



wwetb
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 May 14th, 2024

*Held at the Brandon House Hotel, New Ross, Co. Wexford Y34 KR62
Tuesday, 14^h May 2024 at 3.30p.m.*

Waterford and Wexford Education and Training Board (WWETB)

Minutes of Meeting held 14th May 2024 at 3.30p.m.

Board Members in attendance: Cllr. Barbara-Anne Murphy, Chairperson presided, Cllr. Lola O'Sullivan, Deputy Chairperson, Cllr. Kathleen Codd-Nolan, Mr. Pat Rath, Mr. Richard Byrnes (remotely), Ms. Foluke Adewumi, Mr. Niall Finn, Ms. Margaret Darrer, Ms. Mary Ryan, Cllr. Mary Farrell, Cllr. Fionntán Ó'Suilleabháin, Cllr. Joanne Bailey, Mr. Senan Lillis.

Also in attendance: Dr. Karina Daly, Chief Executive (CE), Ms. Eimear Ryan, Director of Schools, Mr. Fintan O'Reilly, Corporate Services (CS) Manager, Ms. Sandra Murphy, HR Manager-Operations, Ms. Anne-Marie Jones, HR Manager-Culture and Engagement, Mr. Michael O'Brien, Innovation and Development Manager, Ms. Lindsay Malone, Director of Further Education and Training, Mr. Cathal Cremer, Finance Manager

Apologies: Cllr. Aidan Browne, Cllr. Frank Quinlan, Cllr. Garry Laffan, Ms. Kate Miskella, Cllr. Frank Staples, Cllr. Pat Nugent, Ms. Sandra Fogarty, Cllr. Tom Cronin,

140524.01 WELCOME

The Chairperson Cllr. Barbara-Anne Murphy presided and welcomed everyone to the meeting including the newly appointed Finance Manager Mr. Cathal Cremer.

140524.02 APOLOGIES

Apologies as listed above were noted and included apologies from Ms. Kate Miskella who requested that her thanks be conveyed to the members of the board for their help and support.

140524.03 CONDOLENCES

The Board extended sympathy to the following:

- *Mr. Paul O'Brien and family of the death of his grandchild Naomi Howlin;*
- *Ms. Mary Kehoe on the death of her brother Mr. Patrick Kehoe;*
- *The family of Ms. Mary Murphy, former staff member Bunclody Vocational College;*
- *Ms. Jude D'Arcy on the death of her father Mr. Michael D'Arcy, Snr.;*
- *Mr. Michael D'Arcy (former Chair of Co. Wexford VEC) on the death of his father Mr. Michael D'Arcy Snr.;*
- *Ms. Bróna Kenneally on the death of her father Mr. Muiris Kenneally;*
- *Mr. Jim O'Hanlon on the death of his sister Ms. Bridget Mernagh;*
- *Ms. Ann Brien on the death of her father Mr. Christopher O'Brien;*
- *The family of Mr Enda Reagan, former staff member St Pauls Community College;*
- *Ms. Ann Burke on the death of her mother-in-law Ms. Mary Burke;*
- *Mr. Michael Maher (President ETBI) on the death of his mother Mary Maher;*
- *Ms. Catherine Creane on the death of her mother Mrs. Kathy Breen;*
- *Ms. Ita Hannigan on the death of her mother Mrs. Kathy Breen;*
- *Mr. Rory Hannigan on the death of his mother-in-law Mrs. Kathy Breen;*
- *Mr. Jim Codd on the death of his father Mr. Eddie Codd.*

140524.04 CONGRATULATIONS

Congratulations were extended to the following from the board:

- ≈ *Mr. Conor McGrath on the birth of a baby girl;*
- ≈ *Ms. Anna Doyle on the birth of a baby girl;*
- ≈ *Ms. Darina Gleeson on the birth of a baby girl;*
- ≈ *Ms. Stephanie De Ris and Mr. Aidan McCarthy on the birth of a baby girl;*
- ≈ *Mr. Adam Hannigan on his recent marriage;*
- ≈ *Mr. Eddie Taaffe on his appointment as the Chief Executive of Wexford County Council;*
- ≈ *Creagh College Transition Year students Matt Furlong and Adam Connolly (teacher Ms. Edel Peters) who won the overall Student Enterprise Programme National Enterprise Award in the*

Sustainability Category for their business "Ecofire". 28,000 students entered the competition with 81 reaching the national final.

- ≈ Board Member *Mr. Pat Rath* on completion of a BA in Arts Community Education and Development.

140524.05 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.

140524.06 MINUTES

The minutes of Waterford and Wexford Education and Training Board (WWETB) meeting held on the 26th March 2024 were adopted: Proposed Mr. Senan Lillis; Seconded Cllr. Mary Farrell.

140524.07 FINANCE

- (a) *Application for Overdraft facilities 2025:* The Head of Finance Mr. Cathal Cremer referring to Circular Letter 0066/2014: 'Procedures for borrowing for Education and Training Boards' outlined a proposal to the board for consideration, requesting the renewal of existing overdraft facilities in the amount of €3m for the year 2025, similar to previous years. While a requirement is not expected to arise for overdraft facilities, it is advisable to have an arrangement in place for the coming year. He outlined the stages and timeline involved in the process.

The board accepted and approved the proposal to seek overdraft facilities for the purposes of carrying out the Board's functions in respect of the amount of €3,000,000 to the 31st December 2025 and to seek the consent of the Minister for Education *{in accordance with CL 0066/2014 and Section 49 of the Education and Training Boards Act 2013}*. The proposal was adopted, Proposed: Mr. Niall Finn; Seconded Ms. Mary Ryan.

- (b) *Finance Report:* A financial summary was included on pages 37-41 of the CE's Report circulated. The summary set out the Service Plan versus Actual for the first quarter of 2024 and breakdown under the headings: *Schools and Head Office Payments, Further Education and Training, Youth Services, Agencies and Self-Financing Programme Payments, Capital Payments.*

140524.08 CORRESPONDENCE

IPB Insurance CLG Notice of Annual General Meeting (AGM), 3rd May 2024: WWETB Nominee Cllr. Barbara-Anne Murphy nominated Cllr. Kathleen Codd-Nolan to attend on her behalf. Cllr. Kathleen Codd-Nolan gave an update to the members on the meeting.

140524.09 GOVERNANCE

- (a) **Audit and Risk Committee (ARC):** Reports to the Board of ARC meetings held 14th February and 23rd April 2024 were circulated to the members. The Chairperson praised the work of the committee and referred to the ARC Chairperson's attendance at the February board meeting where he gave a report to the meeting on the Audit & Risk Committee's activities. A copy of WWETB's Survey results (views of board members gathered on the work and function of the ARC) was circulated to the board and the CE gave an overview of the findings.
- (b) **Finance Committee:** Finance Committee Report to the Board of its meeting held 20th March 2024 was circulated at the last board meeting.
- (c) **Approval/Renewal of Leases and Updates:** *Site at Ballindaggin, Co. Wexford.*
The CS Manager informed the board regarding a site of approximately one acre in Ballindaggin, Co. Wexford, which appears to be in the ownership of WWETB. He outlined the context and known history of the property and, following research of minutes from the

1950s and 1960s, no record of activity has been found to date. The site came to light following a property search carried out by the Department of Education. The CS Manager brought the matter to the attention of the board. He stated that further research is required and due diligence is in progress regarding the property and he will update the board accordingly at a later date.

- (d) **Nominations/Memberships to Boards and Committees:** Standing agenda item.
- (e) **Risk Management:** WWETB current Risk Register was circulated to the board. The spreadsheet documented risk areas and ratings, impact and management controls in place including review frequencies. The CE gave an overview of the Risk Register to the board. Each school and centre needs an individual plan and she referred to various aspects of the report highlighting three particular items where the risk level was categorised as high. The Risk relating to *Practical equipment for schools* and delays in receipt of funding was referred to. The Director of Schools is actively trying to advance the matter with the Department of Education and referred to applications submitted over two years ago. Issues exist with equipment lists nationally and engagement with the Department around same.
- (f) **Annual Report 2023 and Chairperson's Comprehensive Report** (to accompany Annual Report): The Annual Report 2023 and accompanying Chairperson's Comprehensive Report (Statement to the Minister for Education required by the Code of Practice for the Governance of ETBs paragraph 6.8 and 6.9) were circulated to the Board for consideration. The report content included a message from the Chairperson and Chief Executive, background and governance information, an overview of services and implementation of strategic goals 2023, including outcomes.

The **WWETB Annual Report 2023** (Section 28 (1) of the Education and Training Boards Act 2013) and the **Chairperson's Comprehensive Report** to the Minister for Education required under Sections 6.8 and 6.9 of the Code of Practice for the Governance of ETBs were adopted by the Board: Cllr. Mary Farrell; Mr. Niall Finn.

- (g) **Board Self-Assessment Questionnaire-Evaluation:** The CE referred to template questionnaire provided in the Code of Practice for the Governance of ETBs and board obligations. A confidential form will be circulated to board members for completion, individually. The combined results will then be presented to the board and the importance of completing the questionnaire was emphasised so that the combined data reflects the board's view accurately. The Chairperson also encouraged members to complete the requisite annual questionnaire.

140524.10 CHIEF EXECUTIVE (CE's) REPORT

- (a) The CE's Report was circulated to the board.
- (b) **Presentation:** *KeepWell Mark* programme – update. Ms. Anne-Marie Jones, HR Manager (Culture & Engagement) was introduced to the board. The HR Manager delivered a presentation on the *KeepWell Mark*, an IBEC workplace wellbeing accreditation programme. She explained that implementation of the *KeepWell Mark* in WWETB with support from IBEC, is part of WWETB's Strategic Goals: *4.1.4 Health and Wellbeing*. The project is in the early stages and she listed the eight *KeepWell* pillars and steps leading to accreditation; the process involves self-assessment, goal setting, evidence gathering and onsite assessment. For the initial twelve month period, three WWETB sites are being piloted for the programme: *Ardcavan Administrative Office, Bridgetown College and Wexford College of Further Education and Training* before roll out across the organisation. Cllr. Lola O'Sullivan urged that the programme should be piloted across the wider organisation as the locations listed were all

Wexford based and both counties should have been included. A number of members agreed and the point was duly noted. It was agreed to try and engage another school/centre in the Waterford area before final roll out.

140524.11 POLICY

Information and Communications Technology (ICT) Internet Safety Policy including summary was circulated and noted by the board.

140524.12 BOARD OF MANAGEMENT/COMMITTEE REPORTS (including Draft Reports)

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

- (a) Boards of Management Reports (including draft reports):
Bunclody Vocational College report of meeting held 15th April 2024 and 19th February 2024.
Creagh College reports of meetings held April 17th 2024, February 29th and 19th 2024 and January 29th 2024.
Dungarvan College-Coláiste Dhún Garbhán report of meeting held 21st March 2024.
Kennedy College reports of meetings held 12th March 2024 and 18th January 2024.
St. Declan's Community College reports of meetings held 21st February 2024, 30th January 2024, 11th December 2023 and 3rd October 2023.
- (b) Committee Report: *Waterford City and County Area Committee* draft minutes of meeting held January 22nd 2024 was circulated and noted.

140524.13 ETBI (Education and Training Board's Ireland)

- (a) *ETBI Brief:* Standing Agenda Item.
- (b) *ETBI Reserve Members Forum* – Cllr. Kathleen Codd-Nolan attended a meeting of the ETBI Reserve Members Forum the previous week where the General Secretary reported to the meeting.
Cllr. Kathleen Codd-Nolan informed the board that in relation to the *interview board remuneration* issue, further meetings are planned within the coming weeks on the issue.
Rates and anomalies were referred to by board members. The time and preparation entailed in advance of interviews was described and the struggle at times, to secure interview board members to sit on interview boards.

140524.14 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: Ms. Mary Ryan ; Seconded Cllr. Kathleen Codd Nolan.

- (a) 0028/2024: Appointment of Administrative Deputy Principals and Staffing Arrangements in Special Schools to take effect from the 2024/2025 school year.
- (b) 0029/2024: Allocation of Assistant Principal Posts 2024/2025 (Primary).
- (c) 0030/2024: Arrangements for the Election of Staff to Education and Training Boards (2024).
- (d) 0031/2024: Allocation of Assistant Principal Posts 2024/2025 (Post-Primary).
- (e) 0032/2024: Revised Pay Rates due under Building Momentum – A New Public Service Agreement 2021-2023 ("The Agreement") for Tutors Delivering Adult Education in Certain ETBs.
- (f) 0033/2024: Revision of Teacher Salaries under The Public Service Agreement 2024 - 2026 effective from 01 January 2024.

- (g) 0034/2024: Revision of Salaries for Special Needs Assistants (SNAs) under The Public Service Agreement 2024 - 2026 effective from 01 January 2024.
- (h) 0035/2024: Revision of Salaries and Allowances of Certain Grades other than Teachers and SNAs employed by ETBs under The Public Service Agreement 2024 - 2026 effective from 01 January 2024.
- (i) 0036/2024: Revision of Salaries of Clerical Officers and Caretakers employed under the 1978/1979 Scheme under The Public Service Agreement 2024 - 2026 effective from 01 January 2024.
- (j) 0037/2024: Revision of Salaries of School Secretaries and School Maintenance Staff in Community and Comprehensive Schools under the Public Service Agreement 2024 – 2026.
- (k) 0038/2024: Revision of Salaries for School Secretaries Previously Grant Funded Effective from 01 January 2024.
- (l) 0039/2024: Grant Scheme for ICT Infrastructure.
- (m) 0040/2024: Information in relation to Standardised Testing and Other Matters – Academic Year 2023/24 and Subsequent Years.
- (n) 0041/2024: Guidance in Post-Primary Schools.
- (o) 0042/2024: Say Yes to Languages – primary languages sampler module.

140524.15 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) Department of Education confirms 18,266 Ukrainian pupils currently enrolled in Irish schools.
- (b) Call for expressions of interest for 'School of Excellence in Creativity 2025'.
- (c) Ministers Foley, Byrne and Burke launch national Active School Week 2024.
- (d) Extension of deadline for schools to participate in the Summer Programme 2024.
- (e) Minister Naughton announces details of additional funding for special schools.
- (f) Minister Foley launches Computer Science Week 2024.
- (g) Minister Foley announces phased return to normal Leaving Certificate outcomes, confirms date for Leaving Certificate 2024 results.
- (h) Minister Foley confirms key milestone for 10 key flagship new school buildings.
- (i) Minister Foley secures cabinet approval for text of Supports for Survivors of Residential Institutional Abuse Bill.
- (j) Ministers Foley and Naughton announce revised assessment of need process for schools.
- (k) Minister Foley announces registration opening for Teacher Artist Partnership+ Summer Course.
- (l) Minister Foley announces new anti-bullying initiatives for schools.
- (m) Minister Foley congratulates students graduating with the P-TECH Special Purpose Award.
- (n) Minister Byrne opens inaugural Forum on Physical Education – 'Education on the Move'.
- (o) Minister Foley announces €800 million investment across close to 90 school building projects.
- (p) Minister Foley announces new upskilling programme for post-primary teachers in Irish.
- (q) Minister Foley announces funding for wellbeing and mental health supports in post-primary schools.
- (r) Minister Foley welcomes Road Safety Authority work on developing new road safety module for Transition Year.
- (s) Minister for Education Norma Foley TD and the Teaching Council announce landmark research study on teaching in Ireland.
- (t) Minister Foley pledges commitment to establishing guidelines on the use of AI.
- (u) Ministers Foley and Harris announce publication of Education Indicators for Ireland 2023.
- (v) Minister Foley announces €79 million in funding for primary, post-primary and special schools.
- (w) Minister Foley publishes Languages Connect Interim Review Report and Implementation Plan to 2026.

- (x) Department of Education Statement on the Delivery of Junior Cycle Schoolbooks Scheme.
- (y) Minister Foley welcomes the P-TECH Transition Year students Work Placement Showcase.
- (z) Ministers Foley and Madigan encourage all primary, post-primary and special schools to participate in the 2024 Summer Programme.

140524.16 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 Patrick O'Donovan announces funding of €500,000 to provide free period products for students.
- (b) Minister O'Donovan congratulates Skillnet Ireland on winning best in world award.
- (c) Taoiseach and Minister O'Donovan outline major planned investment in student accommodation to benefit over 1,000 students.
- (d) Tánaiste and Minister O'Donovan Welcome CERN Taskforce to Ireland.
- (e) Minister Harris announces significantly improved student supports to take effect from new academic year.
- (f) Ministers Harris and O'Brien welcome Government agreement to protect student-specific accommodation leases.

140524.17 ADDENDUM

Presentation: Community National Schools, "Primary School Choice" - Update from the Director of Schools Ms. Eimear Ryan.

The Director of Schools began her presentation to the meeting titled: *"Primary School Choice"* with statistics on the percentage of Multi-Denominational primary schools compared to Denominational in Counties Waterford and Wexford and the percentage of individuals who identify/do not identify as Catholic based on the 2022 Census. She gave the status for both counties as set out in the presentation where 2.74% of primary schools in County Waterford are multi-denominational and 4.9% of primary schools in County Wexford are multi-denominational. The percentage of marriages non-religious/religion other than Catholic and Catholic 2022 for Waterford and Wexford was also documented.

The data also gave findings of an ETBI Survey conducted in 2022, indicating the portion of preferences for multi-denomination and denominational schools in Leinster and Munster.

A graphic representing the number of multi-denominational primary schools in each county 2024 compared to the number of additional schools required to meet the government's target of 400 multi-denominational primary schools by 2030 was listed. The number of additional multi-denominational schools required in each county to meet the current appetite for multi-denominational education as per ETBI Survey 2022 was also represented.

A discussion developed on school models, convenience, location, demand, ethos and divesting and the Director of Schools advised that more work is required and some points for contemplation include:

- School provision - state provided schools, i.e. Community National Schools,;
- 152 of the 3,116 primary schools in Ireland are multi-denominational;
- Currently, there is only one Community National School in WWETB;
- Parents regularly express preference to maintain a school day that focuses on the curriculum, especially for small multi-grade class rural schools.

The Chairperson impressed on members that if a school is divesting in an area, that WWETB is interested in engaging with the existing patron.

This information was provided for the information of the board only and to draw their attention to the gaps in multi-denominational education provision in both counties and the difference between the government target of 400 multi-denominational schools by 2030 and the appetite for multidenominational schools.

140524.18 A.O.B.

The CE on behalf of the Executive expressed thanks to the board of WWETB. She acknowledged the huge support afforded to staff and learners by the members and advocating for WWETB.

She thanked the members for their support around the interview process also and acknowledged that the executive could not operate without that voluntary support provided, over and above in some cases, by members.

She also thanked the Boards, Committees and Boards of Management for their selfless dedication. She expressed her thanks to the Deputy Chairperson Cllr. Lola O'Sullivan and the Chairperson, Cllr. Barbara-Anne Murphy for her work and generosity with her time and for attending many WWETB events.

The Chairperson thanked all the members and recognised all the accomplishments during the term and support by the staff that go the extra mile. She expressed the hope that some members would be in a position to stay on for another term and thanked them for their contribution. She extended best of luck to all those contesting the local elections and extended best wishes to those who are retiring including Cllr. Kathleen Codd-Nolan who has been a member of the ETB and VEC and has given a lot to education during her tenure. The Chairperson thanked her for her dedication and thanked all of the outgoing members.

Cllr. Kathleen Codd Nolan complimented all the staff and board members and was grateful for the privilege to serve on the board and remains a firm believer in education and second chance education. She praised the great learning facilities across the organisation and concluded by thanking everyone and extended best wishes and good luck to the Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson.

Cllr. Fionntán O'Súilleabháin added his best wishes to Cllr. Kathleen Codd Nolan and all those running for election.

140524.19 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The meeting concluded. Following the local elections, a date will be decided for the first meeting of the newly appointed incoming board.

Signed: Lola O'Sullivan

Date: 25/11/24

Documents circulated:

Agenda: meeting of 14/05/2024
Minutes of WWETB meeting held 26th March 2024
Conflict of Interest Declaration Forms
Chairperson's Comprehensive Report
Annual Report 2023
Audit and Risk Committee Reports to the board of
meetings held: 14/02/24 and 23/04/24
Policy: Internet Safety Policy and Summary
Risk Register Current Risks
ARC Questionnaire: Results of Survey
CE's Report
Addendum
Waterford City & County Area Comm. draft minutes