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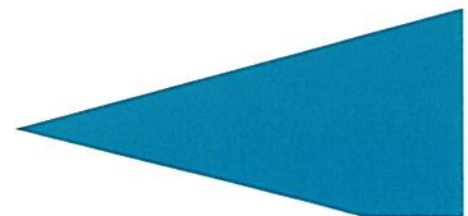
Bord Oideachais agus Oiliúna
Phort Láirge agus Loch Garman
*Waterford and Wexford
Education and Training Board*

Waterford and Wexford Education and Training Board

MINUTES

Of Meeting Held 10th January 2023

*Held at the Brandon House Hotel, New Ross Co. Wexford, Y34 KR62.
Tuesday, 10th January 2023 at 4.30p.m.*



Waterford and Wexford Education and Training Board

Minutes of Meeting held 10th January 2023 at 4.30p.m.

Board Members in attendance: Cllr. Lola O'Sullivan, Deputy Chairperson presiding, Cllr. Kathleen Codd-Nolan, Cllr. Tom Cronin, Cllr. Mary Farrell, Cllr. Leonard Kelly, Cllr. Pat Nugent, Cllr. Frank Quinlan, Mr. Richard Byrnes, Ms. Margaret Darrer, Mr. Senan Lillis, Ms. Kate Miskella, Mr. Pat Rath, Ms. Mary Ryan.

Also in attendance: Mr. Kevin Lewis, Chief Executive (CE), Dr. Karina Daly, Director of Organisation Support and Development (OSD), Ms. Eimear Ryan, Director of Schools, Mr. Alan O'Gorman, Director of Further Education and Training (Acting) (FET-A), Mr. Owen O'Mahony, Head of Finance, Mr. Fintan O'Reilly, Corporate Services (CS) Manager, Mr. Michael O'Brien, Innovation and Development (I & D) Manager, Ms. Sandra Murphy, HR Manager – Operations.

Apologies: Cllr. Barbara-Anne Murphy, Chairperson; Cllr. Aidan Browne, Cllr. Cristiona Kiely, Cllr. Garry Laffan, Cllr. Fionntán Ó'Súilleabháin, Ms. Sandra Fogarty.

100123.01 INTRODUCTION

The Deputy Chairperson Cllr. Lola O'Sullivan presided and welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies received were noted and listed above.

100123. DECLARATION OF INTEREST – CONFLICT OF INTEREST

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

100123.02 CONDOLENCES

The Board extended sympathy to the following:

- Ms. Grace O'Meara on the death of her father Mr. Michael O'Meara;
- Ms. Helen Hogan on the death of her father-in-law Mr. Michael O'Meara;
- Ms. Angela Madigan on the death of her father Mr. Denny Gleeson;
- Ms. Eimear Ryan on the death of her mother-in-law Mrs. Margaret Ryan;
- Ms. Elaine Murray on the death of her brother Mr. Paul Brunnock;
- Mr. Nicky O'Rourke on the death of his brother Mr. Denis O'Rourke;
- Ms. Marie Colfer on the death of her father Mr. Thomas Colfer;
- Mr. Joe Dreelan on the death of his wife Mrs. Anne Dreelan;
- The family of PLC Student Conor Doyle;
- The family of Mr. Davy Daniels, former Waterford Councillor and Mayor.

100123.03 CONGRATULATIONS

The Board extended its congratulations to (a) Ms. Lindsay Malone, Director of FET on the birth of her baby girl; (b) Creagh College on winning the Leinster Junior Hurling Championship.

100123.04 MINUTES

The Minutes of Waterford and Wexford Education and Training Board meeting held on the 8th November 2022 were adopted: Proposed Cllr. Pat Nugent; Seconded Ms. Mary Ryan.

100123.05 FINANCE

Finance Report: The Finance Report and WWETB Financial Summary to the end of November 2022 was circulated to the Board Members. The Finance Manager gave a financial update including breakdown on Receipts and Payments under the main grant headings and supplied additional details where necessary. He reported that pressure experienced on the main schools' budget was somewhat alleviated due to welcome additional one-off funding received from the Department of Education to assist schools with general running costs and which was appreciated.

Work is ongoing on the 2022 Financial Statements and he outlined the timeline to final submission of documentation. In general a good year was reported with overall totals expected to come in marginally ahead.

He alerted the Board of significant projects ahead over the coming months such as the ESBS Shared Services Project which will see several ETB payroll processes transitioning to a shared services model operated by the Department of Education Shared Services Unit. This will involve significant changes to ETB systems, processes and payroll.

WWETB has also been liaising with ESBS regarding the national move towards a single finance system to replace the two current systems in operation in parallel since the amalgamation of SOLAS Training Services and which will involve significant change to operations.

100123.07 GOVERNANCE

- (a) **Audit and Risk Committee and Finance Committee:** Both Committees met and continue to provide oversight – the Audit and Risk Committee held a meeting on the 7th December and the Finance Committee on the 14th December 2022.
- (b) **Approval/Renewal of Leases and Updates:** The Corporate Services Manager provided the following updates to the Board:
- (i) *Riverstown, Tramore:* received sanction in November for additional accommodation in Riverstown, Tramore.
 - (ii) *Convent, Tramore:* Sanction not received and have been advised that we may re-submit application at a later date.
- (c) **Nominations/Memberships to Boards of Management:** The Deputy Chairperson presented a number of nominees for approval and the following were appointed by the Board: Proposed Cllr. Pat Nugent; Seconded Ms. Kate Miskella:

College/Programme

St. Paul's Community College:

Nomination

Ms. Maeve Tobin - Teachers' Nominee
(female) (*replacing Ms. Tina Woods*).

Youthreach:

Ms. Ann Ryan - Teachers nominee (female).
Ms. Christine O'Neill – Parents' Nominee
Mr. Brian Leahy – Parents' Nominee
Cllr. Pat Nugent welcomed the addition of the three new Members to the Youthreach Board of Management.

(d) ***WWETB Representatives on Interview Panels/Boards.***

The Director of OSD shared a presentation with the Board: '*POR Interviews (Interviews conducted March 2022 – date)*'. Ms. Sandra Murphy, HR Manager - Operations gave an overview on the number of Post of Responsibility positions plus competitions held and advised that Board members would have been sought for the interview boards and in cases of unavailability, representatives were engaged. The presentation also included the agreed WWETB Board composition for interviews. It is proposed to hold interview training for the Board towards the end of February/beginning of March and the topics for inclusion were highlighted. In response to a query, the Director of OSD confirmed that the training could be carried out remotely if required.

The Director of OSD read the list of those currently eligible to serve on Interview Boards and Section 29 Appeal Boards to the Board for approval: "*Current WWETB Board Members in the first instance are eligible to serve on Interview and Section 29 Appeal Boards. In addition (a) former WWETB Board Members, (b) former VEC Members, (c) additional nominees: Mr. Eugene Power, Ms. Suzanne Barrett, Ms. Fionnuala Greene, Ms. Gráinne Ní Lúbaigh and (d) Principals/Deputy Principals/FET Management/SMT - if Board members are unavailable, to act as representatives on Interview Boards. An additional nominee to the Panel: Ms. Denise Lennon Hennessy was also tabled for approval.*

The issue of unsuccessful candidates seeking grounds for appeals, was raised by Mr. Richard Byrnes on foot of approaches made to him whereby advice is sought on possible grounds and criteria on which a result may be challenged. He explained that staff will examine the relevant circular and one criteria in particular relating to composition and make-up of interview boards. He emphasised that only a small number of individuals consider contesting a decision adding that no intention to hamper the recruitment operations or progress of the board or staff is meant in these circumstances and the vast majority of candidates accept the decisions.

A detailed discussion took place and a number of points were expressed in relation to the mechanisms around running successful competitions, in particular around established board composition and make-up.

- A number of Members volunteered explanations as to why they may not have been in a position to serve on interview boards in the past, quoting a number of obstacles including the ongoing issue of remuneration/compensation for their services, while acknowledging the necessity for timely processing of appointments.
- A number of members who sat on interview boards registered their contentment with decisions and outcomes in their experience of sitting on boards and acknowledged unsuccessful candidates' disappointment.
- The Directors and CE made contributions and clarity was sought to pinpoint the precise variability.
- It was clarified by the CE that significant progress has been made over a number of years in the recruitment process and *Circular Letter 0003/2018: Leadership and Management in Post Primary Schools* allows a process whereby an ETB can fill the vacancy on an interview board with a nominee drawn from a panel endorsed by the CE and with Board approval to continue with the current process was urged.

All contributions were acknowledged and it was agreed that Cllr. Kathleen Codd-Nolan would continue to pursue, at ETBI level, the issue of appropriate compensation for travel expenses and fees paid to ETB board members for interviews.

The Board unanimously approved the continuation of utilising, as heretofore, the **Panel of those eligible to serve on Interview Boards and Section 29 Appeal Boards comprising:** *“Current WWETB Board Members in the first instance are eligible to serve on Interview and Section 29 Appeal Boards. In addition (a) former WWETB Board Members, (b) former VEC Members, (c) additional nominees: Mr. Eugene Power, Ms. Suzanne Barrett, Ms. Fionnuala Greene, Ms. Gráinne Ní Lúbaigh and (d) Principals/Deputy Principals/FET Management/SMT – in cases where a Board Member is unavailable, to act as Representatives on Interview Boards in the event of being unable to secure Board Members for scheduled competitions, as presented by the Director of OSD and to include an additional nominee Ms. Denise Lennon Hennessy: Proposed Cllr. Pat Nugent; Seconded Cllr. Leonard Kelly.*

- (e) **Risk Management:** Risk Management is comprehended within the report of the ARC.
- (f) **Ethics in Public Office Act 1995 & Standards in Public Office Act 2001.** WWETB is comprehended by the Ethics in Public Office Act 1995 & Standards in Public Office Act 2001 and the CE urged timely completion of Declarations for the period 1 January to 31 December 2022 or part thereof. Designated Directorships - Statement of Interests Forms were issued to the Board and Committee members by email and blank forms were available at the meeting for completion if required.

100123.08 PRESENTATIONS

- (a) **COVID-19 Response Update:** operations continuing as per national public health guidelines.

(b) **Green Skills Agenda**

Mr. Alan O’Gorman, Director of FET-A made a presentation on: ‘*Green Skills Agenda*’ and outlined the background to the Board with reference to the SOLAS FET Strategy which seeks to progress sustainable principles across green skills areas to address environmental matters. A SOLAS/ETB NZEB Oversight Group for Centres of Excellence has been established which include five additional ETBs along with Waterford and Wexford.

‘Retrofitting Skills’ and ‘Green Skills for All’ are specific targets in the Strategic Performance Agreement under the ‘Targeting Key Skills’ theme and Mr. O’Gorman gave a summary. A decline in numbers is envisaged due to five other ETBs rolling out NZEB in the Retrofitting Skills. In relation to ‘Green Skills for all’, the achievement of numbers is largely dependent on the successful rollout of the eCollege module. WWETB hosted the first ever FET Green Summit in 2022 on behalf of SOLAS and ETBI and WWETB has been instrumental in the national development of NZEB and Retrofit. The Director of FET-A then introduced the Innovation & Development (I & D) Manager Mr. Michael O’Brien to the meeting.

The I & D Manager outlined the current WWETB range of NZEB related courses adding that he believed that NZEB training for Trades would need to be mandatory to ensure greater participation by construction industry staff. He gave details on a number of the courses and their evolution such as the inclusion of a virtual reality component in the Retrofitting Course. The NZEB General Operatives City & Guilds assured programme is delivered through the Waterford Training Centre and a number of additional courses were also included in the presentation. The FabLab continues to create other disciplines for 3D printing. WWETB, as part of the Irish Delegation, attended the first meeting of the International Centres of Excellence on High Performance Building in New York. The meeting was attended by the Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations.

(c) **Strategy Statement: Draft:**

Dr. Karina Daly, Director of OSD provided a Strategy Development Update to the Board. (A ‘*Strategy Statement 2023-2027*’ presentation was delivered at the last board meeting).

The update listed the four Core values with the addition of ‘Sustainability’ and the six themes which emerged were listed namely: *Quality, Schools/Colleges of the Future, Communications and Marketing, Technology Enhanced Learning/Digital Learning, Health and Wellbeing and Climate Action and Sustainability.*

The next steps were laid out including presentation to the Board at the February meeting of the final document. All contributors were thanked for their immense input and engagement throughout the process and consultation is still open.

- (d) **Apprenticeship Scholarship:** The Chief Executive CE informed the Board in relation to a philanthropic donation of €20,000 for the provision of a scholarship to an apprentice and further details expected for the next Board meeting.

100123.10 BOARD OF MANAGEMENT/COMMITTEE REPORTS (including Draft Reports)

(a) **Kilnamanagh Community National School:**

Cllr. Mary Farrell highlighted the concerns of some members of Kilnamanagh Community National School Board of Management regarding the proposed new building relating to the design of the building as regards connection, shelter and links with the other building due to the design plan which separates the old and the new building. The CE outlined possible explanations for the building design plan and he agreed to investigate further.

(b) **Board of Management Reports:**

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

- (i) *Bunclody Vocational College* reports of meetings held 9th November 2022, 3rd October 2022 and 7th September 2022.

- (ii) *Creagh College* reports of meetings held: December 1st 2022, November 15th 2022, November 7th 2022, October 21st 2022, September 25th 2022, March 24th 2022, May 19th 2022.
- (iii) *Dungarvan College-Coláiste Dhún Garbhán* reports of meetings held 9th November 2022 and 13th October 2022.
- (iv) *Enniscorthy Community College* report of meeting held 20th September 2022.
- (v) *Kilnamanagh Community National School* reports of meetings held 22nd November 2022 and 29th August 2022.
- (vi) *Waterford College of Further Education* report of meeting held October 10th 2022.

(c) **Area Committee Report:**

Report of North Wexford Area Committee meeting held 26th September 2022.

100123.11 ETBI (Education and Training Board's Ireland)

- (a) *ETBI Brief: Catering Contract - ETB Training Centres.*
- (b) *ETBI Reserve Members Forum:* Report of meeting held on the 25th October 2022 was circulated to the Board. Cllr. Kathleen Codd-Nolan advised that the last meeting was cancelled but gave a brief report on the meeting held 25th October. A proposed ETBI promotional video is being produced which provides opportunities for participation by schools, for example. The CE confirmed that this item will be discussed at Senior Management Team meeting along with an 'ETB Day' being considered for March or June this year.

100123.12 CIRCULAR LETTERS: Department of Education (DoE)

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

The following Department of Education Circular Letters were brought to the attention of the Board and adopted: Proposed Cllr. Leonard Kelly; Seconded Cllr. Pat Nugent.

- (a) 0079/2022: Bereavement Leave Scheme for Special Needs Assistants employed in Recognised Primary and Post Primary Schools.
- (b) 0078/2022: Bereavement Leave Scheme for Registered Teachers employed in Recognised Primary and Post Primary Schools.
- (c) 0077/2022: Once-off cost of living measure to support increased school running costs.
- (d) 0075/2022: Commencement of the Education (Provision in respect of Children with Special Educational Needs) Act 2022 and Commencement of remaining sections of the Education (Admission to Schools) Act 2018.
- (e) 0074/2022: Panel access for fixed-term/temporary (this includes substitute) and part-time teachers to the Supplementary Redeployment Panel for the 2023/24 school year.
- (f) 0073/2022: NQF Level 9 Graduate Diploma in Social Personal and Health Education/ Relationships and Sexuality Education (SPHE/RSE) Programme 2023.
- (g) 0072/2022: Standardisation of the School Year in respect of Primary & Post-Primary Schools for the years 2023/24, 2024/25 and 2025/26.
- (h) 0071/2022: Teacher Supply Post Primary: Teaching Hours Extension Scheme for 2022/2023.
- (i) 0070/2022: Enhancement to Irish Sign Language (ISL) Scheme provision-Post Primary.
- (j) 0069/2022: Enhancement to Irish Sign Language (ISL) Scheme provision.

100123.13 PRESS RELEASES – Department of Education

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

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

- (a) Minister Foley welcomes hundreds of additional schools to CreativeClusters and BLAST arts programme.
- (b) Department of Education confirms 13,753 Ukrainian pupils currently enrolled in Irish

- schools.
- (c) Ministers Foley and Ryan welcome progress on Schools Decarbonisation Pathfinder Programme.
 - (d) Ministers Foley and O’Gorman announce consultation on new Literacy, Numeracy and Digital Literacy Strategy.
 - (e) Ministers Foley and Madigan announce details of Dormant Accounts Funding programme to support transitions from school for students with complex special educational needs.
 - (f) Ministers Foley and Madigan announce accreditation of the national online training programme for special needs assistants.
 - (g) Minister Foley hails positive meeting with US Secretary of State for Education Miguel Cardona at Ministerial meeting of the OECD Education Policy Committee in Paris.
 - (h) Department of Education confirms 13,323 Ukrainian pupils currently enrolled in Irish schools.
 - (i) Minister Foley announces publication of Cineáltas: Action Plan on Bullying.
 - (j) Minister Madigan announces opening of public consultation in review of the Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act 2004.
 - (k) Minister Foley announces payment of the additional funding of €100 Million once-off cost of living measures to support increased school running costs and the school transport scheme.
 - (l) Minister Foley and Minister Madigan congratulate Junior Cycle students on examination results.
 - (m) Minister Foley announces post graduate upskilling programme for post-primary SPHE/RSE teachers.
 - (n) Ministers Foley and Madigan announce implementation of the first phase of ISL Scheme.
 - (o) Ministers Foley and Madigan announce pilot project to support young school leavers with disabilities.
 - (p) Minister Madigan announces significant expansion of the National Council for Special Education (NCSE).
 - (q) Minister Foley welcomes over €3.8 million to address education disadvantage in Dormant Accounts Action Plan 2023.
 - (r) Minister Foley welcomes agreement of extension of bereavement leave in Education Sector.
 - (s) Department of Education confirms 12,544 Ukrainian pupils currently enrolled in Irish schools.

100123..13 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}

The following Department of Further & Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science Press Releases were brought to the attention of the Board and noted:

- (a) Minister Harris announces student maintenance grant increases.
- (b) Up to 10 new apprenticeship programmes in 2023 announced by Minister Harris.
- (c) Minister Harris encourages adults to unlock their literacy potential.
- (d) €50,000 to charities supporting education in disadvantaged areas announced by Minister Harris.
- (e) Construction legislation and construction skills analysis report published by Minister Harris.
- (f) Minister Harris announces payment of additional student maintenance grant.
- (g) Funding to support Traveller and Roma learners in higher education and apprenticeships announced by Minister Harris.

- (h) Safe Pass Renewal System will move online in 2023 - Minister Harris.
- (i) Minister Harris announces significant policy development on unified tertiary sector.
- (j) Minister Harris commences the Higher Education Authority Act 2022 which will reform the higher education sector and modernise the role of the Higher Education Authority.
- (k) Minister Harris announces roll-out of €450,000 in funding for Travellers in Apprenticeships.
- (l) Significant progress on International Education Mark announced by Minister Harris.
- (m) Minister Harris announces further changes for school leavers as CAO portal opens for applications.
- (n) Minister Harris welcomes agreement of extension of bereavement leave in Education Sector.

100123.15 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The meeting concluded with the next meeting scheduled for **Tuesday, 28th February 2023** in New Ross.

Signed: 
Date: 28/02/2023

Documents circulated:

- Agenda
- Minutes of WWETB meeting held 8th November 2022
- Conflict of Interest Declaration Forms
- Finance Report
- Ethics in Public office Act - Declarations of Interest
- ETBI Brief: Catering Contract
- ETBI Reserve Members Forum: Report 25.10.22
- North Wexford Area Comm. Meeting 26.09.22