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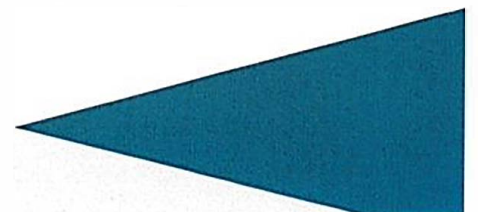
Bord Oideachais agus Oiliúna
Phort Láirge agus Loch Garman
*Waterford and Wexford
Education and Training Board*

Waterford and Wexford Education and Training Board

MINUTES

Of Meeting Held 14th November 2023

*Held at the Brandon House Hotel, New Ross, Co. Wexford Y34 KR62
Tuesday, 14th November 2023 at 4.30p.m.*



Waterford and Wexford Education and Training Board (WWETB)

Minutes of Meeting held 14th November 2023 at 4.30p.m.

Board Members in attendance: Cllr. Barbara-Anne Murphy, Chairperson presided, Cllr. Lola O'Sullivan, Deputy Chairperson, Ms. Margaret Darrer, Ms. Kate Miskella (attended remotely); Cllr. Mary Farrell, Cllr. Pat Nugent, Cllr. Kathleen Codd-Nolan, Ms. Mary Ryan, Cllr. Fionntán Ó'Suilleabháin, Mr. Pat Rath, Mr. Richard Byrnes, Mr. Senan Lillis.

Also in attendance: Dr. Karina Daly, Chief Executive (Acting), Mr. Owen O'Mahony, Finance Manager, Ms. Eimear Ryan, Director of Schools, Ms. Lindsay Malone, Director of Further Education and Training, Mr. Michael O'Brien, Innovation and Development Manager, Mr. Fintan O'Reilly, Corporate Services Manager.

Apologies: Cllr. Aidan Browne, Ms. Sandra Fogarty, Cllr. Frank Quinlan, Cllr. Joanne Bailey, Cllr. Tom Cronin, Cllr. Garry Laffan, Cllr. Leonard Kelly.

141123.01 WELCOME

The Chairperson Cllr. Barbara-Anne Murphy presided and began by welcoming the newly appointed Acting Chief Executive Dr. Karina Daly to the meeting. Apologies received from members were noted.

141123.02 DECLARATION OF INTEREST – CONFLICT OF INTEREST

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

141123.03 CONDOLENCES

The Board extended sympathy to the following:

- ~ Mr. James Hickey on the death of his wife Ms. Betsy Hickey (former BTEI/Community Education staff member);
- ~ Ms. Tracey Somers on the death of her father Mr. Edward Somers (former staff member Enniscorthy Vocational College (now Enniscorthy Community College);
- ~ Ms. Betty Kearon on the death of her husband Mr. Martin Kearon;
- ~ Ms. Kara Cahill on the death of her mother Ms. Ann Nolan.
- ~ Mr. Paddy Lavelle on the death of his mother Ms. Anne Lavelle;
- ~ Dr. Mary Liz Trant on the death of her father;
- ~ Ms. Anne McHugh on the death of her mother Ms. Maureen McHugh;
- ~ Dr. Joseph Collins on the death of his mother Ms. Kathleen Collins and brother Mr. Denis Collins.

141123.04 CONGRATULATIONS

The Board conveyed its congratulations on the following achievements:

- *Worldskills Competition 2023:* WWETB winning apprentices Adam Dempsey, Adam McAuliffe, Daniel Kearns, Ryan Wilson and their Instructors, in the skills of Industrial Insulation, Plastering and Drywall, Metal Fabrication and Sheet Metalwork on their success at the Worldskills Competition.
- *South County Wexford Craft Apprenticeship Trowel Trades:* Scholarship 2023 recipient Oisín Redmond, Plastering Apprentice.
- *Bunclody Vocational College* Transition Year students Evie Bolger and Kayla Roche for their project selected as a BT Young Scientist and Technology Exhibition entry (teacher Ms. Máire Finn), inspired by the school's achievement as a Champion School of Sanctuary.
- Ms. Bróna Kenneally, Principal, Kilnamanagh Community National School on the recent birth of her son.

141123.05 MINUTES

The minutes of Waterford and Wexford Education and Training Board (WWETB) meeting held on the 26th September 2023 were adopted: Proposed Ms. Mary Ryan; Seconded Cllr. Kathleen Codd-Nolan.

141123.06 FINANCE

Finance Report: The Finance Manager provided a financial report as at September 2023 and set out on page 62 of the CE's report circulated.

He outlined relevant updates and as indicated on summary 'Service Plan versus Actual', when compared to the service plan, receipts (primarily consisting of monthly funding from the Department of Education and SOLAS tranche funding) are at 79% of the budgeted amount and payments are at 77% of the budgeted figures. Receipts are ahead of expenditure due to the timing of SOLAS tranche funding and the surplus of just under €2.4m considered reasonable, in light of tranche funding. The closing bank balance noted equates to one to two months cash flow for the organisation.

141123.07 CORRESPONDENCE (see 1411.23.15 also)

Confirmation from the Department of Education to proceed with publication of the *WWETB Annual Report 2022* on website {in accordance with Section 28 (3) of the Education and Training Board Act 2013} was noted.

141123.08 GOVERNANCE

(a) **Audit and Risk and Finance Committee:** The Chairperson to meet with both the Audit and Risk and Finance Committee Chairs shortly and she thanked both Committees for their work.

(b) **Approval/Renewal of Leases and Updates:**

(i) *Tallow Enterprise Centre, Waterford:* Approval to proceed with a short term rental agreement of a room at the Tallow Enterprise Centre, Waterford, as outlined by the Corporate Services Manager, was approved; Proposed Mr. Senan Lillis; Seconded Ms. Mary Ryan.

(ii) *Castlemoyle, New Ross:* A request for a meeting by Wexford County Council to discuss access to lands at Castlemoyle, New Ross, due to a proposed development nearby, was outlined to the Board. The Corporate Services Manager gave details of the site which was a former convent and currently accommodates allotments.

The proposal to proceed with discussions regarding access was approved by the Board in principle; Proposed Cllr. Kathleen Codd-Nolan; Seconded Cllr. Lola O'Sullivan.

(c) **Nominations/Memberships to Boards of Management:**

Kilnamanagh Community National School: The Director of Schools explained that the current Board of Management at Kilnamanagh Community National School is set to expire on the 30th November and the new Board of Management to commence 1st December 2023. The formation of the Board comprising eight members was explained and the following nominees presented were appointed by the Board:

Mr. Pat Rath CE Nominee (re-appointed)

Cllr. Mary Farrell CE Nominee (re-appointed)

Ms. Shannon Keegan Teacher nominee

Mr. Rory O'Leary Parent/Guardian nominee

Ms. Claire Murray Parent/Guardian nominee

Proposed Mr. Senan Lillis; Seconded Cllr. Kathleen Codd-Nolan.

There is a requirement that a member of teaching staff sits on the existing Board of Management and the Board agreed that in addition to membership of the newly constituted Board of Management, Ms. Shannon Keegan was appointed to the current Board of Management: Proposed Cllr. Pat Nugent; Seconded Ms. Mary Ryan.

(d) **Risk Management** - Risk Management is comprehended within the report of the Audit and Risk Committee.

(e) **Multi-Annual Procurement Plan (MAPP) 2023**

The Corporate Services Manager explained the template which is based on projected procurement for a rolling three year period and supports budgeting and procurement planning over the period for ETBs with the updated MAPP submitted to ETBI. The template was circulated and noted by the Board.

141123.09 CHIEF EXECUTIVE REPORT

(a) **Chief Executive's Report:** The Chief Executive's Report was circulated to the Board and the CE (Acting) provided a number of updates including:

⇒ *Senior Management* – The position of WWETB Chief Executive was recently advertised by the Public Appointments Service.

The board was informed that the Finance Manager Mr. Owen O'Mahony has applied for a career break. The Chairperson expressed her appreciation to the Finance Manager for his excellent management of the WWETB finances and wished him well, Cllr. Pat Nugent endorsed the good wishes and commended him on his professionalism.

⇒ *Retirement Ceremony:* The 2023 event is scheduled to take place December 6th, 2023.

⇒ *Strategy Statement* – Steering and Working groups have been formed and terms of reference developed.

⇒ *Wexford College of Further Education and Training* was officially opened 5th October and a Community Open Day held prior to that. This is the first FET College of the Future to open in the country and very good feedback has been received to date.

⇒ *Replacement school for Selskar College:* The Design Team has commenced investigations and a plan for the site at Ballynagee is being formulated by Wexford County Council.

⇒ *Waterford City Techniform Project* – progressing well and the Minister for Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science has expressed his interest in attending the official launch of the building.

⇒ *In-Harmony 2024:* The WWETB Schools' concert is scheduled to take place February 21st, 2024. The Director of Schools has received positive reports on the production and rehearsals to date.

⇒ *Music Generation Wexford* project with the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) was awarded a Highly Commended citation by the Selection Panel at the HSE Excellence Awards 2023 for its project titled *For the Record: Communication and Connection through Music* under the Innovation in Service Delivery Category.

⇒ *Shared Services Payroll Project:* The Finance, HR staff and managers were thanked for the successful completion of this important project ensuring WWETB's transitioning to Shared Services and the team received great commendation from ESBS.

(b) *Head Office, Ardcavan – signage:* Mr. Senan Lillis complimented the recently installed signage on the internal entrance foyer wall in Ardcavan bearing the WWETB core values and suggested that it could be replicated in other centres and schools.

(c) *Youthreach – payments of allowances:* The Chairperson of the Youthreach Committee Cllr. Pat Nugent advised of concerns brought to his attention in relation to a proposed change in the payment regulations which allows learners, regardless of their attendance on a Youthreach programme, payment of a full allowance. He expressed his disappointment with this change and asked that a letter be directed to the relevant authority expressing concern. His concerns were echoed by Cllr. Lola O'Sullivan.

The Director of FET acknowledged concerns and advised that discussions also took place at the FET Forum on this matter. Following discussion, it was agreed that the concerns outlined would be (a) raised at the relevant fora, (b) highlighted through the CE Forum and (c) raised at the ETBI meeting of Chairpersons.

(d) *North Wexford Area Committee meeting:*

Cllr. Fionntán Ó'Súilleabháin informed the meeting of issues tabled at the last meeting of the North Wexford Area Committee where updates from Principals included areas of concern, including stress levels, workload, funding and implementation of new curriculum particularly as regards woodwork, and the availability of 3D-printing facilities at Junior Cycle level. Cllr. Mary Farrell highlighted other difficulties that were expressed at the meeting also such as the requirement for additional administrative support, increased workload due to new systems and burnout due to the extra layer of responsibilities.

The Director of Schools provided feedback on the queries raised:

- Monthly on-line meetings and principals meetings take place; agenda items are routinely sought for meetings.
- Some of the topics raised are national issues which affect all ETBs and progress on these are regularly requested through the various authorities.
- ICT – Funding for ICT was not forthcoming last year and is a national issue for the second year running; news is eagerly awaited by ETBs.
- Practical equipment – weekly communication between the Director of Schools and the Department but disappointingly no progress of note yet.
- The Innovation and Development Manager confirmed that issues are highlighted and discussed at SMT meetings. The Chairperson briefly explained the operation of the area committees, matters are referred to the SMT and back to the board as relevant. She confirmed that reports of the Area Committees are shared with the Board routinely. Cllr. Kathleen Codd-Nolan confirmed that certain issues are raised at ETBI level regularly.

Following a detailed discussion, the CE-A acknowledged the points raised and outlined a number of supports in place such as the leadership programmes introduced by the Director of Schools, the Schools Support Staff Funding Grant (SSSF) as an additional measure to provide additional administrative support to schools and it was acknowledged that some issues are external/national issues that WWETB continues to raise nationally with the Department of Education (e.g. administrative resources in schools).

(e) **Wexford GAA Wellbeing Proposal**

The CE-A informed the members about Wexford GAA's draft proposal for the provision of GAA and coaching support to Wexford ETB schools. The support and coaching programme would be tailored for each school and a meeting is proposed to take place at the end of the month to discuss and agree a programme for schools. The Board's permission was sought to proceed with the proposal; Proposed Mr. Senan Lillis; Seconded Cllr. Kathleen Codd-Nolan.

(f) **Presentation: Youthreach.** The Director of FET introduced Ms. Michelle Keating, Co-ordinator of the New Ross Youthreach Programme who gave a presentation to the Board titled: '*New Ross Youthreach – a SEN Centre*'. The Co-ordinator outlined the mission statement of New Ross Youthreach and a Special Educational Needs Initiative (SENI) was set up by the Department of Education at the Centre in January 2007.

The Co-ordinator gave an overview of the programme with regard to teaching, mentoring and other supports available to learners, including meals. Possible factors and barriers to engagement for participants were outlined and a general overview of typical learner difficulties was explained. The Webwheel Mentoring process contained in the presentation is a systematic approach for engaging with learners and identifying how to support them, i.e. "meet the person where they are at". Needs are addressed through targeted interventions and collaborating with local services and agencies to support learners, the importance of building staff capacity was also described. The presentation also included learner and parent testimonials.

The Chairperson congratulated Ms. Michelle Keating on her commitment to the programme and board members expressed their appreciation for her work and for the presentation.

141123.10 BOARD OF MANAGEMENT/COMMITTEE REPORTS (including Draft Reports) (see 141123.15 also.) The following Reports (including draft reports) were noted by the Board.

(a) Boards of Management:

- *Bunclody Vocational College reports of meetings held 6th September and 7th February 2023.*
- *Bridgetown Community College report of meeting held 21st June 2023.*
- *Kennedy College report of meeting held 28th September 2023.*
- *Enniscorthy Community College reports of meetings held 24th October and 11th September 2023.*
- *Selskar College report of meeting held 18th September 2023.*
- *St. Declan's Community College reports of meetings held 3rd October and 8th May 2023.*
- *Waterford College of Further Education reports of meetings held 26th September and 23rd August 2023.*

(b) Committee Report: *Youthreach Committee draft report of meeting held 10th October 2023.*

141123.11 ETBI (Education and Training Board's Ireland)

(a) *ETBI Reserve Members Forum:* Cllr. Kathleen Codd provided a verbal report to the meeting and some updates:

- *AGM/EGM:* the ETBI AGM and EGM is due to take place 28th November 2023;
- *Staffing ETBI:* increases in number of ETBI staff;
- *ETBI 2023 Conference:* Positive feedback received both locally and nationally.
- *Apprenticeship:* The ETBI Chairperson met with the Minister for Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science (FHERIS) in relation to apprenticeship.
- *Interview fees issue* – the Chairperson and a deputation to meet with the Minister for Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science. Progress on the issue of payments to interview boards is constantly pursued.

(b) *ETBI AGM/EGM:* 28th November 2023 in Portlaoise.

Information was previously circulated to the voting members informing them of the meeting details. The five voting members representing WWETB were agreed at the last board meeting including substitute delegates. The final five members attending were approved by the Board as the WWETB voting delegates:

1 Cllr. Kathleen Cod-Nolan.

2 Cllr. Barbara-Anne Murphy.

3 Cllr. Pat Nugent.

4 Ms. Kate Miskella.

5 Ms. Mary Ryan.

141123.12 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. Lola O'Sullivan; Seconded Cllr. Pat Nugent.

(a) 0056/2023: Cost of living measure to support increased school running costs.

(b) 0055/2023: Unpaid Leave for Medical Care Purposes for staff other than persons employed as Teachers and Special Needs Assistants employed in Education and Training Boards.

(c) 0054/2023: Curriculum and assessment related developments at Senior Cycle with particular reference to school years 2023/24 and onwards.

- (d) 0053/2023: Breastfeeding Breaks for Special Needs Assistants employed In Recognised Primary and Post Primary Schools.
- (e) 0052/2023: Breastfeeding Breaks for Registered Teachers employed in Recognised Primary and Post Primary Schools.
- (f) 0051/2023: Unpaid Leave for Medical Care Purposes for Special Needs Assistants employed in Recognised Primary and Post Primary Schools.
- (g) 0050/2023: Unpaid Leave for Medical Care Purposes for Registered Teachers employed in Recognised Primary and Post Primary Schools.
- (h) 0049/2023: Election of new Boards of Management of Primary Schools.

141123.13 PRESS RELEASES – Department of Education (see 141123.15(c) also)

{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 launches new plan to encourage parents to avoid buying smartphones for their children in primary schools.
- (b) Minister Byrne launches Olympic Movement Breaks in primary schools.
- (c) Minister Foley announces €1.5 million funding in Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths Learning Grant for Schools.
- (d) Schools to benefit from €20 million in additional capitation funding to be delivered during the mid-term break.
- (e) Minister Foley announces 425 new BLAST Arts in Education residencies in schools and 40 new Creative Clusters commenced.
- (f) Secretary General Bernie McNally welcomes the first P-TECH ‘Community Day’ of 2023-2024.
- (g) Ministers Foley, Madigan and Byrne congratulate students receiving Junior Cycle examination results.
- (h) Minister Foley announces over €250 million investment with commencement of construction of large-scale school building projects.
- (i) Ministers Foley, Madigan and Byrne announce details of over €10.5 billion education funding in Budget 2024.
- (j) Minister Madigan announces new national recruitment campaign for special educational needs organisers.
- (k) Press Statement from the Scoping Inquiry into Historical Sexual Abuse in Day and Boarding Schools Run by Religious Orders.
- (l) Senior Cycle Redevelopment Partners’ Forum discuss updates to Senior Cycle Redevelopment.
- (m) Department of Education confirms 17,501 Ukrainian pupils currently enrolled in Irish schools.
- (n) Minister Madigan announces proposals for the first Special Needs Assistant Workforce Development Plan.
- (o) Minister Foley launches campaign to encourage school attendance and additional funding for schools to support attendance.
- (p) Statement from the Scoping Inquiry into Historical Sexual Abuse in Day and Boarding Schools Run by Religious Orders.
- (q) Statement on the passing of Mark Ryan from Minister Foley.
- (r) Ministers Foley and Madigan publish report on use of reduced school days.
- (s) Minister Foley announces update to Senior Cycle Redevelopment.

141123.14 PRESS RELEASES – Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science (see 141123.15(d) also)

{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 celebrates incorporation of St. Angela’s College, Sligo into the Atlantic Technological University.

- (b) Minister Harris welcomes signing of partnership between TU Dublin + Korean Universities during Team Ireland Trade Mission Week.
- (c) Minister Harris announces new scholarship scheme for Korean students as part of Team Ireland Trade Mission Week.
- (d) Ministers Harris and O'Brien welcome more than €400 million investment in student accommodation.
- (e) Minister Harris congratulates first ever female winner of Apprentice of the Year.
- (f) Minister Harris hosts first annual Careers in Construction forum with focus on driving female participation.
- (g) Ministers Harris and Collins detail supports for undergraduate part-time students, increase in PhD stipend and upskilling scheme.
- (h) Ministers Harris and Collins announce significant cost of education package with investment in third level education and research.
- (i) Minister Harris welcomes advertisement of the role of Government Science Advisor.
- (j) Minister Harris officially opens the new Wexford College of Further Education and Training.
- (k) Minister Harris announces additional capital funding of €5.4 million for Further Education and Training sector.
- (l) Minister Harris welcomes participation in retrofit upskilling programmes with a boost in the number of females training.
- (m) Minister Harris invites expressions of interest to fill a vacancy on Board of Directors of Skillnet Ireland.
- (n) Minister Harris announces significant expansion of courses available outside the points system.
- (o) Minister Harris announces up to 100 farms register for farming apprenticeships.

141123.15 ADDENDUM

Correspondence (see 141123.07 also)

- (a) **National Parents Council (NPC) - Primary:** notification from the Department of Education was noted regarding (i) extension of remit to provide support to parents of both primary and post-primary students, and (ii) specified national association of parents who shall nominate two parents for appointment as members to education and training boards.
- (b) **Board of Management Reports** (including Draft Reports) (see 141123.10 also)
The following Board of Management Reports were noted by the Board:
 - (i) *Creagh College* reports of meetings held 21st September 2023, 15th September 2023, 23rd August 2023, 23rd March 2023 and 23rd February 2023.
 - (ii) *Meánscoil San Nioclás* report of meeting held 28th September 2023.
- (c) **Press releases: Department of Education** (see 141124.13 also)
{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:
 - (a) *Schools in counties under Orange and Red weather warnings will not open before 10am tomorrow.*

(d) **Press releases: Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science** (see 141123.14 also)

{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 two new construction apprenticeship programmes in Civil Engineering.
- (b) Minister Harris announces €600,000 to support 15 festivals and hundreds of events for Science Week 2023.
- (c) Minister Harris announces the development of a dedicated national centre for electric vehicle skills.
- (d) Minister Harris celebrates the 1,000th graduate of the Dublin Construction Skills Project.
- (e) Minister Harris announces significant milestone for the expansion of Wexford campus of the South East Technological University.
- (f) Minister Harris confirms final approval for the purchase of Waterford Crystal site for the South East Technological University.
- (g) Ministers Harris and Collins welcome publication of 2023 National Skills Bulletin.

14112.1 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The meeting concluded and the next meeting was scheduled to take place **Tuesday, 9th January 2024.**

Signed:



Date:

9/1/2024

Documents circulated:

Agenda: 14.11.23
Minutes of WWETB meeting held September 26, 2023
Conflict of Interest Declaration Forms
MAPP 2023
CE's Report
Youthreach Board of Mgmt. meeting report 10.10.23
Addendum
Correspondence from Dept. of Educ. re NPC Primary