

Waterford and Wexford Education and Training Board

MINUTES

Of Meeting Held 14th September 2021

Held via Microsoft Teams, Tuesday, 14th September 2021 at 4.00p.m.

Waterford and Wexford Education and Training Board Minutes of Meeting held 14th September 2021 at 4.00p.m.

Board Members in attendance: Cllr. Barbara-Anne Murphy (Chairperson presiding); Cllr. Aidan Browne, Mr. Richard Byrnes, Cllr. Kathleen Codd-Nolan, Ms. Margaret Darrer, Ms. Sandra Fogarty, Cllr. Susan Gallagher, Cllr. Garry Laffan, Ms. Kate Miskella, Cllr. Eddie Mulligan, Ms. Mary Ryan, Cllr. Leonard Kelly, Mr. Pat Rath.

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 to the Board by: Mr. David Guiney, ICT Manager and Mr. Trevor Sinnott, Unit Manager, Services to Business Unit.

Apologies: Cllr. Mary Farrell, Mr. Senan Lillis, Cllr. Frank Quinlan, Cllr. Pat Nugent, Cllr. Fionntán Ó'Súilleabháin, Cllr. Lola O'Sullivan (Deputy Chairperson).

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

140921.01 PRESENTATION: CYBER SECURITY - GUIDANCE/INFORMATION SESSION

The Chairperson introduced Mr. David Guiney, ICT Manager, WWETB to the Board. The ICT Manager began his Presentation to the Board by providing a brief background into Cyber Security and outlined the agenda for his presentation as displayed on screen (copy of presentation to be circulated to the Board following the meeting).

The presentation began with an overview including world trends in digital transformation and some statistics from various businesses/companies in a European study on Cyber Security. The ICT Manager explained the most common and targeted types of attack to systems and gave the top common breaches in the education sector, an example of a recently publicised serious attack and the repercussions that followed. A significant challenge exists to mitigate against the risk of attack and he listed the WWETB actions and responses in place and highlighted a Cyber Security Action Plan presented to Senior Management. Additional Cyber Security insurance has also been procured and he thanked the Senior Management Team for approving extra resources to cover a number of projects.

He gave an overview of the entry in WWETB Risk Register. The enormity of the challenge was acknowledged and a number of tips to safeguard data (and procedures in a case where an account may have been compromised) including links to further information videos on cyber security awareness, were provided.

The Chairperson thanked the ICT Manager for his presentation and the Chief Executive advised that ETBI are liaising with ETB insurers in the development of a suitable package/product to cover Cyber breaches. He extended appreciation to the ICT Manager and staff for their ongoing work and input especially over the last eighteen months.

140921.02 WELCOME AND GENERAL

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

140921.03 PARENT REPRESENTATIVES

The Chairperson advised the Board that Ms. Finola Walsh's membership has ceased as a female Parent Representative on the Board of Waterford and Wexford Education and Training Board. Two parent representative vacancies currently exist on the Board of WWETB — one male and one female. She appealed for parents who may be interested in nomination to be put forward for consideration.

The nomination process for the appointment of Parent Representatives to ETBs was outlined to the Board by the CE {Item 140921.19(1)(c) also refers).

140921.04 CONFLICT OF INTEREST - DECLARATIONS

Conflict of Interest Declaration Forms were issued 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.

140921.05 CONDOLENCES

The Board extended sympathy to the following on their bereavements:

- ~ Mr. Breandán Ó Dufaigh on the tragic death of his son Breandán Óg Ó Dufaigh;
- ~ The families and friends of former students Thirapol "Nod" Sriphako and Conor O'Brien;
- ~ Mr. Adam Hannigan on the death of his mother Ms. Deirdre Hannigan.

140921.06 CONGRATULATIONS

The following accomplishments were highlighted and the Board conveyed their congratulations to all concerned in the All Ireland Schools Athletics Championships:

- Doireann Ní Icí from Meánscoil San Nioclás 3rd in All Ireland 3000m Walk;
- David Scanlan St. Declan's Community College 3rd in Discus competition;
- Julia Kelly St. Paul's Community College on her success in the Hammer competition;
- Members of the Wexford Camogie Team winners of All Ireland Premier Junior Championship Final 2021.

140921.07 MINUTES

The Minutes of Waterford and Wexford Education and Training Board (WWETB) meeting held on the **29**th **June 2021** were adopted; Proposed Ms. Kate Miskella; Seconded Ms. Mary Ryan.

Matters arising

Interview Boards/Panels: At the last WWETB Meeting held on the 29th June 2021 it was agreed by the Board to expand Interview Boards to include temporary supplementary nominees. A proposer and seconder was invited; this was adopted: Proposed Ms. Mary Ryan; Seconded Ms. Sandra Fogarty.

140921.08 FINANCE

- (a) **Finance Report**: The Finance Report WWETB (CE's Report pages 35-37 as circulated refers) was noted.
 - The Finance Officer provided a synopsis and breakdown for the period to the 30th July 2021 of the financial payments, expenditure balances and associated grants. Expenditure is expected to grow steadily and the higher current bank balance continues to be actively managed to minimise negative interest accruing.
- (b) Audit of Annual Accounts for year ended 31st December 2020: The Finance Officer anticipates the conclusion and signing of the Annual Accounts 2020 by the end of September. The Finance Officer was acknowledged for his work in this regard.
- (c) Renewal of Overdraft Facility 2022: Application to the Minister for Education for overdraft facilities to the 31st December 2022 (in accordance with Circular Letter 0044/2014 and Section 49 of the Education and Training Boards Act 2013).

The Finance Officer advised of correspondence received sanctioning overdraft facilities in the amount of €3,000,000 to the 31st December 2022 from the Department of Education following WWETB's request. The facility will assist in addressing any potential cash flow volatility and while unlikely to be required, provides welcome back-up in case of delays or uncertainty. The process will be initiated with the relevant banking provider.

The Board adopted the proposal to borrow in order to carry out the functions of the Board in the amount of €3,000,000 to the 31st December 2022 following the consent of the Minister; adopted: Proposed Cllr. Kathleen Codd-Nolan; Seconded Ms. Mary Ryan. {140921.09(b) refers}

140921.09 CORRESPONDENCE

- (a) Waterford Institute of Technology (WIT) Governing Body nominations: The following Student Nominees were recommended for appointment to the Governing Body of Waterford Institute of Technology following the expiration of the current student representatives' term as advised by WIT. The Board recommended Ms. Rachel McCartney and Mr. Killian Fitzgerald to the Governing Body of Waterford Institute of Technology and to seek the approval of the Minister: Proposed Cllr. Leonard Kelly; Seconded Ms. Mary Ryan.
- (b) Financial overdraft 2022: Sanction from the Department of Education for overdraft facilities in the amount of €3,000,000 was noted and adopted; proposed Ms. Mary Ryan; Seconded Cllr. Aidan Browne {140921.08(c) above}

140921.10 NOMINATIONS/MEMBERSHIP TO BOARDS OF MANAGEMENT AND INTERVIEW PANELS The Board appointed **Ms.** Ann Marie Curran to the Board of Management of *St Declan's Community College* (following the resignation of Ms. Emer Martin, Teacher Nominee – Female): Proposed Ms. Sandra Fogarty; Seconded Ms. Mary Ryan.

140921.11 GOVERNANCE

- (a) Chairperson's Comprehensive Report to accompany the Annual Report of WWETB 2020
 The Director of OSD advised of a number of minor revisions requested to the Chairperson's
 Comprehensive Report to the Minister 2020 (Statement to the Minister for Education required by
 the Code of Practice for the Governance of ETBs paragraph 6.8 to accompany the annual report) and
 listed them to the Board. (ref. page 28 CE Report). The Board adopted the amended
 Chairperson's Comprehensive Report; Proposed Ms. Mary Ryan; Seconded Cllr. Kathleen
 Codd-Nolan.
- (b) Charities Act (see 140921.19 (1)(a) below)
- (c) Oversight and Performance Delivery Agreements (see 140921.19(1)(b) below)
- (d) Parent Representatives on Board of WWETB: (see 140921.19 (1)(c)below).

140921.12 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 (FET) and Organisation Support and Development (OSD). The CE and Directors gave an account for their respective areas highlighting some items and answered questions.

Senior Management Developments: Ms. Margaret Kinsella appointed temporary deputy principal at Enniscorthy Community College (name correction on CE's Report was noted).

The CE responded to queries from Cllr. Kathleen Codd-Nolan on progression and advancement of the temporary accommodation facility at *Bunclody Vocational College* and Cllr. Leonard Kelly on progress of the new/replacement *Wexford post primary and primary campus* project respectively.

(b) COVID-19 Response Updates

Verbal presentations were provided to the Board by the Chief Executive and Directors of Schools, FET and OSD on the current position in relation to the Covid-19 pandemic response.

General

WWETB Schools have re-opened, FET programmes to open 21st September and administrative offices to open in October, all within the relevant Government guidelines.

Schools

Schools have re-opened in line with the Department of Education Guidelines and Covid-19 Response plans updated. The re-opening progressed well apart from a few cases of close contacts, however substitute teaching remains a difficulty.

Additional accommodation being provided at Selskar College was noted.

FET:

Youthreach Programme opened. A number of meetings have taken place with managers and Covid-19 Plans are in place in centres including physical distancing reduction to 1m until 22 October including other protocols and guidelines. The extra supports provided were acknowledged. Dungarvan College-Coláiste Dhún Garbhán and Selskar College Wexford Town to secure extra accommodation for PLC learners.

OSD:

Administrative Offices to open full-time from the 4th October, initially under a hybrid pattern of attendance of three days one week/two days the following week with a view to a full return to the office in January 2022.

The flexibility and support of staff over the last 18 months was acknowledged.

The Chairperson thanked management and staff, acknowledging the work involved with the move back to the physical workplace.

- (c) Presentation: Cyber Security Guidance/Information session (140921.01 above refers). A copy of the Presentation to be circulated to the Board after the meeting.
- (d) Ministerial visits WWETB projects/centres: The Board were informed of recent meetings:
 - Minister at the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage Darragh O Brien, TD and Minister of State at the Department of Justice with responsibility for Law Reform James Browne, TD visited the NZEB Centre on Friday the 3rd September.
 - Minister of State Joe O'Brien (special responsibility for Community Development within the Department of Rural and Community Development) and Minister of State James Browne on their visit to the WWETB FabLab in Enniscorthy.

(e) PRESENTATION: SERVICES TO BUSINESS

The Director of FET introduced Mr. Trevor Sinnott, WWETB Services to Business (STB) Unit Manager, outlined the background to the STB Unit and welcomed him to the meeting for his presentation and update to the Board Members.

The STB Unit Manager thanked the Director of FET and Chairperson and began his presentation which was shared on screen and briefly outlined his area of remit. The Services to Business Unit provides quality-based training and development to industries and businesses across Waterford and Wexford.

The presentation listed the number of active companies and apprentices in the Waterford and Wexford area including details of registrations, pre and post 2016, gender breakdown and the number of beneficiaries for the phases and courses. He gave an overview of the various Apprenticeship Support Services available such as the WWETB Speak Easy Programme and a dedicated pod for learning support utilising tutoring from the Adult Literacy Programme.

The *Skills to Advance* (funded tailored industry training to upskill and reskill existing employees) training throughout Waterford and Wexford engaged and corresponded with 75 companies and statistics were laid out for the number of training programmes including beneficiaries, industry sectors catered for, and current and future pilot initiatives.

The *Skills for Work* covers Upskilling of employee's digital, literacy and numeracy skills within the workplace.

The management development programme 'Step up and Grow Project' comprises 28 participating companies and seven mentoring disciplines.

Specialist Training Provision (Vocational Training and Employment of People with Disabilities to Assist Entry into the Labour Market) is provided through National Learning Network (NLN) Waterford, Wexford and Kilcannon, Enniscorthy – programmes from level 3-5 covering various training/learning and skills and the number of learners catered for was listed.

Questions were invited and contact details for any queries provided for the Services to Business Unit. The Chairperson thanked the Unit Manager for his presentation.

The Director of FET acknowledged the work carried out over the past difficult year and their success in retaining a similar number of employers and companies in training as in 2019 and noted increased numbers this year. A copy of the presentation to be made available to the Board following the meeting.

140921.13 POLICIES

The Corporate Services Manager presented the following policies and summary document to the Board; Ms. Lorraine Redmond was acknowledged for her work in standardisation and revision of WWETB policies which is on-going. No queries arose and the following Policies were noted by the Board: (a) Detection and Reporting of Fraud Policy;

- (b) Travel and Subsistence Policy;
- (c) Course Fee Policy;
- (d) Password Policy;
- (e) Network Security Policy;
- (f) Wireless Access Policy;
- (g) Procurement Policy.

140921.14 BOARD/COMMITTEE REPORTS (including draft reports if not stated)

The following Board of Management Reports were noted by the Board:

- (a) Kilnamanagh Community National School report of meeting held 27th August 2021;
- (b) Youthreach Board of Management meeting held 8th June 2021.

140921.15 ETBI (Education and Training Boards Ireland)

- (a) ETBI Reserve Members Forum Report: Cllr. Kathleen Codd Nolan gave a brief report of a recent ETBI Reserve Members Forum meeting where the following items were discussed:
 - (i) Payment of expenses to board members sitting on interview boards: Correspondence from the Minister for Education's Private Secretary on this ongoing issue of the payment of expenses to board members sitting on interview boards was read to the Board.

There is currently no scope to deviate from DPER rates and Cllr. Kathleen Codd-Nolan agreed to inform the Board of any progress following ETBI's follow up to the Minister. The Chairperson recommended it continues to be pursued. Cllr. Kathleen Codd-Nolan to forward a copy of the communication to the CE.

- (ii) Appeal to increase ETB Membership of Technological Universities' Governing Bodies:

 No deviation from the position of one ETB nominee to a governing body of a technological university has been forthcoming following an appeal made on behalf of ETBI.
- (b) ETBI Annual General Meeting 2021:
 - (i) Notice and Information on the Annual General Meeting 2021 of ETBI: Details of the 2021 ETBI Annual General Meeting to be held on-line/remotely on the 30th September 2021 at 11.00a.m. was provided to the Board. ETBs may nominate up to 26 delegates to attend the event, five of whom may be Voting Delegates.
 - (ii) Board Members and members of the Executive were invited to attend as Delegates and the following *Voting Delegates* were agreed by the Board:
 - 1. Cllr. Barbara-Anne Murphy
 - 2. Cllr. Kathleen Codd-Nolan
 - 3. Ms. Sandra Fogarty
 - 4. Ms. Kate Miskella
 - **5. Nominee**: a number of board members to be contacted and it was agreed that the fifth nominee would be selected based on availability.

140921.16 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 Cllr. Garry Laffan. (140921.19(2) also refers)

- (a) 0043/2021: Coronavirus (COVID-19): Arrangements for staff other than Teachers and Special Needs who are employed in ETBs.
- (b) 0042/2021: Coronavirus (COVID-19): Arrangements for Teachers and Special Needs Assistants employed in recognised Primary and Post Primary schools.
- (c) 0041/2021: Fair Processing Notice to explain how the personal data of students in post-primary schools on the Post-Primary Online Database (PPOD) will be recorded, processed and shared.
- (d) 0040/2021: Partial Return to Work for Special Needs Assistants employed in Recognised Primary and Post Primary Schools.
- (e) 0039/2021: Extended Breastfeeding Breaks for Special Needs Assistants employed In Recognised Primary and Post Primary Schools.
- (f) 0038/2021: Home Tuition Grant Scheme 2021/2022 Special Education Component.
- (g) 0037/2021: Revision of 2011 Entrant Teacher Salaries with effect From 1 March 2021 Application of Additional Incremental Skips.
- (h) 0036/2021: Application of 1st July 2021 FEMPI Pay Restoration of certain grades other than Teachers and SNAs employed by ETBs with salaries of between €70,000 and €150,000.

140921.17 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 (Item 140921.19(3) also refers):

- (a) 3 September 2021: Ministers Foley and Madigan congratulate over 61,000 students receiving their Leaving Certificate results today.
- (b) 27 August 2021: Minister Josepha Madigan welcomes a record number of new special class places as students return to school.

- (c) 25 August 2021: Minister Foley encourages students to enter competition to design new logo for BLAST.
- (d) 27 July 2021: Minister Foley confirms plans for full reopening of schools for the new school year.
- (e) 16 July 2021: Minister Foley welcomes EU/NRRP Funding of €63.5 million for School Broadband and Digital Infrastructure for Schools to support Students at risk of educational disadvantage through lack of access to digital infrastructure.
- (f) 13 July 2021: Minister Foley announces details of 39 organisations to benefit from participation in €100,000 Non-Mainstream Music Education Bursary Scheme.
- (g) 7 July 2021: Ministers Foley and Ryan welcome progress made under 2020 Schools Energy Retrofit Pathfinder programme.
- (h) 02 July 2021: Minister Foley launches innovative research project to support small schools in rural Ireland.
- (i) 30 June 2021: Seventh meeting held of Advisory Group on Planning for State Examinations 2021.
- (j) 24 June 2021: Minister Foley publishes two guides for Gaeltacht Schools on how to strengthen partnerships with naíonraí and with Gaeltacht communities to promote the use of Irish.
- (k) 24 June 2021: Minister Foley welcomes the preliminary report of the Steering Group on the Review of the School Transport Scheme.
- (I) 15 June 2021: Statement from Minister for Education Norma Foley TD.
- (m) 14 June 2021: Statement from Minister for Education Norma Foley 14 June 2021.

140921.18 PRESS RELEASES: Dept. of Further & Higher Education, Research, Innovation & Science {available: https://www.gov.ie/en/search/?type=press releases&organisation=department-of-higher-education innovation-and-science}. (Item 140921.19(4) also refers). The following Press Releases were brought to the attention of the Board and noted:

- (a) 27 August 2021: Continuation and expansion of Student Support Scheme for asylum seekers in the international protection system announced by Minister Harris.
- (b) 28 July 2021: Taoiseach Micheál Martin and Minister Simon Harris launch Creating Our Future to collect 10,000 ideas on future of science and research.
- (c) 21 July 2021: Minister Harris announces €105 million funding for safe on-site return to third level in September.
- (d) 19 July 2021: Ministers Harris and Naughton launch sexual consent online learning hub to promote education and information resources
- (e) 30 June 2021: New generation of female leadership in science, research and innovation connected at event co-hosted by Minister Harris.
- (f) 28 June 2021: Minister Harris addresses National Economic Dialogue on skills shortages in economy.

140921.19 ADDENDUM

(1) (a) Charities Act - Charities Governance Code: Compliance Code

The Corporate Services Manager shared a presentation on screen in relation to the 'Charities Governance Code: Compliance Code' and informed the Board of additional reporting requirements which the Charities Governance Code sets out as the minimum standards that charity trustees should meet. WWETB are obliged to report on compliance with the Code to the Charities Regulator - 2021 being the first year.

Board members, i.e. 'Charity Trustees' are required to complete a Declaration (required to be available for inspection by the Charities Regulator at any time – not for publication).

The Corporate Services Manager gave a brief overview which set out the context to the Charities Governance Code standards including principles and role of Charity Trustees. The ETB Act 2013 is interpreted as the Governing Document of the Charity and the distinction between reserved versus executive decisions is maintained. The Charities Regulator developed a template document for organisations and an ETBI Working Group provided a coordinated response and approach to completing the compliance record form. Each Board Member will be forwarded a Charity Trustee Declaration Form (as displayed during the Presentation) for completion and return via email or post to Emma Jordan or Margaret Kelly by the 30th September 2021. A copy of the presentation to be circulated to the Board after the meeting.

The CE added that the former VECs were registered charities for decades and this requirement ensures consistency. The Charities Regulatory Authority (Charities Regulator) ensures compliance of charitable organisations with the Charities Act 2009 and maintaining the public register of charitable organisations in operation.

- (b) Oversight Agreement and Performance Delivery Agreement: The Director of OSD confirmed revised and signed agreements returned between the Department of Education and Waterford and Wexford Education and Training Board and this was noted.
- (c) Parent Representation on the Board of WWETB: The CE highlighted to the Board existing vacancies on the Board of WWETB due to the end of tenure of both parent representatives and outlined the need to fill both vacancies as soon as possible. The names of any potential nominees who would be interested in joining the Board would be welcomed and forwarded to the relevant organisation in accordance with the nomination process (140921.03 also refers).
- (2) CIRCULAR LETTERS Department of Education

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

The following Circular Letters were adopted: Proposed Ms. Mary Ryan; Seconded Ms. Sandra Fogarty. {Item 140921.16 also refers}

- (a) Arrangements for the Election of Staff to the Board of LMETB: 0046/2021; 9 September 2021.
- (b) Covid Learning and Support Scheme: 0045/2021; 8 September 2021.
- (3) PRESS RELEASES: Department of Education

{available: https://www.education.ie/en/Press-Events/Press-Releases/2020-press-releases/}
The following Press Release was brought to the attention of the Board and noted. (Item 140921.17also refers).

- (a) Ministers Foley and Madigan launch Covid Learning and Supports Scheme for measures to mitigate learning loss and provide targeted additional teaching supports for students following Covid-19 school closures: 8 September 2021.
- (4) 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}. {140921.18 also refers}. The following Press Releases were brought to the attention of the Board and noted.
 - (a) 10-year adult literacy strategy launched by Minister Harris: 8 September 2021.
 - (b) Minister Harris congratulates students receiving CAO offers: 7 September 2021.

140921.20 A.O.B.

- (a) Resignation of Cllr. Susan Gallagher: The Board Members were informed of the resignation of Cllr. Susan Gallagher from Waterford City and County Council and therefore WWETB. Cllr. Gallagher was acknowledged for her service and work and wished every success for the future.
- (b) The Director of OSD responded to Cllr. Susan Gallagher's query which was recently resolved.

140921.21 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of WWETB is scheduled to take place on Tuesday, 9th November 2021. It is hoped to hold a Board meeting in person subject to regulations in place at the time and dependent on participants view to attending in person. It was agreed to review closer to the time and the Chairperson invited members to contact her should they have any issues. The CE agreed to provisionally book a venue.

The Chairperson thanked everyone and extended best wishes on the move back into offices, schools and centres.

Signed:

Date:

Documents circulated:

Agenda

Conflict of Interest Declaration Forms

Minutes of WWETB meeting held 29th June 2021

Chief Executive's Report

Presentations on: Cyber Security, Services to Business and Charities Act

(to be circulated after the meeting)

Summary and Policies: Detection and Reporting of Fraud, Travel and Subsistence, Course Fee, Password, Network Security, Wireless Access,

and Procurement Policy

Addendum