

Waterford and Wexford Education and Training Board

MINUTES

Meeting Held 11^h May 2021

*Held via Microsoft Teams,
Tuesday, 11th May 2021 at 4.00p.m.*

Waterford and Wexford Education and Training Board

Minutes of Meeting held 11th May 2021 at 4.00p.m.

Board Members in attendance: *Cllr. Barbara-Anne Murphy (Chairperson presiding); Cllr. Lola O'Sullivan (Deputy Chairperson), Cllr. Aidan Browne, Mr. Richard Byrnes, Cllr. Kathleen Codd-Nolan, Ms. Margaret Darrer, Cllr. Mary Farrell, Ms. Sandra Fogarty, Cllr. Susan Gallagher, Cllr. Leonard Kelly, Cllr. Garry Laffan, Ms. Kate Miskella, Cllr. Pat Nugent, Cllr. Fionntán Ó'Súilleabháin, Cllr. Frank Quinlan, Mr. Pat Rath, Ms. Mary Ryan, Ms. Finola Walsh.*

Also in attendance: *Mr. Kevin Lewis, Chief Executive; Dr. Karina Daly, Director of Organisation Support and Development; Mr. Owen O'Mahony, Finance Officer; Ms. Eimear Ryan, Director of Schools; Mr. Ken Whyte, Director of Further Education and Training; Mr. Fintan O'Reilly, Corporate Services Manager, Mr. Michael O'Brien Innovation and Development Manager. Presentations by Music Generation Development Officers: Ms. Shauna McCullough (Waterford) and Ms. Katherine Atkinson (Wexford).*

Apologies: *Cllr. Eddie Mulligan, Mr. Senan Lillis.*

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

110521.01 GENERAL

The Chairperson outlined relevant meeting etiquette and protocols to the Board at the outset, emphasised confidentiality on all matters and restrictions on the release of press-media communications until agreed by the Chief Executive in consultation with the Chairperson.

110521.02 DECLARATION OF INTEREST – CONFLICT OF INTEREST DECLARATIONS

Conflict of Interest Declaration Forms were circulated to the Board for their 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.

110521.03 CONDOLENCES

The Board extended sympathy to the following on their bereavements:

- ~ *Ms. Jacqueline Sweeney on the death of her father Mr. Paddy Sweeney;*
- ~ *Ms. Rosarii Curran on the death of her father-in-law Mr. Jack Curran;*
- ~ *Ms. Mary Waters on the death of her mother Ms. Catherine (Kitty) Waters;*
- ~ *Ms. Gráinne Ní Lúbaigh on the death of her father Mr. Seán Looby;*
- ~ *Ms. Margaret Kelly on the death of her father-in-law Mr. Laurence Kelly.*

110521.04 CONGRATULATIONS

The following accomplishments were highlighted and the Board conveyed their congratulations to all concerned:

- (a) *Creagh College Students:* First year Junior Cycle Coding Short Course student Balazs Gyurko on winning overall first prize in this year's National Scratch Competition with his innovative project 'Help Our Planet'; 6th year Computer Science student Gabor Major who came first overall in the National 'Bebras Computational Thinking' National Final and second year students Niamh Browne and Bill Mullany who finished in the top 20% receiving a Merit award.
- (b) *Meánscoil San Nioclás:* 5th year student Seosamh Ó Maináin on his award of joint second place in Europe at the Youthstart European Entrepreneurship Awards.
- (c) WWETB Board member *Mr. Richard Byrnes* on his selection as an Area Representative, South East Region with the Teachers' Union of Ireland (TUI)

110521.05 MINUTES

The Minutes of Waterford and Wexford Education and Training Board (WWETB) meeting held on the **30th March 2021** were adopted; Proposed Ms. Mary Ryan; Seconded: Cllr. Kathleen Codd-Nolan.

110521.06 FINANCE

Finance Report: The Finance Report (Pages 39-40 of CE's Report as circulated) was noted.

The Finance Officer provided a summary of the WWETB financial situation for the first quarter of 2021 to the Board. The summary figures were broadly in line with the previous year; opening cash balance as at 31st March 2021 of €11,074,537; payments €27m, Receipts €34m reflecting receipt of SOLAS tranche funding and funding received from the Department of Education. Cash is lodged in an NTMA account to minimise negative interest accruing.

The 2020 WWETB Financial Statements and associated documents were submitted to the Comptroller and Auditor General by the statutory deadline of 1st April. The audit of WWETB Financial Statements 2020 is currently in progress - commencing at a significantly earlier date compared to previous years; the audit is being conducted online due to Covid-19 restrictions.

110521.07 CORRESPONDENCE (Item 110521.16(1) also refers)

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

- (a) Notice and information of **Annual General Meeting of IPB Insurance** 7th May 2021: WWETB nominee Cllr. Barbara-Anne Murphy attended the meeting remotely.
- (b) **Local Youth Club Grant Scheme** incorporating the National Quality Standards for Volunteer Led Groups 2021: Annual payment notification from the Department of Children, Equality, Disability Integration and Youth.
- (c) **WWETB Service Plan 2021:** Department of Education confirmation and consent for publication of Service Plan 2021 on WWETB website.

110521.08 GOVERNANCE

- (a) **Approval/Renewal of Leases** (Item 110521.16(1)(b) also refers): *Allied Hub Wexford and Units 218/219 IDA Industrial Estate Waterford.*

It was agreed to consider Addendum Item 110521.16(1)(b) and the Director of FET explained the proposal sanctioned to convert industrial buildings at the Allied Hub into a Further Education and Training College, referred to as a 'FET College of the Future'. The CE gave background details to the projects and communication received from the Chief Executive Officer of SOLAS for sanction to enter lease agreements for the Waterford Training Centre 'Techniform' and Wexford 'FET College of the Future' projects. He gave a brief overview of discussions and previous correspondence regarding the two developments for Apprenticeship and a pilot FET College.

The Board adopted entering lease agreements as outlined above at the **Wexford Allied Hub building in Wexford town and Techniform buildings, Units 218/219 IDA Industrial Estate Waterford:** Proposed Cllr. Garry Laffan; Seconded Cllr. Aidan Browne.

- (b) **Sale of property at No. 66 O'Connell Street, Waterford:** Confirmation of decision from the last WWETB Board meeting regarding the sale of property at No. 66 O'Connell St., Waterford (former Youthreach Premises). The Director of FET referred to the legacy building which is not currently fit for purpose. Condition reports were carried out and no other public body expressed an interest in acquiring the building. A request was made at the last meeting to once more give Waterford City and County Council the opportunity to utilise the building before it would go on the market. The CE read the relevant extract to the meeting from the previous Board minutes where it was agreed to dispose of the property on the open market pending confirmation at the May Board meeting. The Chairperson invited questions from the Board and no queries emerged; it was confirmed that the sale of the property at **No. 66 O'Connell Street Waterford** on the open market subject to statutory approval would proceed, in line with the previous meeting's resolution.

110521.09 NOMINATIONS/MEMBERSHIP TO BOARDS OF MANAGEMENT AND FINANCE COMMITTEE

A list of nominations to a number of Colleges and the WWETB Finance Committee was circulated to the Board and the Chairperson gave particulars of the nominees to the Board.

A Sub-Group meeting was held prior to the Board meeting and recommendations made were outlined.

The CE briefly outlined roles and experience of the Finance Committee nominees and indicated that the Committee had sought new members for some time.

The Chairperson listed nominees and the Board made the following appointments:

St. Paul's Community College	Mr. Ben O'Dwyer (replacing Keith Bailey Teacher Nominee – Male)
Selskar College	Mr. David Shore (replacing John Ryan Teacher Nominee – Male)
Bridgetown College	Ms. Tracy Kelly (replacing Finola Walsh – Parent Rep. – Female)
Coláiste an Átha	Senator Malcolm Byrne (Board of Management Nominee)

Proposed: Ms. Mary Ryan; Seconded Cllr. Mary Farrell.

Finance Committee	Ms. Lynda Lacey (External Member)
	Ms. Anita Power (External Member)

Proposed: Ms. Finola Walsh; Seconded Cllr. Kathleen Codd-Nolan.

110521.10 CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT

(a) The **Chief Executive's Report** was circulated to the Board for information. The Report details information and updates on Strategic Developments, Schools, Further Education and Training and Organisation Support and Development. The CE and Directors gave an account for their respective areas and questions were responded to. Some of the items highlighted included:

Strategic Development

- *Senior management developments:* Two Administrative Officers appointed to the Human Resources team and a number of senior permanent positions advertised in recent weeks.
- *Buildings:* Many projects continuing and positive developments taking place.
- *HPBA:* recruitment of a Director/Manager is currently taking place by the Wexford County Council/WWETB Designated Activity Company (DAC) (WWETB are partners with Wexford County Council - Cllr. Barbara-Anne Murphy appointed Chairperson of the HPBA). It was noted that Enniscorthy will be the third UN 'Designated Centre of Excellence' currently in existence worldwide and a lot of international interest has been generated in this area. A Memorandum of Understanding is expected to be formally agreed between the High Performance Building Alliance (HPBA) and the UNECE shortly.

Organisation Support and Development (OSD)

- *Appointments to HR Department:* The appointment of two new team leads was welcomed.

Further Education and Training (FET)

- *LTI:* A Presentation on Local Training Initiatives (LTIs) is scheduled to take place at the next meeting.
- *Apprenticeship:* Return to Training Centres of apprentices - details page 25 of CE's Report.
- *New course announced:* Polyethylene Electro Fusion Welding.
- *FET Access and Disability:* A graphical overview by the FET Access and Disability Officer's remit set out on page 21 of CE's Report.
- *Youth Services:* starting to re-open.

Schools

- *Board of Management Training:* the first general training session took place 28th April on-line and was well attended with a repeat of the session to take place in the coming weeks for those who were unable to attend the first session.
- *Magenta Principles Programme:* Long Term Planning - It is intended to review the programme to plan for the next academic year.

- *Community of Practice Special Education Needs (SEN)*: The Education Co-ordinator is undertaking research of the impact of the WWETB Community of Practice on the work of Special Education Needs Co-ordinators in schools.

(b) **Update on Coronavirus/COVID-19**

A verbal update of the current position was made by the Chief Executive and Directors.

CE Update: The Response Management Team and other management groups continue to meet regularly and cascade the various updates and guidance notes as appropriate.

Schools: A number of Covid-19 related school inspections has taken place since the last meeting. Some positive Covid-19 cases were reported, and school principals engaged with the HSE as appropriate and no school based Covid -19 transmission has been identified to date.

Students preparing for written examinations currently and schools will be closing to facilitate accredited grades process in accordance with national guidelines.

All schools have been provided with advice on end of year events - a cautious approach being taken, and risk assessed as required.

Staff who are pregnant and staff at very high risk will continue to work remotely until the end of the school year.

FET: Tuition has been mainly on-line and the return of some face-to-face opportunities for learning was welcomed. Apprenticeship training has resumed in instances where previously started and unable to complete tuition – other trainees back only to complete time sensitive projects.

Covid-19 Managers Group continue to meet fortnightly chaired by the Innovation and Development Manager; Covid Managers issue guidance notes as updated and the Director of FET complimented all Co-ordinators and Managers for their efforts.

Assessments: Alternative assessments to take place and LCA to continue with Youthreach centres closing to facilitate same in due course.

The FET Director was pleased with standards in place at the various centres visited.

OSD: A number of Health and Safety assessments were carried out as part of the general Health and Safety Programme - some Covid-19 related. Assessments commenced on FET Centres in recent weeks and a Health and Safety Audit by the Internal Audit Unit is currently underway.

Increased emphasis placed on the management and assessment of risk for the organisation.

The Chairperson thanked everyone for their management of the current situation and conveyed the Board's compliments to students and learners on their safe return to face-to-face teaching/learning and resilience displayed to date. The CE wished to be associated with the sentiments and praised management and staff across the organisation for their commitment. The number of Covid-19 cases has remained low with strict adherence to the guidelines; the work of the Covid-19 Managers and Covid Teams in ensuring the safety of settings and individuals alike was recognised.

(c) **Music Generation (Waterford and Wexford) Presentations**

The Director of OSD introduced the Music Generation Development Officers Ms. Katherine Atkinson (Wexford) and Ms. Shauna McCullough (Waterford) to the meeting. The programmes form part of a Music Generation National Development Programme aimed to create access to performance music education for children and young people across Waterford and Wexford.

At the beginning of the presentations both Music Generation Development Officers outlined their background, qualifications, and experience to date. They emphasised that the presentations provide a small snapshot and flavour of some of the programmes - further details on any aspect of the programmes are available and social media sites associated with the programmes are also available to view.

The backing and support received from both Local Authorities including their members and WWETB was acknowledged by the MG Development Officers and continue to strengthen the delivery of the music education programmes along with support received from the many links forged with partners, stakeholders and organisations; they extended their appreciation to the WWETB Communications team through Music Generation's presence on Social Media and other communication channels including printed articles featured in local newspapers such as the recent article on 'Mini Maestros'.

Music Generation Wexford

The Music Generation Officer Wexford Ms. Katherine Atkinson highlighted some of the benefits and advantages of the programme to children and young people who participate and the transformative effects on participants. She gave data on participant numbers engaged, educators, locations and instruments bank.

The programmes consist of early years, vocal, instrumental, rock and pop, ensembles and performances; the Vocal Programme works with 12 Wexford Primary schools and details provided on the various options.

- ≈ The Instrumental Programme operates within 18 Wexford primary schools and one of the partnership projects was highlighted: "Wexford Wind Jammers" Band Camp and a video was shown to the Board.
- ≈ Another project referenced was a Zoom on-line Ukulele Workshop for young players up to 18 years old which led to an on-line performance at the end tied in with Wexford County Council as part of the Cruinniú na nÓg programme.
- ≈ Details of a Uke-n-play Ukulele Wexford six week workshop with Gorey Youth Needs and FDYS and a short video demonstrating some work in Castletown National School was also displayed to the Board.
- ≈ Following on from a Song Writing project with young people from the Child and Adolescent Mental Health service (CAMHS) Wexford, a Song Writing workshop was developed with Music Generation Waterford, accessible to all young people and partnered with musicians. A "Barrows Song Lab" event was held over Easter: 'Songwriters Workshop for Teenagers' led by music educators on Zoom and some young people's compositions are available on SoundCloud.

Music Generation Waterford

Ms. Shauna McCullough, Music Development Officer, Music Generation Waterford gave a brief history of the origins of MG Waterford. The Programme reaches 4,000 children and young people, 17 music educators, 32 locations, over 3,500 instrumental bank provided and a map showing the geographical reach of MG Waterford was shown on screen. The Music Generation Programme in Waterford consists of four main strands of Musical beginnings – 0-7; Instrumental – based in schools, primary/secondary/Youthreach/Comhaltas branches, Youth Services; Ensembles – traditional, harp, vocal and classical guitar ensembles and CPD – work with Music Generation Wexford to provide support and training.

- ≈ The Waterford City Music Hub targets a defined disadvantaged area of Lisduggan and Ballybeg and communities surrounding and provides a creative, open space for children to explore, experience and learn to use a musical instrument and access any of the Programmes. Gratitude was expressed to the former and current principals at St. Paul's Community College for their support.
- ≈ Some pupils from St. Paul's Boys National School had an opportunity last year to perform in their local Shopping Centre at the 'Summer in the City Festival' in Waterford City.
- ≈ Pupils/Children from all over Waterford took part in "Brass off" culminating in a performance at the WIT Arena, accompanied by guest musicians from Ireland and abroad.
- ≈ Traditional Ensemble Programme - new music commissioned and students represented Music Generation nationally and internationally at events such as the ETBI National Conference in Wexford for principals and deputy principals, Ireland Funds International Conference; Creative Connexions Festival Spain and a short collaboration from some of the traditional Ensembles was played to the Board.

- Dungarvan Music hub: 15 young musicians receive tuition at the YouthReach premises.
- ≈ Online opportunities has enabled learning reach a wider audience living in remote areas such as the four week Ukulele Programme.

The presentation finished with an exclusive performance of 'Uke Rocks' - the culmination of a four-week Ukulele programme performing Guns N' Roses: 'Sweet child o' mine'.

The Chairperson and Board members congratulated all involved and praised the inspiring work taking place and the positive mental impact on young people throughout the communities of Waterford and Wexford. The Director of OSD complimented both Music Development Officers for their continuing drive and commitment to the programme and said that she was grateful to have them on board. The CE thanked all involved, the MG Development Officers who do a fantastic job, visible at the various events attended and credit was also extended to the Director of OSD who drives the programme and successfully secured the Music Generation programmes for Waterford and Wexford.

110521.11 POLICY

- (a) **WWETB Professional Learning and Development (PLD) Policy** was circulated. The Director of OSD gave an overview of the policy, available to all staff in the organisation and which supports staff engaging in relevant PLD learning and development. The WWETB Professional Learning and Development (PLD) Policy was noted by the Board.

110521.12 BOARD/COMMITTEE REPORTS (including draft reports if not stated)

The following reports were noted:

- (a) **Board of Management Reports:**
St. Paul's Community College reports of meetings held: 26th March 2021, 10th February 2021, and 2nd February 2021.
- (b) **Area Committee Report:**
South Wexford Area Committee report of meeting held 24th February 2021.

110521.13 ETBI (Education and Training Boards Ireland)

ETBI Reserve Members Forum: Reports of meetings held 24th March and 28th April 2021 were circulated to the Board for information and Cllr. Kathleen Codd-Nolan gave a brief account of the meetings and highlighted the following items:

- *Expenses/Fees paid to Board Members sitting on Interview/Selection Boards:* This matter was raised with the Minister for Education by ETBI and further representations are being made to the Minister to progress and address the anomaly (Item 110521.16.(1) (a) also refers).
- *Membership of Governing Body of Technological University:* An update is awaited from the Minister for Further and Higher Education, Research Innovation and Science regarding ETBI's proposal of three ETB nominees (from one) to the Technological University's Governing Body - further representations are being made.

110521.13 CIRCULAR LETTERS: Department of Education

{available: <https://www.education.ie/en/Circulars-and-Forms/Active-Circulars/>}.

The following Circular Letters were adopted: Proposed Cllr. Kathleen Codd-Nolan; Seconded Ms. Finola Walsh.

- (a) 0028/2021: Cost Limits for Post-primary School Buildings.
- (b) 0027/2021: Cost Limits for Primary School Buildings.
- (c) 0026/2021: Recruitment of Special Needs Assistants (SNAs) – Supplementary Assignment Arrangements for the 2021/2022 school year.
- (d) 0022/2021: Breastfeeding Breaks for all staff other than persons employed as Teachers and Special Needs Assistants In Education and Training Boards.
- (e) 0021/2021: Coronavirus (COVID-19): Arrangements for Teachers and Special Needs Assistants.

110521.14 PRESS RELEASES: Department of Education

{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) 28 April, 2021 – Fifth meeting held of Advisory Group on Planning for State Examinations 2021.
- (b) 27 April, 2021 – Ministers Foley and Madigan confirm patronage of new special school in Carrigaline.
- (c) 26 April, 2021 - Ministers Foley and Ryan launch €14 million 2021 Schools Energy Retrofit Pathfinder Programme.
- (d) 26 April, 2021 – Minister Foley announces €100,000 fund for grants to organisations delivering music education.
- (e) 23 April, 2021 – Minister Foley publishes the Education (Leaving Certificate) (Accredited Grades) Bill 2021.
- (f) 22 April, 2021 – Ministers Foley and Harris announce Joint Public Consultation on a National Strategy on Education for Sustainable Development to 2030.
- (g) 15 April, 2021 – Minister Foley invites applications from schools for funding to work together on Creative Projects.
- (h) 14 April, 2021 - Minister Foley launches 2021 Active School Week, promoting active wellbeing in our school communities.
- (i) 06 April, 2021 - Ministers Foley and Harris announce additional places on upskilling programmes for post-primary teachers in mathematics, physics and Spanish and new upskilling programme in Irish.
- (j) 05 April, 2021 - Minister Foley announces development of a New Digital Strategy for Schools.

110521.15 PRESS RELEASES: Dept. of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science

{available: https://www.gov.ie/en/search/?type=press_releases&organisation=department-of-higher_education_innovation-and-science} . (110521.16(2) also refers).

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

- (a) 2 May 2021: Minister Harris welcomes expansion of National Hairdressing Apprenticeship across 6 new locations.
- (b) 30 April 2021: Minister Simon Harris confirms Waterford IT and Carlow IT applications to establish a Technological University in the Southeast.
- (c) 30 April 2021: Minister Harris confirms Government commitment to reopen third level education
- (d) 28 April 2021: Ministers Harris and Collins meet stakeholders on new five-year plan to reform Apprenticeships.
- (e) 23 April 2021: Minister invites expressions of interest to fill vacancy on Governing Board of National College of Art and Design (NCAD).
- (f) 22 April 2021: Minister Harris meets National Youth Council and Youth Work Ireland to discuss youth unemployment.
- (g) 19 April 2021: Ministers Harris and Collins launch five-year Action Plan for Apprenticeship.
- (h) 16 April 2021: Minister Harris opens public consultation to inform the development of the next National Plan for Equity of Access to Higher Education.
- (i) 7 April 2021: Ministers Harris and Ryan launch 'Climate Ready' programme to prepare Irish businesses for climate change.
- (j) 5 April 2021: Ministers Harris and Collins announce important step in safety awareness licensing for construction and quarrying workers.
- (k) 2 April 2021: Minister Harris welcomes publication of report on rapid testing and confirms next steps for third level sector.
- (l) 1 April 2021: Minister Harris announces changes to the Student Grant Scheme for 2021 including changes to supports for post graduate students.

110521.16 ADDENDUM

- (1) **Correspondence** (Item 110521.07 also refers)
- (a) **Expenses payable to Interview/Selection Board Members:** A response from the Office of the Minister for Education was circulated to the Board. The communication indicated the current rates payable and confirmed that the Department of Education has raised the matter of increasing the rates payable within the ETB sector with the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform on a number of occasions and were advised that there was no change to the centrally determined rates in operation (Item 110521.13 also refers).
- (b) **SOLAS approval for FET projects** in Wexford Town and Waterford City (Item 110521.08(a) refers). Confirmation of SOLAS sanction from the SOLAS CEO for WWETB to enter into lease agreements with regard to the Waterford Training Centre Techniform and Wexford FET College projects.
- (2) **PRESS RELEASES: Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science** (available: https://www.gov.ie/en/search/?type=press_releases&organisation=department-of-higher-education-innovation-and-science). (110521.15 also refers).
Press Release dated 5th May 2021: Minister Harris grants Technological University status to Athlone and Limerick Institutes of Technology was brought to the attention of the Board and noted.

110521.17 A.O.B.

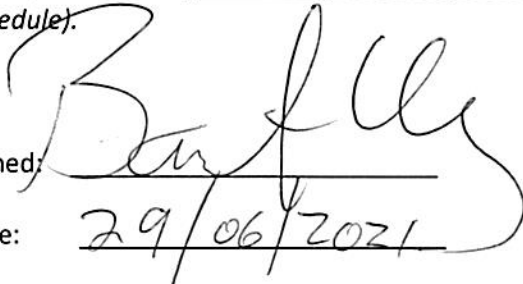
Leaving Certificate: The Chairperson wished students and learners well in the upcoming Leaving Certificate and PLC examinations and staff a safe and enjoyable summer. The CE thanked principals, managers and the Board in their support of staff.

110521.18 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of Waterford and Wexford Education and Training Board is scheduled to take place on Tuesday, **29th June 2021** to allow submission of the 2020 Annual Report by the statutory deadline of the 1st July – therefore, no meeting will take place on 13th July 2021 (as previously listed on the Meeting Dates Schedule).

Signed:

Date:



29/06/2021

Documents circulated:

Agenda

Conflict of Interest Declaration Forms

Minutes of WWETB meeting held 30th March 2021

Boards of Management and Committee Nominees Info.

Chief Executive's Report

Policy: Professional Learning and Development (PLD) Policy and Summary

South Wexford Area Committee meeting Report of meeting held 24/2/21

ETBI Reserve Members Forum reports of meetings held 24/3 and 28/4/21

DES communication re expenses to interview board members response