



A meeting of Laois and Offaly Education and Training Board was held on Tuesday 29 March 2022 at 4:30pm at the Tullamore Court Hotel. Members also joined the meeting via Microsoft Teams.

#### **PRESENT**

Cllr Robert McDermott (Chairperson)  
 Cllr Barry Walsh  
 Cllr John Carroll  
 Cllr Clare Claffey  
 Ms Mary Cotter-Bracken  
 Mr Dave Cullen  
 Cllr Caroline Dwane-Stanley

Cllr Catherine Fitzgerald  
 Cllr Eddie Fitzpatrick  
 Cllr Padraig Fleming  
 Mr John Mollin  
 Mr Frank Smith  
 Cllr Willie Aird  
 Mr Niall Tully

#### **IN ATTENDANCE**

Mr Joe Cunningham, Chief Executive  
 Ms Marie Bracken, Director OSD  
 Ms Emily McCauley, Head of Finance  
 Mr Rory Connolly, Corporate Governance  
 Ms Rebecca Preston, Corporate Governance

#### **1. APOLOGIES**

Ms Molly Buckley; Ms Maura Brophy and Mr Shane Flesk

#### **2. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS LOETB MEETING**

The minutes of the previous meeting, which took place on 28 February 2022 were circulated to members. Members approved the minutes, and they were signed by the Chairperson.

Proposed: Eddie Fitzpatrick  
 Seconded: Frank Moran

#### **3. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

There were no matters arising from the minutes.

#### **4. GOVERNANCE**

Marie Bracken, Director of OSD, informed members that the Audit and Risk Committee reviewed the updated Risk Register at their meeting on 26 March and received a presentation from Frank Walsh, Head of Corporate Services, on same. Members of the Audit and Risk Committee recommended the Risk Register to the Board for approval.

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Members approved the Risk Register.

### **Conflict of Interest**

As per Schedule 3, Paragraph 10, Section 3 of the (ETB) Act 2013 and the Agenda Notice, no conflicts of interest were declared.

## **5. ANNUAL REPORT FROM AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE**



25 March 2022

### **Annual Report of the Audit and Risk Committee in accordance with Section 7.37 of the Code of Practice for the Governance of ETBs for year ending 31/12/2021**

The Audit and Risk Committee, at meetings on 20 February 2021, 27 March 2021, 13 July 2021, 7 September 2021 and 7 December 2021, examined and reviewed the following;

1. Minutes of the;
  - Audit and Risk Committee meetings from 01/01/2021 to 31/12/2021
  - Finance Committee meetings from 01/01/2021 to 31/12/2021
  - LOETB meetings from 01/01/2021 to 31/12/2021
2. Reviewed Corporate Risk Register and recommended same to the Board at each meeting in 2021
3. Reviewed all Building and Capital Works and Procurement in 2021
4. Reviewed an Internal Audit Opinion Reports, by IAU-ETB's on Contracted Training and Procurement Compliance in LOETB.
5. Reviewed the following correspondence from the Office of the Comptroller and Auditor General in February 2022
  - Report from C&AG on the presentation of LOETB 2020 accounts to the Houses of the Oireachtas
  - C&AG letter re: Financial Statements Year Ended 31 December 2020
6. Reviewed the following Internal Controls in LOETB
  - Draft Statement of Internal Controls 2021
  - Report on controls in place in LOETB as at March 2022
  - Statement from Chief Executive for financial period January to December 2021
7. Conducted an Annual Review of Effectiveness of Internal Control
8. Reviewed LOETB's Letter of Representation to the Comptroller and Auditor General and noted that the representations given in connection with the audit of the Annual Financial Statements for 2020 were true and accurate.
9. Reviewed the approved internal audit plan for LOETB for 2021
10. Reviewed LOETB's report on the Public Spending Code
11. Adopted the following Procedures;

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- Procedures for Safes
- Referral of a Teacher/Special Needs Assistant to Medmark 28 day referral
- Oracle BI Discoverer
- LOETB CSR Proposal Documents
- LOETB Press Release Guidance Document
- Corporate Procurement Plan and Final Multi Annual Procurement Plan (MAPP) 2021
- Procedures and Guidance on the hire, rental, lease and licence of premises
- Public Sector Purchasing Card Procedure
- Purchasing and Payment Procedures
- Procedure for transferring staff with Post of Responsibilities within the LOETB scheme
- School Bank Accounts Procedure
- Travel and Subsistence for Members and Staff

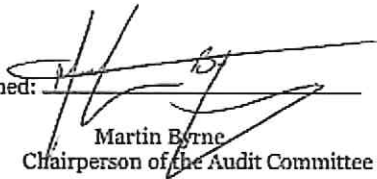
12. Microsoft Teams call with Denis Cromie Senior Auditor at the Office of the Comptroller and Auditor General (OCAG) to discuss the Annual Financial Statements (AFS) for 2020

13. Reviewed LOETB's Covid19 Response Plan

14. Reviewed LOETB's response on the impact of Covid19 on LOETB's Control Environment

15. Completed an evaluation of the effectiveness of the Audit and Risk Committee

Signed:



Martin Byrne  
Chairperson of the Audit Committee



25 March 2022

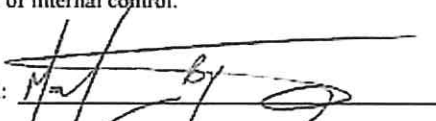
**Annual Review of Effectiveness of Internal Controls in accordance with Section 7.8 of the Code of Practice for the Governance of ETBs as at 25 March, 2022**

The Audit and Risk Committee, at meetings on 18<sup>th</sup> February 2021, 26<sup>th</sup> March 2021, 9<sup>th</sup> July 2021, 10<sup>th</sup> September, 2021 and 10<sup>th</sup> December 2021, examined and reviewed the following:

1. Minutes of the:
  - Audit and Risk Committee meetings from 01/01/2021 to 25/2/2022
  - Finance Committee meetings from 01/01/2021 to 31/12/2021
  - LOETB meetings from 01/01/2020 to 31/12/2021
2. Internal and External Audit Reports issued in 2021 and to date in 2022;
  - *Internal Audit Report* – Mr. Michael Mullarkey, Director, Internal Audit Unit-ETBs;
    - IAU Report on Contracted Training on 18<sup>th</sup> February 2021
    - IAU Report on Procurement Compliance on 9<sup>th</sup> July 2021
  - *C & AG Correspondence:*
    - Report from C & AG on the presentation of LOETB 2020 accounts to the House of the Oireachtas
    - C & AG Letter re: Financial Statements Year Ended 31 December 2020
3. Risk Management; reviewed and monitored the Corporate Risk Register on a regular basis and recommended to the Board.
4. Review of the System of Internal Controls in place in 2021 and to date in 2022.
5. Confirmation by the Chief Executive that LOETB is operating an adequate and appropriate system of internal control.

The Audit Committee wish to report that there are no inconsistencies in the above documents and it is the Audit and Risk Committee's understanding that the CE has operated an adequate and appropriate system of internal control.

Signed:

  
 Martin Byrne,  
 Chairperson of the Audit and Risk Committee

Members noted the Annual Report of the Audit and Risk Committee and the Annual Review of Effectiveness of Internal Controls.

## 6. ANNUAL REPORT FROM THE FINANCE COMMITTEE



26 March 2022

### **Finance Committee's Annual Report for year ending 31 December 2021**

The Finance Committee, at meetings on 18 February 2021, 26 March 2021, 8 July 2021, 17 September 2021 and 10 December 2021, examined and reviewed the following;

1. Reviewed and recommended the Service Plan 2021 to the Board
2. Reviewed the Annual Report of the Audit and Risk Committee for 2020
3. Reviewed and noted LOETB's Annual Review of Effectiveness of Internal Control
4. Reviewed the Draft Statement on Internal Control and Letter of Representation which were recommended to the Board by the Audit and Risk Committee.
5. Considered and recommended the Annual Financial Statements 2020 to the Board
6. Reviewed and noted the Letter of Determination from the DES
7. Reviewed SOLAS funding for 2021
8. Proposed that the Board put an overdraft facility in place for one year
9. Recommended Bank Overdraft
10. Considered the monthly accounts and other financial reports in 2021
11. Reviewed all Building and Capital Works and Procurement in 2021
12. Reviewed all Leases in 2021
13. Approved the Annual Report of the Finance Committee
14. Recommended LOETB's Annual Report 2020 to the Board for approval
16. Reviewed the LOETB Corporate Procurement Plan (CPP) and Final MAPP for 2021
17. Completed an effectiveness evaluation of the Finance Committee

Signed:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "P ter Scully", written over a horizontal line.

P ter Scully  
Chairperson of the Finance Committee

## 7. FINANCE

### **7.1 Annual Financial Statements 2020**

Emily McCauley (Head of Finance) informed members that the Finance Committee reviewed the Working Papers and Annual Financial Statements (AFS) for 2021 in detail at a meeting on 29 March and recommended the adoption of same by the Board. Ms McCauley took members through the AFS highlighting areas of interest and pointing out that the accounts are completed on a cash basis and not accrual basis. Members were satisfied with the accounts as presented.

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The Board adopted the AFS 2021.

Proposed: Padraig Fleming

Seconded: Neil Feighery

### **7.2 Statement on the System of Internal Controls**

Ms Bracken explained that Statement on the System of Internal Controls is a statement on the internal control procedures that were in place in LOETB during 2021 and to date in 2022. Ms Bracken took members through each section of the Statement. The Audit and Risk Committee, at a meeting on 25 March, reviewed the draft Statement on System of Internal Controls and recommended that the Chairperson of the Board sign same. The Finance Committee, at a meeting on 29 March, also reviewed same.

Members approved the Statement on System of Internal Controls and the Chairperson signed same.

Proposed: Caroline Dwane Stanley

Seconded: Dave Cullen

### **7.3 Letter of Representation**

Members reviewed LOETB's Letter of Representation to the Comptroller and Auditor General. Ms Bracken explained to members that the format for the letter is laid down by the Office of the Comptroller and Auditor General (OCAG). Ms Bracken informed members that the Audit and Risk Committee reviewed the Letter of Representation at their meeting on 25 March and were satisfied that the representations presented are true and accurate. Members of the Audit and Risk Committee recommended that the Chairperson of the Board and the Chief Executive (CE) sign same. The Finance Committee, at their meeting on 29 March, also reviewed the Letter of Representation.

Members approved the Letter of Representation.

Proposed: John Mollin

Seconded: Eddie Fitzpatrick

### **7.4 Bank Overdraft**

LOETB's overdraft facility, per sanction received from the Dept. of Education, is due to expire in June 2022. The current overdraft facility is €4 million, and this will need to be extended for a further year.

Members of the Finance Committee, at a meeting on 29 March, accepted the CE's proposal that the Board should borrow an amount of up to €4 million for the purposes of carrying out the Board's functions and for this overdraft facility to be put in place for one year. The Finance Committee recommended that the Board accept the CE's proposal.

Members agreed in principle that the proposal should be accepted.

Proposed by: Caroline Dwane Stanley

Seconded by: Eddie Fitzpatrick

## 8. CORRESPONDENCE

Item No	Correspondence From	Date / Ref No.	Details	
1.	Department of Education	CL 0009.2022	Revision of Salaries for SNAs with effect from 1 February 2022	Noted by members
2.	Department of Education	CL 0013.2022	Prescribed material for the Leaving Certificate English Exam 2024	Noted by members
3.	Department of Education	CL 0014.2022	Prescribed material for Junior Cycle English	Noted by members
4.	Department of Education	CL 0015.2022	Revision of salaries of certain grades other than Teachers and SNAs within ETBs 1 February 2022	Noted by members
5.	Department of Education	CL 0016.2022	Employment of 3 <sup>rd</sup> and 4 <sup>th</sup> year undergraduate student Teachers and application of the "5 Day Rule"	Noted by members

## 9. ANNUAL REPORT 2021

### Annual Report 2021

Members reviewed the draft LOETB Annual Report for 2021. The CE took members through each section of the Annual Report and explained that the Statement of Services will correspond with the activities on our Service Plan. The Service Plan (which includes the actions from our strategy statement) sets out our goals, priorities, actions, performance indicators, and targets for the year, and the Annual Report will report on performance against planned activity. The CE informed members that the majority of the actions have been completed and targets met. However, there are a limited number of activities that the completion dates have moved into Quarter 1 and Quarter 2 of 2022, as a direct result of Covid-19.

Members adopted the Annual Report for 2021.

Proposed: Eddie Fitzpatrick

Seconded: Padraig Fleming

### Chairperson's Comprehensive Report to the Minister

The CE informed members that as part of the Annual Report each year we must submit the Chairperson's Comprehensive Report to the Minister as set out in the Code of Practice for the Governance of ETBs. The Chairperson's Comprehensive Report to the Minister is a confidential letter from the Chairperson of the Board to the Minister of Education. It sets out any significant financial development outside of the norm in 2021. The CE took members through each section of the Report and explained the financial developments in detail. The Statement on Internal Control is attached to the Chairperson's Comprehensive Report as an appendix.

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Members approved the Chairperson's Comprehensive Report to the Minister, and the Chairperson and CE signed same.

Proposed: Willie Aird  
Seconded: Neil Feighery

### **Register of Gifts/Donations 2021**

In line with the Section 28.2 of the ETB Act 2013, LOETB is required to publish details of any gift received that exceed the amount specified by the Minister of Public Expenditure and Reform. Members reviewed and noted the register of gifts/donations received in LOETB in 2021. As there were no gifts/donations over the value specified by the Minister, they will not be included in the Annual Report.

## **10. DRAFT POLICIES FOR ADOPTION**

There were no draft policies for adoption.

## **11. MINUTES OF COMMITTEES OF THE BOARD**

Birr OETC 22 September 2021  
Birr OETC 09 December 2021  
Birr OETC 03 February 2022  
Audit and Risk Committee 28 February 2022  
Cóláiste Naomh Cormac 03 March 2022  
Portlaoise College 22 September 2021  
Portlaoise College Special Meeting 20 October 2021  
Portlaoise College 19 January 2022 and Appendix 1  
St Fergal's College 15 December 2021

## **12. APPOINTMENT TO BOARD OF MANAGEMENT AT CLONASLEE COLLEGE**

The Chairperson informed the Board that Ms Marese Corcoran, Killeigh has been appointed as the Community Representative to the Board Of Management at Clonaslee College.

## **13. LANGUAGE BURSARIES**

Ms Bracken informed members that the Board has a reserved function in terms of scholarships and bursaries. A list of language bursary allocations for 2022 was circulated to members prior to the meeting with total proposed expenditure of €40,000. The allocations are for LOETB schools and schools under the trusteeship of LOETB.

Members approved the allocations.

Proposed: Caroline Dwane-Stanley  
Seconded: Frank Moran

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#### 14. THE SALE OF THE LSU BUILDING

Ms Bracken informed Board members that approval of a wayleave was needed, in respect of access to the Surface/Foul Water drainage to progress the sale of the LSU buildings. This wayleave was for remedial works only and does not interfere with the pedestrian walkway to Banagher College. Members were informed that they wayleave approval will also have to be sanctioned by Dept. of Education. Board members agreed to the approval of the wayleave for the Purchasers of the LSU building. It is hoped that the purchase will be completed at an early date.

#### 15. CE REPORT

The CE presented the following report to members.

##### Schools Directorate

##### **Schools**

Schools continue to operate within the updated guidance issued following the mid-term break from the Department of Education. Masks are no longer required but staff and students can do so on a personal basis. The return to normal school routines and normal teaching and learning activities was welcomed. However, we are continuing to experience staff and student absences due to Covid-19. These absences have, and continue to be, significant at times. To date, we continue to be fully operational. Schools are supporting students as they continue to adapt to returning to learning alongside preparations for the return to normal examination timetables.

- At present, some of our schools have received queries from Ukranian families who have moved to Ireland and who wish to enrol students in our schools. We will continue to support families in whatever way we can. We await further guidance from the Dept. of Education in relation to supports that will be made available in this area.
- LOETB/Laois Education Centre, Optimising Middle Leadership Webinar Series facilitated by Dr Joe O'Connell is continuing for school leaders holding API and APII positions in our schools. The second session took place on Wednesday 2 March with the final part of the series taking place on 26 April.
- LOETB Principals and Deputy Principals attended the Annual ETBI Principals and Deputy Principals Conference on Tuesday 8 February 2022.
- LOETB School Ethos Digital Storytelling Competition launched Wednesday 2nd March inviting all LOETB schools to get involved. The Digital Story should specifically refer to one of the ETB Core Values (Excellence in Education Care, Respect, Community, Equality), and how this Core Value is alive in your school. here will be a prize for the winner in each school and a prize for the overall LOETB Winner.
- The Take 1 Sustainability Programme Information Session took place with Valerie Lewis from ETBI on Tuesday 1 March via Teams. Our schools will be invited to participate in the ETBI-supported May Day for Sustainability (10 May 2022) to further create awareness around Sustainability.
- Digital Schools Awards is a programme for schools who undertake a SELFIE assessment. All LOETB schools are planning to undertake a SELFIE assessment in March. Schools will then have the option to register with the Digital Schools Awards Academy. The aim of the academy is to provide SELFIE assessed schools with digital education mentor supports and professional development resources around the themes addressed within the SELFIE self-reflection tool. The themes are Leadership, Collaboration and Networking, Infrastructure and Equipment, Continuous

Chairmans  
Initials

Professional Development, Teaching and Learning, Assessment and Student Digital Competences.

- UCD Power 2 Progress Project Launch Monday 7 March 2022 – Tullamore College, St Fergal's Rathdowney, Oaklands Community College, Portlaoise College, and ASCN Clara are involved in a programme run by UCD which supports students reach their academic potential through enhanced academic supports. The project launch was attended by representatives from UCD, Zurich Foundation and Rethink Ireland. The keynote speaker was Professor Paul Rouse from UCD.
- Oaklands Community College student Maeve Frances McIntyre has been awarded the Trinity College Dublin Entrance Exhibition Award as the incoming student with the highest points from their public exams.
- Clonaslee College opened a new sensory room "Narnia" for all students. Recognising the negative impact of Covid-19 on students through social lockdowns and school closures, the staff of Clonaslee College have created a space where students can be offered a quiet, distraction-free zone. The room was formally opened by Minister Josepha Madigan on Friday 11th March 2022. This was an exceptionally positive event emphasising the inclusive, student-centred education practice in Clonaslee College.

### **Youth Services:**

- DCEDIY – Resilience and Effectiveness Initiative 2022: The DCEDIY allocated €17,500 to LOETB to administer under Grant Scheme 2022. The Resilience and Effectiveness Initiative is a UBU Your Place Your Space initiative to support UBU funded organisations to deliver a more efficient and comprehensive service to young people, while ensuring that they have sufficient resilience to operate effectively in the medium to long term. Information in relation to the Grant Scheme has been sent by email to all four UBU funded organisations.
- DCEDIY – Local Youth Club Grant Scheme 2022: The DCEDIY allocated €82,544 to LOETB to administer under Grant Scheme for 2022. The Scheme supports voluntary youth club/groups activities for young people, with priority given to clubs/groups catering for aged of 10 and 21. The primary focus of the Scheme is to assist local, volunteer-led youth clubs/groups that provide a programme of youth work activities for young people. Information in relation to the Grant Scheme has been advertised on LOETB website, social media and local newspapers. The deadline for applications is Friday 1 April 2022.
- DCEDIY – Targeted Youth Employability Support Initiative 2021-2022: The DCEDIY (in conjunction with the Minister for Rural and Community Development) allocated €30,580 to LOETB for this Grant Scheme for 2021/2022. The aim of the Targeted Youth Employability Support Initiative (TYESI) is to engage and support the harder to reach young people aged 15 to 24 years who are not currently in employment, education or training. The focus of the initiative is on soft skills and developing these in relation to employability. Youth Work Ireland – Midlands/Tullamore Youth Project are the sole and successful applicant.
- DCEDIY - UBU Your Place Your Space 2022: The DCEDIY has approved grant funding of €382,287 to LOETB to administer under Grant Scheme for 2022. UBU Your Place Your Space provides funding to youth services that support young people to develop the personal and social skills required to improve their life chances. This includes services covering health and wellbeing, education, employment and social connectedness. The scheme will target young people aged between 10 to 24 years who are experiencing economic, social and cultural disadvantage.

Chairmans  
Initials

UBU Funded Organisation	2022 Funding allocation
Offaly Traveller Movement / Youth Project	€53,103
Youth Work Ireland – Midlands / Tullamore Youth Project	€102,328
Youth Work Ireland – Laois.	€103,255
Foroige / Portlaoise UBU Youth Service	€123,600
<b>Total</b>	<b>€382,287</b>

- Laois Offaly Local Creative Youth Partnership (LCYP)/Creative Youth Programme: The Department of Education through the Creative Ireland Programme has allocated €100,000 to Laois Offaly Local Creative Youth Partnership (LOETB) to administer under Grant Scheme for 2022. The Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media (TCAGSM) through the Creative Ireland Programme the LCYP was approved grant funding of €30,000 to Laois Offaly Local Creative Youth Partnership (LOETB) to administer under Grant Scheme for 2022 (downfall of €20,000 from 2021). Minister for Department of TCAGSM Catherine Martin TD announced on the 8th of February that the Creative Ireland Programme is being extended to 2027. Laois Offaly LCYP, actively support creative youth providers and practitioners who work directly with young people considered hard to reach/seldom heard aged 10-24 years in out of school setting. Youth voice and participation lead the creative activities identified. Core and central to the work of the LO LCYP is youth voice.

Currently working with: Young Traveller Men Tullamore, LGBTI+ Music Group Tullamore, ongoing Afterschool of Music Programme in partnership with Music Generation in five schools across Laois and Offaly, Down Syndrome Laois and Offaly branches and Down Syndrome Midlands, Laois and Offaly Families for Autism, Introduction to virtual reality.

**Music Generation:**

- Music Generation Laois and Laois School of Music have successfully secured €24,200 for the Laois-Franklin Youth Project from Laois County Council under the LPSS 2022. Nine young musicians and their adult leaders from Franklin, Tennessee, will come to Portlaoise from the 16-23 June 2022 and these funds will be used to host a Gala concert, and develop joint repertoire.
- Eleven young traditional musicians from MG Laois took part in Donal Lunny’s Atlantic Arc in Carlow on 4-6 February.
- Two recent concerts programmed included the Laois School of Music Beginner Orchestra concert in the Dunamais Arts Centre on Sunday 13 February, and ‘re: Centering’ Mountmellick in the Mountmellick Community Arts Centre on Sunday 20 February.
- Saturday 12 March, Laois Music Centre, Church Ave, Portlaoise, Album launch: Uilleann Piping from County Kildare – Joe Byrne, The Ace and Deuce of Piping Volume 5. The fifth CD in Na Piobairí Uilleann’s Ace and Deuce of Piping series is a solo recording by Joe Byrne on concert pitch pipes made by Paddy Hyland. Joe Byrne is from Athy in Kildare and joined Music Generation Laois in 2012, studying pipes with Gay McKeon in Portlaoise, part of our partnership pipe programme with Na Piobairí Uilleann. Joe now teaches the pipes for Music Generation Laois, as well as Music Generation Louth and Music Generation Offaly-Westmeath. Paddy Hyland is a

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Initials

Laois Pipemaker and has been an active advocate and support to Music Generation Laois since the programme was established in 2012. MG Laois pipe students past and present performed at the launch.

- Wednesday 16 March, Laois Music Centre, Church Ave, Portlaoise: Rock and Pop programme Open Mic event: Singer-songwriters and bands in the Music Generation Laois Rock and Pop programme took part in this Open Mic event in Laois Music Centre, part of Music Generation Laois St Patrick's Day celebrations 2022.
- Thursday 17 March, Main St, Portlaoise: Young bands and ensembles from Music Generation Laois took part in the 2021 St Patrick's Festival in Portlaoise.
- Saturday 19 March, Collin's Barracks, Dublin St Patricks Festival: The Music Generation Laois Trad Orchestra, and the Music Generation Harp Collective, performed in this year's St Patrick's Festival, in Collins Barracks, Dublin

### **FET Directorate**

LOETB/SOLAS Strategic Dialogue and Performance Agreement

The LOETB CE & FET Management team (FMT) met a SOLAS delegation in Mount Lucas on Thursday 3 March. The meeting focused on LOETBs FET provision to date and the next Strategic Performance Agreement.

The discussion was guided by LOETBs focus on Green Skills, NZEB, Retrofit, and the FET Centre provision model. The next stage of the process will be an agreement on targets in the following areas:

- Progression to HE
- Progression to Employment
- Certification at Levels 1-3
- Green Skills provision
- Skills To Advance (Employer/Employee focused provision)

### **National Construction Training Centre, Mount Lucas**

Under the new FET Capital Call process, LOETB has requested permission to expand provision at Mount Lucas. This expansion will incorporate a 10,000 sq. ft. unit to double our NZEB/Retrofit provision and a second 15,000 sq. ft. unit to house provision targeted at the Modern Methods of Construction (these include site simulation, BIM, Digital Twins and future Construction modelling).

This application has been made under the 'Strategic Infrastructure Upgrade Fund' and has the support of CIF, SOLAS, DFHERIS, and will contribute significantly to ensuring the FET sector meet the national strategic targets.

### **Programme Development**

LOETB and TUS (Limerick) have co-developed a Special Purpose Award at Level 6 in Green Skills. This 'Retrofit Co-ordinator' award is targeted at industry professional (e.g., architects, quantity surveyors) and focuses on the oversight of Retrofit installation. This role was outlined in the Skills for Zero Carbon report, 2021 and will be co-delivered by LOETB and TUS staff.

This collaborative FET/HE programme development process is one of the first in the country and provides LOETB with a far greater ability to respond quickly and effectively to industry needs.

Chairmans  
Initials

## FET Guidance Strategy

LOETB FET Services have developed a single, fully integrated guidance service. This service will ensure that all FET learners have access to guidance and support during their time with LOETB.

Our strategy will contribute significantly to our Pathways model, supporting learners to identify their progression goals. The strategy will be managed by our two Guidance co-ordinators based in our Learner Information hubs in Tullamore and Portlaoise. This strategy is outcomes focused and measurable and will be reviewed annually by the FMT.

## LOETB FET Beneficiary Report 2022

LOETB provides a fully integrated FET service across the region. This provision is delivered in ten FET Centres, two Prison Education Units, the Birr Outdoor Education and Training Centre, the Midlands Skills Centre, the National Construction Centre at Mount Lucas, and collaboratively in second provider centres in Tullamore and Portlaoise.

These centres deliver a range of full and part time programmes, across all NFQ levels with learner supports available on-site. These centres are supported by two Learner Information Hubs in Tullamore and Portlaoise which provide 'one-stop-shop' guidance and recruitment services to past, existing and future FET learners.

This approach is informed by the recent SOLAS strategy document; Future FET: Transforming Learning 2021-25.

The nature of provision in these centres is aligned to the identified regional growth sectors using relevant reports from the Expert Group on Future Skills Needs, the Strategic Labour Market Research Unit (SLMRU) in SOLAS and local and regional employer engagement undertaken by LOETBs Enterprise Support Team. This provision is agreed and underpinned by the annual Strategic Dialogue process and LOETBs Strategic Performance Agreement with SOLAS.

As a result of this approach, LOETB provided for 12,088 FET beneficiaries in 2021, which equates to 98% of the 2019 pre-pandemic total.

Furthermore, this figure represents increases in the following areas:

- 'Access' Progression (community-based to FET Centre) increased from 47% (2019) to 54%
- Progression to FET and/or HE increased from 62% (2019) to 69%
- Progression to Employment increased from 17% (2019) to 27%
- Retention across the FET scheme increased from 81% (2019) to 86%

## LOETB supporting Community and Voluntary providers

A number of Community and Voluntary providers in the region are currently trying to re-engage with QQI. The new process, based on QQI's policy, is proving to be extremely difficult for smaller providers.

To support these providers, LOETB has developed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) allowing these providers to work within LOETB's QA management system. This will ensure that these providers can continue to work within their communities and are supported to deliver high quality QQI accredited courses and programmes.

**OSD Directorate**

**Human Resources**

**The following posts have been filled since the last ETB meeting**

- 1 X APII St Fergal's College
- 1 X Grade III – Tullamore College
- 3 X APII Portlaoise College
- 1 X Plumbing Instructor
- 1 X Programme Co-ordinator post – Tullamore College
- 1 X Acting APII Clonaslee College
- 1 X Attendant Coláiste Naomh Cormac
- 1 X Community Education Facilitator
- 1 X Grade VII – Training Officer
- 1 X Adult Educator
- FET tutor panel
- Substitute teacher panel
- Substitute SNA panel

**Posts advertised and interviews to be held**

- 1 X Biology, Ag Science Teacher
- 1 X Grade VII – Corporate Section
- 4 X API – Tullamore College
- 2 X Electrical Instructors
- Principal Dunamase College
- Substitute Teacher Panel
- Musician Educators, Music Generation
- 2 X Adult Education Guidance Counsellors

**Report on Pensions to date (21/03/2022) since 01/01/2022**

<b>Pension Description</b>	<b>No.</b>
Members Retired/Pensions issued	2
Widow/Widower Pensions issued	0
Members/ Widows to return pension forms	1
<b>Total Pensions issued to date:</b>	<b>3</b>

Reference: 2576-999

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Initials

<b>Leaver Statements Report for 2022</b>	<b>Total Numbers</b>
How many staff members have left since 1 Jan 2022	4
How many Leaver Statements we have issued since 1 Jan 2022	1

<b>Leaver Statements Report 2013 - 2022</b>	<b>Total Numbers</b>
How many Total staff members have left since 1 Jan 2013	401
How many Leaver Statements we have issued since 2013	61
How many not able to issue (as they are Timesheeted)	340
Currently processing members who started in 2020 and 2021	61

<b>Benefit Statements up to 31-Dec-2021 issued 30 June 2022</b>	<b>Total Numbers</b>
Total active Single Pension Scheme members on 31/12/2021	478
Benefit statements issued on 30 June 2022	TBC June 22
How many not able to issue (as they are Timesheeted or not matching with DPER)	TBC June 22
How many processed but not able to issue due to error in CORE (started 1/9/20 SPS deductions taken only from 20/9/20)	TBC June 22

We have sent instruction to NSSO to apply pension increases to all LOETB retirees up to and including 1 Oct 2020 increases. We are awaiting templates/instructions from NSSO for the 2021 increases.

We are currently updating service on our new Core system for members aged 60+ where total number is 76 and members aged 55+ where total number is 95. So far, we have completed service for 49 members on Core System. To date in 2022, we have written for previous service to be transferred over to LOETB for 17 members with four completed and we have transferred out service for three members and eight are being processed.

#### Report on Payroll

04/02/2022	948	1,126,322.28
18/02/2022	960	1,174,957.27
04/03/2022	968	1,198,545.03
18/03/2022	958	1,140,846.64

## Corporate Services

### ICT

New phone systems are on order for St. Fergal's College and the Learner Information Hub at Castle Buildings, Tullamore.

The installation of new phone system for Portlaoise College is completed.

The roll-out of Microsoft Defender as future replacement for Symantec and Sophos anti-virus has commenced with several sites now migrated.

A hardware failure of the server at Portlaoise College occurred during the first week of March. Workaround procedure have been implemented and new server is ordered.

Hardware failure of the server at Portlaoise FET occurred during the second week of March. Workaround procedures were implemented during downtime and server has since been repaired under warranty.

A new video conference system has been installed in Lyster Square boardroom and Head Office meeting room. Network cabling and Wi-Fi was installed in unit 3 Midland Skills Centre. A wireless bridge connecting all three buildings at Dunamase College has been upgraded.

Regular maintenance, prevention, and replacement requests on an ongoing basis across schools, centres and offices.

### Capital Projects and Buildings Works

#### Clonaslee College

Additional Accommodation ASD - Approval received from DoE. Consultants Tenders being evaluated. Science Room/Classrooms work on schedule to finish May/June 2022

#### St Fergal's Community College

Summer Works Scheme 2022 approval received from DoE – replacement of existing asbestos pitched roof area. Consultants – MCOH appointed.

#### Portlaoise College

Phase 1 Reconfiguration Classrooms - Handover of Art, Construction and ASD Rooms on 4 March 2022. Toilet Units at the Athletic Track – Contractor Insurances being checked by IPB, electricals commenced

#### Oaklands Community College, Edenderry

Additional Accommodation ASD – Kenny Lyons & Associates appointed as Consultants.

#### Ard Scoil Chiarain Naofa, Clara

Awaiting completion of surveys on the site at Drayton Villas.

ASD Room - ground works commenced, and the unit will be installed over the Easter period.

#### Coláiste Naomh Cormac Kilcormac

Traffic Calming Works – Contractors Insurances checked by IPB – Works have commenced on site. OT Student - Consultant preparing Tender documents for works.

#### S.N. na Fraoich (The Heath)

Approval letter received from DoE. Brief Formulation Report completed by Principal.

Consultant Tender Documents to be uploaded to eTenders.



**Emo National School**

Approval letter received from DoE. Brief Formulation Report completed by Principal. Consultant Tender Documents to be uploaded to eTenders.

**Further Education Projects**

Axis Business Park Unit 23e, works commenced on fit out for electrical apprenticeship.

**Procurement****New OGP Frameworks**

Single Framework for Media Buying Services/Advertising in the public sector

Procurement Section are currently working on the following projects for Tendering:

- Waste Management – supplementary RFT competition with OGP
- Stationery – on eTenders
- Electrical Apprenticeship Materials – on eTenders
- Engineering and Renewable Energy – on eTenders
- Website

**Corporate Services (General)**

Ongoing reviews of risk register, and a risk appetite statement has been developed.

Léargas accreditation for Schools awarded (Collab. with Schools' Support Coordinator)

New staff members undertaking training in Governance and GDPR.

Planned programme for Fire safety/warden training for Admin staff under way, First Aid training commenced.

Mandatory Engineering Inspections Audit underway across schools and centre network

Continued support for brand alignment across centres and/or schools

Specifications for new website being finalised to tender format

Phase 2 (of 5) cybersecurity phishing campaign almost complete

**Finance**

Monthly monitoring of expenditure continues with the 2021 Annual Financial Statements presented as a separate agenda item.

The CE updated members on the progress of works at Dunamase College and Ard Scoil Chiaráin Naofa Clara and committed to providing further information on a gift received by a school.

## 16. VOTES OF SYMPATHY

A vote of sympathy was passed to:

- To Sandra Mierzwa, Teacher in Banagher College, on the passing of her grandfather
- To Sarah Rossiter, Teacher in Tullamore College, on the passing of her aunt
- To Mary O'Connor, Teacher in Tullamore College, on the passing of her mother
- To Elaine Sheridan, Assistant Staff Officer in Tullamore FET Centre, on the passing of her father
- To Kathleen Gleeson, Teacher in Banagher College, on the passing of her mother
- To Maria O'Brien, Midland's Prison, on the passing of her uncle

## 17. VOTES OF CONGRATULATIONS

- Congratulations to CNC Kilcormac on winning the winning the Senior 'C' All Ireland Schools Hurling Final.
- Congratulations to Heywood Community School on winning the Senior "C" All Ireland Schools Football Final.

## 18. AOB

- The Chairperson informed members that John Mollins had submitted notice of retirement from the Board. He thanked John for his hard work and contribution to LOETB over the years, noting that John is well respected among members and the Chair wished to send on well wishes to John on behalf of the Board for the future. The CE also thanked John Mollins for his contribution to the Board and the committees on which he served and wished him the very best on his retirement and good health to enjoy it.

- Approval to enter a lease for Unit 23, Axis Business Park was sought. Members were informed that the additional space, approx. 5,000 sq metres was needed because of the demand for apprenticeships. The Board approved same.

Proposed: Caroline Dwane Stanley  
Seconded: Neil Feighery

## 19. DATE AND VENUE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Board will take place on Tuesday 24 May 2022 at 4.30pm at a Laois Venue (TBC). Members will also be able to join the meeting online.

Signed: Robert Mc Dermott

Date: 24/5/22

Chairperson

Chairmans  
Initials