

Waterford and Wexford Education and Training Board

MINUTES

WWETB Meeting held 8th January 2019

Held at the Wexford County Council Offices, Carricklawn, Wexford

8th January 2019 at 4.30 p.m.

Waterford and Wexford Education and Training Board

Minutes of Meeting held Tuesday 8th January 2019

Board Members in attendance: Cllr. Jim Moore (Chairperson), Cllr. Michael J. O’Ryan (Deputy Chairperson), Cllr. Ger Carthy, Cllr. Kathleen Codd-Nolan, Mr. Geoffrey Collins, Cllr. Tom Cronin, Mr. David Doyle, Mr. John Evoy, Cllr. Mary Farrell, Cllr. Barbara Anne Murphy, Ms. Nessa Murphy, Cllr. Pat Nugent, Cllr. Fionntán Ó’Súilleabháin, Ms. Mary Ryan, Mr. John Wall, Ms. Finola Walsh.

Apologies: Mr. Mark Fitzgerald, Cllr. Lola O’Sullivan

Also in attendance:

Mr. Kevin Lewis, Chief Executive; Dr. Karina Daly, Director of Organisational Support and Development; Ms. Eilís Leddy, Director of Schools/Education Office; Mr. Ken Whyte, Director of Further Education and Training; Mr. Owen O’Mahony, Finance Manager; Mr. Michael O’Brien, Innovation and Development Manager; Ms. Adrienne Redmond, Meeting Support.

080119.01 PRESENTATION BY ‘SERVICES TO BUSINESS’ TEAM

The meeting commenced with a presentation on the new WWETB Services to Business Unit delivered by Mr. Eamonn McGettigan, Unit Manager, accompanied by Ms. Kathryn Bermingham, Contracted Training Officer.

A briefing document on the SOLAS ‘Supporting Working Lives and Enterprise Growth in Ireland: 2018-2021 further education and training national policy framework for skills development of people in employment’ was circulated to Members. The policy framework is being promoted as the ‘Skills to Advance’ initiative.

Mr. McGettigan delivered an overview of the WWETB ‘Services to Business’ Unit strategic goals and Quarter 1 ‘Skills to Advance’ actions. Queries were responded to and the initiative was well received by Members.

080119.02 CONDOLENCES

The Board extended sympathy to the following:

- Ms. Margaret Kelly on the death of her mother Ms. Ann Parle;
- The family of Mr. Jack Walsh (former Member and Chair of City of Waterford VEC).

080119.03 MINUTES

The Minutes of the Waterford and Wexford Education and Training Board meeting held on 6th November 2018 were adopted on the proposal of Cllr. Mary Farrell and seconded by Cllr. Kathleen Codd-Nolan. There were no matters arising from the minutes.

080119.04 FINANCE

(a) *Finance Report:* The Finance Manager presented the Financial Summary at the end of November 2018 including an update on Receipts and Payments (pages 24-26 of the Chief Executive’s Report refers).

The Finance Manager stated that the receipt of funds by tranche can result in an occasional requirement for an overdraft facility and he confirmed the extension of the existing facility to the end of 2019 with Bank of Ireland.

He reported that the process for the preparation of the 2018 Annual Accounts has commenced and noted that the further development of our budgetary systems for each school and centre will be prioritised for 2019.

(b) *Comptroller and Auditor General Account and Audit Certificate - 2017 Annual Financial Statements:*

The Finance Manager stated that the audit certificate received from the Comptroller and Auditor General following the audit of Financial Statements 2017, is presented for adoption. He informed the members that an ‘unqualified’ Opinion Report had been received from the C&AG.

It was noted that the C&AG had acknowledged the support received from WWETB staff during the audit process which had commenced in October and was subsequently certified on 17th December. Members thanked Mr. O'Mahony and his team for their work in implementing improvements within the financial systems and controls. The Chief Executive concurred, noting a positive management meeting with auditors.

The C&AG Certificate: 2017 Annual Financial Statements was adopted on the proposal of Cllr. Kathleen Codd-Nolan and seconded by Cllr. Michael J. O'Ryan.

080119.05 CORRESPONDENCE

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

- (a) *FET Planning and Funding 2019 – Strategic Planning 2018-2020*: Correspondence from SOLAS setting out the proposed FET provision funding along with the proposed FET capital funding figure for 2019. The CE confirmed that he welcomed the allocation which represents an increase on 2018 and that a bid for additional revenue will be submitted later in 2019 as has been the custom in previous years.
- (b) *Notification from the Department of Education and Skills to proceed with publication of WWETB 2017 Annual Report in accordance with Section 28 (3) of the Education and Training Boards Act 2013*: The Chief Executive indicated that a small number of statistical variances had been amended in order to ensure consistency with the Annual Financial Statements. In particular the learner numbers for PLC's and night classes had been adjusted. Discussion ensued regarding the challenge of reporting requirements for educational institutions in balancing the academic year with calendar year outcomes, and the concept of course/programme beneficiary versus individual learner. Cllr. Michael J. O'Ryan suggested this issue could be addressed at a national level by ETBI.
- (c) *Ministerial appointment to the Governing Body of Waterford Institute of Technology*: Following the resignation of Dr. Mark White, **Professor Riona Mulcahy** is appointed until 31st March 2020.

080119.06 GOVERNANCE

(a) Audit Committee Report

The Chief Executive read aloud the report from the Chairman of the Audit Committee, Mr. Eddie Breen, which included:

- Risk Management: A streamlining of the process is proposed to ensure effective and efficient practice;
- Fixed Assets Register: An emphasis will be put on the implementation of a comprehensive register across the organisation in 2019;
- Internal Audit Unit report on procurement in the Waterford Training Centre was considered by the Audit Committee and the findings and recommendations were deliberated upon. A number of measures and controls have been implemented consistent with the procurement policy.

(b) Finance Committee Report

The Chief Executive read aloud the report from the Chairman of the Finance Committee, Mr. Michael Veale, which included:

- Parents Association Bank Accounts: The process of closing Parents Association bank accounts is ongoing and some progress has been achieved. The Finance Manager is continuing to consult with schools and their Parents Associations on this matter.
- Comparison of Service Plan to Actual: The Finance Manager had delivered a comprehensive report at 31/10/18 to the Finance Committee. He anticipated that support would be forthcoming for additional funds for 2018 in the context of the 26% increase in student numbers.
- Proposed move of Waterford WCFE to College Street: The relocation will proceed on completion of WITs new PPP building, which is scheduled for 2022, and a prudent approach is being taken to the renewal of leases in light of this.

(c) Executive Response re governance and oversight arising from Secretary General, DES correspondence re: Statutory Investigation KWETB:

- The Chief Executive read aloud the draft response to correspondence sent to ETBs from the Secretary General, DES, re current practices in relation to governance and oversight, which had been circulated to Members in advance of the meeting.

The draft executive response acknowledged responsibility for prudent and ethical disposition of public monies, and stated the WWETB commitment to ongoing development, review and reform of existing policies. Compliance initiatives implemented since the publication of the Code of Practice for the Governance of ETBs (18/2015) were outlined including:

- Adoption of the Code of Conduct for Board Members;
- Code of Conduct for Staff drafted for implementation in 2019 following a consultative process;
- Standards in Public Office reminders to Board Members and senior managers, and collation and monitoring of resultant declarations of interest;
- Adoption of the WWETB Strategy Statement 2018-2022 prioritising “continued reform and development of organisational structure and design” and “ongoing policy development and high standards of governance and compliance”.
- Establishment of a WWETB Procurement Team and the adoption of a new organisation-wide procurement policy;
- Appointment of corporate governance and compliance officer at Grade VII;
- Utilisation of named sector-specific procurement projects;
- Participation nationally in the development of best practice tools to safeguard the implementation of high ethical standards e.g. Corporate Procurement planning tool for implementation by WWETB;
- Collaborate with ETB Legal Services Support Unit to support compliance with best practice.

WWETB propose to review the revised Code of Practice for Governance of ETB’s when published, and prioritise any further actions necessary for compliance.

The CE confirmed that the Department of Education and Skills had not requested a response; however members were in agreement that should such a response be required that it be submitted as outlined above, when appropriate.

080119.07 CHIEF EXECUTIVE’S REPORT

The Chief Executives Report had been circulated in advance of the meeting. The Directors and Managers in attendance presented their respective reports and updates and responded to matters raised. Some of the items highlighted included:

Appointments: Mr. John Connolly appointed Deputy Principal at Selskar College
Retirement: Mr. Gerard Morgan, Principal, Waterford College of Further Education.

Education *(It was agreed that the Addendum correspondence be dealt with at this time)*

Patronage - The Chief Executive gave the background to correspondence which had been received from the Right Reverend Michael A.J. Burrows, Bishop of Cashel, Ferns and Ossory, offering the patronage of Kilnamanagh National School to Waterford and Wexford Education and Training Board from the commencement of the 2019/2020 school year.

The Director of Schools/Education Officer reported that she had accompanied the Chief Executive to a meeting with the Bishop in December, who had expressed his wish to explore the potential for engagement with WWETB. The Director had outlined the ETB model of multi denominational primary schools, the Community National School. In his subsequent correspondence, the Bishop had formalised his offer of patronage of Kilnamanagh National School to Waterford and Wexford Education and Training Board (WWETB) from the commencement of the 2019/2020 school year.

The proposal was enthusiastically welcomed as an excellent opportunity to become a patron at primary school level and to establish a Community National School in line with the WWETB Strategy Statement (2018-2022). The Board, on the proposal of Cllr. Mary Farrell and seconded by Cllr. Fionntán Ó’Súilleabháin, unanimously approved in principle to accept the patronage from the commencement of the 2019/’20 school year.

The Members agreed that a considered approach to publicity and communications would be taken jointly with the Bishops office and that the matter would be treated as confidential in the intervening period.

Capital Investment Programme - Concerns were raised by members that sanction had not been received for further developments at Bunclody Vocational College and Bridgetown College. It was agreed to defer conveying the Boards concerns until the month end and to continue to follow up with the Department in the interim.

(At this point the Chairman offered his apologies and left the meeting for another engagement. The Deputy Chairman presided thereafter.)

Further Education and Training

The Director of Further Education and Training reiterated his satisfaction with the SOLAS allocation for 2019.

He acknowledged the Nearly Zero Energy Building (NZEB) initiative as an exciting development for WWETB, stating that the model may be replicated around the country by SOLAS. NZEB training is currently delivered during daytime hours however the introduction of an evening schedule may be explored to facilitate the upskilling needs of those already engaged in employment.

The Youthreach internal audit has been completed with no significant matters arising. The IAU ETB's report is awaited.

Local Area Plans – The Director referred to the proposal to develop Local Area Plans for targeted geographical areas, where high quality data analytics and needs analysis would inform the implementation of cross-programme actions. He expressed his optimism that funding for a pilot initiative commencing with Bunclody, would be secured from SOLAS, with a view to developing 11 areas across the WWETB region by 2020:

- i. Bunclody – *led by Ms. Fran Kennedy AEO* - Initial research findings will be circulated to the North Wexford Area Committee for their consideration in advance of their next meeting;
- ii. Dungarvan – *led by Ms. Mary Walsh AEO* - Initial research has been completed and will be followed by the needs analysis;
- iii. A third area has been selected but is not yet ready to proceed.

The Director of FET suggested that a Community Education presentation could be arranged for the March Board meeting and this was welcomed.

He noted that the CEs report contains reports to the Board from the individual programmes in the FET division.

Innovation and Development

The Innovation and Development Manager reported that six 'Youth Employability' proposals had been received for 2019 funding. Five of these had been selected from the evaluation process and submitted to the Department of Education & Skills for sanction.

Mr. O'Brien confirmed that oversight responsibility for youth projects across counties Waterford and Wexford, previously funded by City of Dublin Youth Services Board and the HSE, has transferred to WWETB with effect from January 2019, resulting in an increase from 13 to 33 external youth projects falling within WWETBs remit.

Wexford County Council were acknowledged for initiating the successful Wex-Sci programme of events during Science Week last November. The programme had resulted in a number of successful events including some examples promoted by WWETB in conjunction with Wexford County Council.

College Awareness Week: In excess of 800 second-level students attended workshops organised and run by the staff in Waterford Training Centre and held over three days during College Awareness Week in November 2018.

Organisation Support and Development

The Chief Executive and members welcomed Dr. Karina Daly, Director of Organisation Support and Development, who had recently returned from a period of extended leave.

Mr. Paul Glynn, Principal, Creagh College, was also thanked for his time as Acting Director of Organisation Support and Development during Dr. Daly's leave.

A brief discussion took place regarding arrangements for presentations at Board meetings. The Chairperson proposed that consideration be given to the meeting format to ensure an emphasis on the mandatory governance aspects of the Board function.

The following format was agreed in principle:

- Meetings will commence with business as usual, with a presentation break at 5.30 pm
- Presentations will be limited to approximately 15 minutes and 10 minutes for questions
- Meeting proper will reconvene directly following the presentation or at 6.00 pm at the latest.

080119.08 POLICIES

- (a) *Career Break Policy, Teachers and SNAs (for adoption)*: The draft policy which had been circulated to the Board in advance of the meeting was adopted on the proposal of Mr. John Wall and seconded by Cllr. Barbara Anne Murphy.
- (b) *Policy for Making Protected Disclosures by Staff of WWETB (amendment for noting)*: 4.2 (b) Protected Disclosure Officer – Dr. Karina Daly.

080119.09 BOARD/COMMITTEE REPORTS

The following reports (including draft reports) were noted by the Board:

- (a) *Board of Management Reports*:
 - Selskar College: Meeting held 03/12/18, 20/11/18, 11/09/18;
 - Meánscoil San Nioclás: Meeting held 25/10/18;
 - Bunclody Vocational College: Meeting held 23/10/18, 13/06/18;
 - Enniscorthy Vocational College: Meeting held 09/10/18;
 - Waterford College of Further Education: Meeting held 11/10/18;
 - St. Paul's Community College: Meeting held 15/10/18;
 - Kennedy College: Meeting held 04/12/18.
- (b) *Area Committee Meetings*:
 - North Wexford Area Committee: Meeting held 22/10/18, circulated.
- (c) *VTOS Board of Management*: Meeting held 06/11/18, circulated.

080119.10 ETBI

ETBI Reserve Members Forum report of meeting held 6th November 2018, which had been submitted for circulation in advance of the meeting by Cllr. Kathleen Codd-Nolan, was taken as read.

Cllr. Kathleen Codd-Nolan, also gave a brief update on ETBI actions, reported at their last meeting which had taken place earlier in the day. Cllr. Codd-Nolan reported that the ETBI Chief Executive and President had recently met with the Minister of Education and Skills and raised matters of concern arising amongst ETBs. This was welcomed as a preliminary step to progressing the focus of further discussions on resource issues and other matters of significance.

080119.11 CIRCULAR LETTERS: DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND SKILLS

The following Department of Education and Skills Circular Letters, were brought to the attention of the Board and adopted on the proposal of Cllr. Barbara-Anne Murphy and seconded by Mr. David Doyle.

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

- (a) 0084/2018: Replacement of Pension Related Deduction (PRD) by Additional Superannuation Contribution (ASC) and the Rates and Thresholds of the Additional Superannuation Contribution - With effect from 1 January 2019.
- (b) 0083/2018: Curriculum-related developments at Senior Cycle with particular reference to school years 2019/20 and 2020/21, including the discontinuance of Leaving Certificate Agricultural Economics.
- (c) 0082/2018: Cost Limits for Post Primary School Buildings.
- (d) 0081/2018: Cost Limits for Primary School Buildings.
- (e) 0079/2018: Arrangements for the Implementation of the Framework for Junior Cycle with particular reference to school year 2018/19.
- (f) 0075/2018: Revision of Salaries of all staff paid directly by a recognised school or ETB with effect from 1 January 2019.
- (g) 0074/2018: Revision of Salaries in Respect of All Staff Other Than Teachers and SNAs Employed by ETBs - With effect from 1 January 2019.
- (h) 0071/2018: Revision of Salaries for Special Needs Assistants (SNAs) - With effect from 1 January 2019.
- (i) 0069/2018: Clarification in respect of Circular Letter 0036/2018 - Prescribed material for Junior Cycle Irish - Specification for Junior Cycle Irish: English-medium Schools (L2).
- (j) 0068/2018: Clarification in respect of Circular Letter 0035/2018 – Prescribed material for Junior Cycle Irish – Specification for Junior Cycle Irish: Irish-medium schools (L1).
- (k) 0067/2018: Consolidation of arrangements for the offer of severance terms in the Civil and Public Service in ETBs.

080119.12 PRESS RELEASES: DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND SKILLS

The following Department of Education and Skills Press Releases were brought to the attention of the Board and noted: {Available on <https://www.education.ie/en/Press-Events/>}.

- (a) 28 December, 2018 - Positive engagement by schools in Gaeltacht School Recognition Scheme: Key messages from Inspectorate advisory visits.
- (b) 27 December, 2018 - Preliminary enrolments in Primary and Post-primary schools announced – Minister McHugh.
- (c) 21st December, 2018 - Minister Appoints new Chairperson Designate and re-appoints eligible members for a second term of the Council of National Council for Special Education (NCSE).
- (d) 19 December, 2018 - Minister McHugh announces extension of timetable for Leaving Certificate examinations.
- (e) 19 December, 2018 - Minister Mitchell O'Connor announces €1.65m in funding for innovative Teaching and Learning projects in the higher education sector.
- (f) 18 December, 2018 - Minister welcomes engagement of GAA with new Leaving Certificate Physical Education subject.
- (g) 18 December, 2018 - Minister for Education and Skills Joe McHugh, TD, and Minister of State at the Department of Health with responsibility for Health Promotion and the National Drugs Strategy, Catherine Byrne TD, launch 2018 schools Wellbeing and Lifeskills survey.
- (h) 17 December, 2018 - Minister McHugh announces that 307 schools will receive more than €40 million for Summer Works projects for delivery in 2019.
- (i) 13 December, 2018 - Pilot local Creative Youth Partnerships Announced.
- (j) 07 December, 2018 - Minister McHugh invites views on the future direction of policy and practice in relation to the granting of exemptions from the study of Irish in primary and post-primary schools.
- (k) 28 November, 2018 - Minister McHugh launches mid-term review of the National Strategy on Education for Sustainable Development 2014-2020.
- (l) 28 November, 2018 - Expenditure on Gaeltacht Education to double in 2019 – Minister for Education and Skills, Joe McHugh T.D.
- (m) 28 November, 2018 - Minister McHugh announces review of optional nature of Junior Cycle History
- (n) 27 November, 2018 - Minister McHugh welcomes consultation symposium on Relationship and Sexuality Education.
- (o) 16 November, 2018 - Irish Government Launches P-TECH Pilot to boost students' opportunities in the Digital Economy.
- (p) 13 November 2018 - Minister for Education and Skills invites applications from suitably qualified persons to fill vacancies on the Council of the National Council for Special Education (NCSE) and the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA).
- (q) 08 November, 2018 - Minister McHugh publishes Teacher Supply Action Plan.

080119.13 ADDENDUM - An Addendum was circulated to the Board.

1. Correspondence (080119.07 above refers).

2. Governance

(a) Additional Nominees of WWETB for Section 29 of Education Act Appeals Panels:

The Chief Executive recommended the extension of the Section 29 Appeals panel of WWETB representatives to include former ETB and VEC members, as well as retired Principal Ms. Suzanne Barrett.

This was approved on the proposal of Cllr. Mary Farrell and seconded by Cllr. Pat Nugent, with the proviso that current Board members should be prioritised where possible.

3. Press Releases: Department of Education and Skills The following Department of Education and Skills Press Releases were brought to the attention of the Board and noted:

{Available on <https://www.education.ie/en/Press-Events/>}.

- (a) 1st January, 2019 - Minister for Higher Education welcomes establishment of TU Dublin
- (b) 4th January 2019 – Record level of public interest in consultation on exemptions form Irish in schools
- (c) 7th January 2019 – Minister McHugh welcomes publication of Educational Research Centre Report on Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools Programme

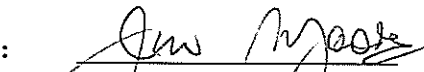
4. Scholarships

(a) Proposal to award up to five scholarships of one-year duration to female students attending WWETB schools during the 2018/19 school year who are successful in achieving entry to Craft Apprenticeships. This pilot initiative was approved on the proposal of Cllr. Mary Farrell and seconded by Mr. Geoffrey Collins.

5. AOB

The circulation of confidential documentation by email was queried, particularly in the context of GDPR requirements. The availability of MinutePad to WWETB members is the recommended option; however circulation via secure email addresses e.g. local authority or ETB, could be considered as a realistic alternative.

Signed:



Date:

