publicised changes to the approved list of product range. Temporary accommodation and facilities, particularly for PLC courses in dual provision schools, are being worked through.
- Wellbeing Sessions: A number of wellbeing seminars for various staff groups have been completed, facilitated by Mr. Shane Martin, Psychologist, 'Moodwatchers' and some principals have invited him to give a talk to staff.

The Chairperson invited questions and the following matters were responded to.

Interview Panels: Cllr. Mary Farrell requested clarity on Interview Boards meeting in person and the benefit of same. Her experience to date indicates that the on-line interview method has worked extremely well. The Director of OSD acknowledged its success and appreciated the positive feedback; however she explained the rationale which related to difficulties in securing sufficient interview board members agreeable to sit on an 'on-line' interview board. This slows down the administration of the process and where an agreed list of board members exist it has been decided that if board members are not available to conduct interviews remotely, the option of socially distancing in a room with the candidate being interviewed on-line should be provided.

Acknowledgement: Mr. Senan Lillis referred to the Director of Schools' Presentation in particular and enquired as to the possibility of a small token or gesture to the management and staff of each school and centre for Christmas in recognition of their work under extremely difficult circumstances to thank them on behalf of the WWETB. Cllr. Leonard Kelly seconded these sentiments and echoed the positivity and adaptability of staff and students and the commitment evident throughout the organisation. Ms. Sandra Fogarty was pleased to see some normality returning through the various events taking place, in a safe manner, and the positivity and adaptability of students. Cllr. Mary Farrell acknowledged the excellent work in schools and gave an example of a recent small gesture of appreciation for students and staff which received excellent feedback.

{Some members left the meeting as previously arranged}

A conversation followed on how best to appropriately acknowledge the goodwill shown. The Director of OSD paid tribute to the CE, her colleague Directors, Innovation and Development Manager, Teachers, Managers, SNAs, Office and ancillary staff, students etc. and all for the co-operation which has ensured very few confirmed Covid-19 cases have occurred to date within WWETB. The CE echoed this and outlined his appreciation of staff in the various centres and departments for supporting the necessary processes to progress WWETB's functions whilst maintaining a safe environment. He confirmed that he had been considering how best to represent or convey the appreciation to staff and he would take the board members encouragement on board in this regard; he also paid tribute to the Boards of Management and Board of WWETB for their support.

The Chairperson thanked everyone who has played such a role in bringing normality to the student population, for the excellent work being carried out and welcomed the concept of an acknowledgement to staff.

- (c) **Annual Report 2019:** The Director of OSD informed the Board that this year the Department of Education and Skills reviewed the key components of the annual reporting process for ETBs and a number of adjustments were suggested. Following the submission of the WWETB 2019 Annual Report and Chairperson's Comprehensive Report to the Minister (approved by WWETB previously) a number of amendments were required and detailed in the CE's Report (pages 36-38). The modifications referred to the Chairperson's Comprehensive Report to the Minister 2019; Revisions to the Annual Report: a replacement paragraph to reflect a more comprehensive compliance section, a statement of Board's responsibilities confirmations and functions, Board, Audit and Risk and Finance Committee meeting attendances were also documented.

The Board adopted the amended *Annual Report 2019*: Proposed Cllr. Joe Kelly; Seconded Ms. Sandra Fogarty.

A meeting will take place with the DES in December and its believed a recommendation may follow to ETBs that the Annual Report be submitted to the Board in Draft form before it is forwarded to the Department of Education and Skills.

- (d) **Board Self-Assessment Template:** The Director of OSD shared '*WWETB Board Self Evaluation*' on screen and gave a presentation on the combined findings following the completion of a self-assessment evaluation questionnaire by the Board Members. This forms part of WWETB obligations under the Code of Practice for the Governance of Education and Training Boards and completion is required annually. The results and feedback were consolidated and provided the Board an opportunity to review and comment on the result. The Board Self-Assessment Questionnaire was completed by entering a rating ('score') for 34 questions under various governance headings with an option to comment on 'what could be done differently'. Scoring ranged from 5 (very satisfied) to 1 (very dis-satisfied).

The returns overall indicated a very positive outcome under the various headings. A total of 16 completed questionnaires were returned and the Board Members were thanked for responding. The statistics indicated satisfaction rates of:

- 66% - very satisfied,
- 25% - satisfied,
- 8% - neither satisfied nor dissatisfied,
- 1% -dissatisfied and 0% - very dissatisfied.

The Director of OSD reviewed the responses and additional comments which mainly related to further training/mentoring, skills/knowledge and understanding/awareness of relevant information.

Training has been delayed due to COVID-19 but commencing in December (presentation took place last year on executive/reserved functions) and should the Board request it, additional training in any particular area can be facilitated.

In relation to awareness of information, each Director's report on their particular remit is laid out in the CE's Report to the Board at each Board meeting and Information is also available through various published documents such as the Annual Reports, Strategic Plan, Service Plan, Standing Orders, Code of Conduct and Code of Practice for the Governance of ETBs.

Details in relation to 'Internal and External Controls' and links between Committees and the Board were also explained. The Director of OSD thanked the Board Members for their input into the evaluation and invited comments.

Some comments from the Board related to the complex nature and expertise required throughout the various sections of the questionnaire for completion.

The CE acknowledge the high expectation on Board Members which provides oversight and welcomed the fact that over three quarters of the Members completed same. He took on board the observations such as the overwhelming nature of the questionnaire and disconnect between the expectations of DES for members of ETBs on the ground. He recognised the complexities for board members and will be critiquing the document. The Chairperson thanked the Director of OSD for her presentation and synopsis. The Presentation: 'Board Self Evaluation' to be circulated to the Board after the meeting.

- (e) **Patronage competition** – new 500 pupil post-primary school in Gorey due to open September 2021. An on-line poll runs until Monday, November 16th at 9.00a.m. asking parents/guardians of 2nd class to 6th class pupils in the feeder primary schools to indicate their preference for patronage. The competition is being run as a social media campaign and an on-line information session was held 9th November and was very well attended.

The CE invited the Director of Schools who is leading the process to give an update to the Board. He also invited suggestions from the Board on furthering the promotion and support for the campaign. Feedback has been positive to date notwithstanding the speed with which the process was required to be up and running due to the very short notice received from the Department of Education and Skills.

- Cllr. Fionntán Ó'Súilleabháin suggested a number of possible Fora for advertising/linking in with.
- The Director of Schools to supply a short information document to Board Members for sharing on social media as requested by Cllr. Mary Farrell.

The Director of Schools gave a brief presentation and update on the process so far. All schools have been informed and requested to circulate information. Various media platforms are being utilised as it is being run as a social media campaign. An on-line information session was held on 9th November and was well attended. Media interviews also took place and great support was received from both Creagh College management and staff. Gorey Community School management also assisted in this regard. The closing date for voting is Monday 16 November at 9.00a.m. The Chairperson thanked everyone involved and for the successful Information Meeting held the previous evening. She encouraged the Board Members to share the information on social media where possible.

CE's Report, continued:

- The CE listed recent senior management appointments.
- *Wexford Town Proposed post-primary school-replacement Selskar College:* Design Team Procurement Process underway, site identified and commencing discussions with Wexford County Council.
- A number of other major projects were listed and are progressing well.
- *Carrigfoyle (Forth Mountain) Outdoor Education and Training Centre:* The first meeting took place the morning of 10th November 2020 with the CE, other management representatives and management from Wexford County Council.
- *Wexford County Development Plan:* A submission to be lodged in due course.

Further Education and Training

- The Director of FET welcomed Ms. Sarah Lavan, Access and Disability Officer for FET to the team - the first such appointment in this area.

Innovation and Development

- High Performance Building Alliance (HPBA): A Memorandum of Understanding between Wexford County Council and WWETB has been signed and a Designated Activity Company established. An MoU between HPBA and the UNECE is expected to be formally signed in the next few months.
- SOLAS Innovation Fund: The NZEB Train the Trainer level 7 programme is due to begin on the 7th of November.
- NZEB: It is planned to convert two of the three days of the trades courses to on-line with one day only for practical work and the I and D Manager explained the rationale behind this.

- (f) **Inspection Report:** Kilnamanagh Community National School was circulated (Item 101120.08(b) also refers).

101120.09 BOARD/COMMITTEE REPORTS (including draft reports if not stated)

- (a) The following Board of Management Reports were noted:
- St. Declan's Community College held 5th October, 18th September and 28th August 2020.
 - St. Paul's Community College held 16th June, 11th August, 29th and 10th September 2020.
 - Bunclody Vocational College held 3rd March and 26th August 2020.
 - Kilnamanagh Community National School held 26th August, 24th June, 12th June, and 5th May 2020.
- (b) The following draft Area Committee meeting Reports were circulated and noted:
- North Wexford Area Committee meeting held 14th October 2020.
 - South Wexford Area Committee meeting held 19th October 2020.

101120.10 ETBI

The following were circulated and brought to the attention of the Board for information:

- (a) *ETBI Brief No. 22/2020:* Sectoral response to FE and HE COVID-19 Response Plan.
- (b) *ETBI Brief No. 23/2020:* Template Response to Queries re Article on Catholic Symbols in State Schools to be phased out.
- (c) *ETBI Reserve Members Forum* – Report of meeting held 24th September 2020 was circulated and Cllr. Kathleen Codd-Nolan gave a brief update on items relating to the on-going 'travel and subsistence' anomaly and 'branding' issues for ETB's. She reminded the Board to contact her should they have any matters they wished raised at ETBI level. In relation to the promotion of the Community National School model she conveyed the suggestion that a presentation could be made at local authority level and the CE confirmed that the concept of a WWETB presentation was previously communicated to both local authorities. The CE and Chairperson congratulated Cllr. Kathleen Codd-Nolan on her re-appointment as Chair of the ETBI Reserve Members' Forum.

101120.11 CIRCULAR LETTERS: Department of Education and Skills

{available: <https://www.education.ie/en/Circulars-and-Forms/Active-Circulars/>}. The following Circular Letters were adopted; Proposed Cllr. Kathleen Codd-Nolan; Seconded Cllr. Fionntán Ó'Súilleabháin.

- (a) 0073/2020: Updated Guide to Child Protection and Safeguarding Inspections in Post-Primary Schools.
- (b) 0072/2020: Updated Guide to Child Protection and Safeguarding Inspections in Primary and Special Schools
- (c) 0071/2020: Arrangements for the Election of Staff to Education and Training Boards (ETBs) (2020).
- (d) 0070/2020: Curriculum and assessment related developments at Senior Cycle with particular reference to school years 2020/21 and 2021/22 and the postponement of implementation of revised specifications.

- (e) 0069/2020: New Arrangements and Procedures for Appeals under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998 effective from 12 November 2020 onwards.
- (f) 0068/2020: Emergency Works Grant Scheme: Migration to On- Line Applications and Minor Revisions of Scheme.
- (g) 0067/2020: Advice on the use of assessment instruments/tests for Guidance or for additional and special educational needs (SEN) in post-primary schools.
- (h) 0063/2020: Revision of Salaries for ETB Staff other than teachers and SNAs with effect from 01 October 2020.
- (i) 0062/2020: Revision of Salaries of all staff paid directly by a recognised school or ETB with effect from 01 October 2020.
- (j) 0061/2020: Revision of Salaries for Special Needs Assistants (SNAs) with effect from 01 October 2020.
- (k) 0060/2020: Revision of Teacher Salaries with effect from October 2020.

101120.12 PRESS RELEASES: Department of Education and Skills

{available:<https://www.education.ie/en/Press-Events/Press-Releases/2020-press-releases/>}.

The following Press Releases were brought to the attention of the Board and noted.

- (a) 29 October, 2020 – Statement by the Department of Education: Review of biocidal products included on the Education Sector PPE Procurement Agreement.
- (b) 24 October, 2020 - Minister Josepha Madigan announces a consultation on the draft Inter Agency Good Practice Guidelines for schools on supporting students with Autism.
- (c) 24 October, 2020 - Minister Foley invites parents to express preference for patronage of four post-primary schools to be established in 2021.
- (d) 23 October, 2020 - Statement from the Department of Education.
- (e) 22 October, 2020 - Statement from the Department of Education Product recall notice on ViraPro hand sanitiser (PCS100409).
- (f) 21 October, 2020 - Minister Foley launches new resources commemorating the Decade of Centenaries in the Junior Cycle History classroom.
- (g) 19 October, 2020 - Statement from Minister for Education Norma Foley on Sustaining the Safe Operation of Schools during Level 5 Measures.
- (h) 16 October, 2020 – Minister Foley invites applications for patronage of four new post-primary schools to be established in 2021.
- (i) 16 October, 2020 – Statement regarding 2020 Leaving Certificate (Calculated Grades) appeals process.
- (j) 14 October, 2020 – Ministers Foley and Madigan announce that Budget 2021 brings significant increase in investment in education: over 2,100 new teachers and special needs assistants; important new measures in special educational needs and social inclusion.
- (k) Statement from the Minister for Education Norma Foley TD and the Department of Education and Skills regarding Leaving Certificate 2020 Calculated Grades Process.
- (l) 30 September, 2020 – Statement from the Minister for Education Norma Foley TD and the Department of Education and Skills regarding Leaving Certificate 2020 Calculated Grades Process.
- (m) 24 September, 2020 – Minister Josepha Madigan TD sets out Priorities for Action to reform special education provision in Ireland.

101120.13 A.O.B.

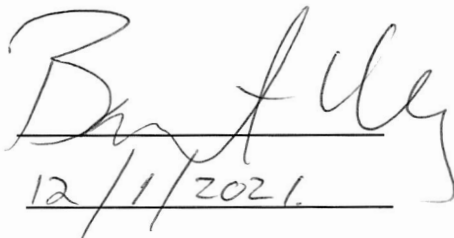
- (a) COTS Local Training Initiative (Career Opportunity Training Scheme): Cllr. Mary Farrell expressed her disappointment at the closing of the COTS facility in Kilmuckridge and the resultant loss of jobs and learners. This was regarded as a fantastic facility serving the rural area of Kilmuckridge; seconded by Mr. Path Rath. The CE and Director of FET expressed their regret at its closure and were aware of the efforts made to try and save it. The Director of FET confirmed that the Community Education Unit are engaging with and exploring opportunities in that area.

- (b) *Courses for Disadvantaged:* Mr. Pat Rath complimented teachers and all who have done magnificent work in ensuring schools remain open. However, he expressed concern for the delivery of courses to disadvantaged and vulnerable groups including women who are members of the travelling community during restrictions. He stressed the importance of the availability of services for those most at risk in the community especially if they are not in a position to take up remote learning and asked if they could be catered for. The Director of FET advised that groups are struggling to function at the moment due to Covid-19 restrictions but huge efforts are being made with over 40 groups. Additional funding has been secured under 'Mitigating Against Educational Disadvantage Fund' and Community Education Facilitators have been in contact with groups who are having difficulties so that funding can be dispersed in the community. It is also hoped to get more groups up and running.
- (c) *Mary Fitzgerald Scholarship:* Cllr. Fionntán Ó'Súilleabháin referred to a new bursary which was brought to his attention and available to facilitate sixth year students attend third level education. He referred to obstacles experienced by a particular student due to non-recognition of the bursary by a grant awarding authority. The CE agreed to revert with information to Cllr. Ó'Súilleabháin.

101120.14 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

- (a) The next meeting of Waterford and Wexford Education and Training Board is scheduled to take place on Tuesday, 8 December 2020 at 4.00p.m. to facilitate governance training for WWETB Members and the Chairperson encouraged members to attend the training.
- (b) **Schedule of Meeting Dates - 2021**
A Schedule of Meeting dates for 2021 will be forwarded to Board Members during the week and advised that Boards of Management will be notified of dates.

Signed:



Date:

12/11/2021

Documents circulated:

*Agenda, Conflict of Interest Declaration Forms
Minutes of meeting held 15th September 2020
Finance Committee report of meeting held 20th October 2020
Chief Executive's Report
Board vacancies on BoM/Committees
Board Self-Assessment Presentation – after meeting
Inspection Report: Kilnamanagh Community National School
North Wexford Area Committee report of meeting held 14/10/2020
South Wexford Area Committee report of meeting held 19/10/2020
ETBI Briefs Nos. 22-23/2020
ETBI Reserve Members Forum report of meeting held 24/09/2020
Update on Technological University of the S. East of Ireland Project*