



A meeting of Laois and Offaly Education and Training Board was held on Tuesday 25 July 2023 at 4:30pm in Admin Offices, Portlaoise, R32 XWY1

**PRESENT**

Evelyn Dunne (Chairperson)  
Cllr John Carroll  
Ms Mary Cotter-Bracken  
Cllr Eddie Fitzpatrick  
Cllr Willie Aird  
Ms Maura Brophy  
Mr Dave Cullen  
Cllr Catherine Fitzgerald

Mr Frank Smith  
Cllr Caroline Dwane-Stanley  
Cllr Neil Feighery  
Cllr Pdraig Fleming  
Cllr Barry Walsh  
Mr Jim Cashen  
Mr Niall Tully

**IN ATTENDANCE**

Mr Joe Cunningham, Chief Executive  
Ms Marie Bracken, Director of OSD  
Ms Josie Lalor, Corporate Services

**1. WELCOME**

The Chair thanked the OSD staff for meeting with the Board members prior to the start of the Board meeting.

**2. APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from Cllr Robert McDermott, Ms Molly Buckley, Mr Shane Flesk, and Cllr John King.

**3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS LOETB MEETING**

The minutes of the previous meeting, which took place on 23 May 2023 were circulated to members. Members approved the minutes and they were signed by the Chairperson.

Proposed: Caroline Dwane-Stanley  
Seconded: Evelyn Dunne

**4. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

There were no matters arising from the minutes.

## 5. GOVERNANCE

### **Risk Management**

Marie Bracken, Director of OSD, informed members that the Risk Committee met on 20 June to review and update the Risk Register. Members of the Audit and Risk Committee went through the Corporate Risk Register in detail at a meeting on 14 July and informed the Board that 1 new addition had been included in the risk register. Ms Bracken informed the board that because of the inability to recruit teachers and tutors for all subjects, LOETB may be challenged in meeting its full staffing requirements in schools and centres. Ms Bracken informed the Board that representations has been made to the Dept. of Education (DoE) and ETBI on this matter. A detailed discussion took place with members requestion continued representation to be made to the relevant parties.

### **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.

## 6. FINANCE

Marie Bracken, Director of OSD went through the draft finances up to the end of May 2023 as presented to the Finance committee on 14 July 2023. The financial information is also covered in the Chief Executive's Report. The members noted same.

## 7. CORRESPONDENCE

<b>Item No</b>	<b>Correspondence From</b>	<b>Date / Ref No.</b>	<b>Details</b>	<b>Comments</b>
1.	Department of Education and Skills	CL0026.2023	Recruitment of Special Needs Assistants (SNA's)	Noted by Members
2.	Department of Education and Skills	CL0027.2023	NQF Level 9 Graduate Diploma in Social Personal and Health Education/Relationships and Sexuality Education (SPHE/RSE Programme 2024)	Noted by Members
3.	Department of Education and Skills	CL0028.2023	Arrangements for the implementation of the Framework for Junior Cycle with Particular reference to the school year 2023/2024	Noted by Members
4.	Department of Education and Skills	CL0029.2023	Brief Absences For Staff Other Than Persons Employed As Teachers And Special Needs Assistants In Education And Training Boards	Noted by Members
5.	Department of Education and Skills	CL0033.2023	Carers Leave Scheme for Special needs Assistants employed in Recognised Primary and Post Primary Schools	Noted by Members
6.	ETBI	20.06.2023	Notice of Education & Training Boards Ireland, Company Limited by	Noted by Members

## 8. Draft Policies

The following draft policies were circulated to members prior to the meeting. Members approved the draft policies as follows:

### **Bank Account Policy**

Proposed: Frank Smith

Seconded: John Carroll

### **CCTV Policy and Guidance Booklet**

Proposed: Willie Aird

Seconded: Caroline Dwane Stanley

### **Professional Development Policy**

Proposed: Neil Feighery

Seconded: Eddie Fitzpatrick

### **Risk Management Policy**

Proposed: John Carroll

Seconded: Maura Brophy

## 9. MINUTES OF COMMITTEES OF THE BOARD

The following minutes of the Committees of the Board were circulated to members prior to the meeting. Members noted same.

- Finance Committee 23 March 2023
- Audit & Risk Committee 23 March 2023
- Youth Work Committee 29 March 2023
- Birr OETC 27 April 2023
- Ard Scoil Chiarain Naofa 29 November 2022
- Ard Scoil Chiarain Naofa 10 January 2023
- Ard Scoil Chiarain Naofa 7 March 2023
- Banagher College 26 April 2023
- Clonaslee College 27 April 2023
- Colaiste Naomh Cormac 17 April 2023
- Colaiste Naomh Cormac 22 May 2023
- Dunamase College Extraordinary Meeting 2 March 2023
- Dunamase College Extraordinary Meeting 15 March 2023
- Dunamase College Extraordinary Meeting 21 March 2023
- Dunamase College Extraordinary Meeting 10 May 2023
- Oaklands Community College 2 March 2023
- Oaklands Community College 27 April 2023

- Portlaoise College 23 November 2022
- Portlaoise College 15 March 2023
- Portlaoise College 10 May 2023
- St Fergal's College 23 March 2023

## **10. SCHOOL BOM NOMINATION**

The Chairperson informed members that St Fergal's College has nominated Barbara Stanley to School BOM and members ratified this nomination.

Proposed: Evelyn Dunne  
Seconded: Padraig Fleming

## **11. ETBI AGM**

The Chairperson informed members that the ETBI Annual General Meeting 2023 will take place on the 27 and 28 September in Cork's City Hall. Any member who is interested in attending is to contact Josie Lalor in Corporate Services to register their planned attendance.

## **12. SERVICE PLAN**

The Service Plan for 2022, as approved by DoE, was noted by members.

## **13. LEASES FOR APPROVAL**

- Lease of additional accommodation for the Information Hub, Lyster Square, at the same cost as the current accommodation. Lease period to run in conjunction with current lease.

- Lease of additional accommodation at Vision 85 for PLC and Further Education and Training, at same rate as current lease and to run in conjunction with timeline of current lease.

Proposed: Evelyn Dunne  
Seconded: Padraig Fleming

## **14. CHIEF EXECUTIVES REPORT**

### **Schools' Directorate**

#### **Vocabulary Enrichment Programme**

All LOETB schools have nominated teachers to attend this training provided by the National Council for Special Education in Kilkenny Education Centre on Thursday 21 September. This training will complement the work of our Inclusion Coaches across all LOETB schools

### **LOETB/Laois Education Centre Leadership Webinar series for LOETB Schools' Middle Leaders**

This series is confirmed for the new academic year and workshops will include: Dealing with Difficult Conversations, Day to Day Practicalities of the API and APII Position - Tuesday 5 December, The role of the Year Head and Vision for School Development

### **LOETB/Laois Education Centre SNA Training**

Training took place on 6 and 13 June 2023 by Joe Lynch focusing on 'A skills-based approach to managing behaviour'. The training received very positive feedback.

### **Youth Services: DCEDIY – UBU Your Place Your Space: 2024 – 2026 (Cycle 2)**

LOETB Youth Service Unit have now completed and submitted revised Area Profile Needs Analysis and Service Requirement (APNASR) to DCEDIY, which will help to support decisions in relation to funding applications and subsequent allocations under the UBU, which will commence in 2024.

### **Local Youth Club Grant Scheme 2023**

The Department of Children Equality Diversity Inclusion and Youth have allocated €82,544 to LOETB to administer under Grant Scheme for 2023. Payments will be made to successful applicants in late July 2023.

### **LOETB Youth Work Committee**

Youth Services are currently working on the final stages the LOETB Youth Work Plan. The LOETB Youth Work Plan sets out legislative basis and policy context of youth service provision, underpinned by a detailed socio-economic profile LOETB region. The Youth Work Committee have now reviewed the Draft LOETB Youth Work Plan, and it will be presented to the Senior Management Team for approval. It is anticipated that the official launch of LOETB Youth Work Plan, will take place in Q4 2023.

### **Laois Offaly Local Creative Youth Partnership**

The Department of Education through the Creative Ireland Programme have commitment to allocate €100,000 to LOETB/Laois Offaly Local Creative Youth Partnership to administer under Grant Scheme for 2023. The Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media, through the Creative Ireland Programme have committed to allocate €50,000 to LOETB/Laois Offaly Local Creative Youth Partnership to administer under Grant Scheme for 2023.

### **Laois Offaly Local Creative Youth Partnership**

Students at Youthreach Edenderry created a stunning indoor mural focusing on the theme Biodiversity. Laois Offaly Local Creative Youth Partnership organised the Offaly Biodiversity Officer to chat with the students about biodiversity in the surrounding area and funded a local Biodiversity artist to support the students create the mural. Commencing in July, Laois Offaly Local Creative Youth Partnership enabled Tullamore Youth Project part of Youth Work Ireland Midlands to expand their current music programme to address the need and interest of a wider catchment area in Tullamore.

For the month of July Clonbullogue Summer Camp delivered arts and crafts workshops funded by LO Laois Offaly Local Creative Youth Partnership. These workshops were requested by children and young people from the surrounding area.

### **Cruinniú na Nóg**

To celebrate Cruinniú na nÓg, Laois Offaly Local Creative Youth Partnership funded Paul Timoney Specialist sensory artist to work with children and young people in the ASD units of the Holy Family School and Scoil Bhríde in Portlaoise.

### **Music Generation Laois**

Presented 2 Summer Camps in Portlaoise across June and July. The camps included 5 concerts, and the creation of music videos, supported by the Music Generation/Arts Council Partnership Creativity and Collaboration Fund. Young musicians from Music Generation Laois' Friday Club, supported by LOETB Local Creative Youth Partnership performed at Traveller Pride in Portarlinton on Wednesday 12 July 2023. Music Generation Laois Trad Orchestra will be performing at Forest Fest in Emo in July, and at Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann in August. Five young musicians from Music Generation Laois, and their Musician Educator Siobhan Buckley, will travel to Japan this August to tour original music commissioned by Music Generation Laois in 2017. 'The Spirit of Laois Suite' was composed by Michael Rooney, with supports from Creative Ireland. Michael Rooney (harp) and June McCormack (flute) will join the group in Japan for performances in Osaka, Nagoya and Tokyo, including professional concert halls, a primary school and in the Irish Embassy in Tokyo.

### **Music Generation Offaly**

School programmes have finished up for the summer break and will return in September with the addition of 4 primary schools, making a total of 16 primary schools for the 2023-2024 academic year. One musician educator continues to work with the Fusion Project and Tullamore Youth Group and delivering 4 hours per week as part of their summer programmes and continues to work with targeted groups on a weekly basis. Funding has been secured for same until December 2023. The young musicians recently performed at the Youth Music Gathering in Portlaoise organised my Music Generation Laois, which was part of the Old Fort Quarter festival. Music Generation Offaly is involved in 4 summer programmes: 2 in primary schools and 2 in youth work settings: in Scoil Eoin Phoil Naofa II in Tullamore, and in Scoil Bhríde in Clara. Music Generation Offaly choir made up of children from St. Josephs' NS and Scoil Eoin Phoil Naofa II performed with Tolú Makay and Dónal Lunney as part of the official opening for Esker Arts in early June. The event was attended by President Michael D. Higgins, his wife Sabina, and other dignitaries.

### **Regional Education and Language Team (REALT)**

End of academic year situation re: Ukrainian refugees (overall numbers)

- 15,625 Ukrainian pupils enrolled
- 10,141 of these in primary
- 5,484 of these in post- primary

#### Local Enrolments in primary and post-primary schools:

Laois has 145 enrolled in primary and 77 in post-primary

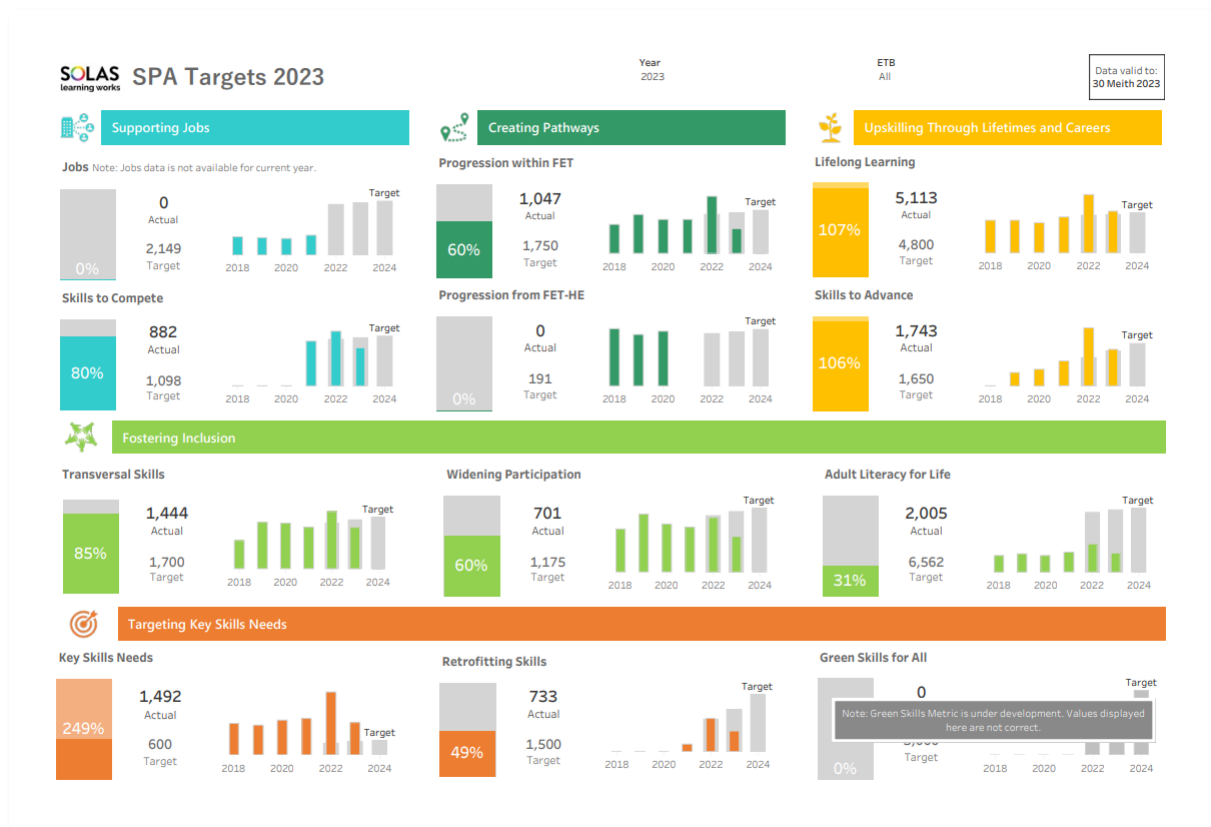
Offaly has 125 enrolled in primary and 43 in post-primary

At the moment there is only a trickle of new arrivals into the area. This will change as new units become available in August. As schools are closed for the summer, all new arrivals will be placed on a pre-enrolment list, and the relevant schools will be contacted when they re-open in August.

**FET Directorate**

**LOETB FET Service Strategic Performance Agreement Targets Mid-Year Report**

LOETB FET Service continues to make significant progress in relation to our SPA Targets for 2023.



Key Skills Needs, Lifelong Learning and Skills to Advance provision targets for 2023 have been achieved:

- 1,743 employed people participated on Skills To Advance programmes in the first six months of 2023
- 5,113 are engaged in Lifelong Learning and we expect this figure to grow to over 8000 by year end.

Approximately 750 people (50%) have completed NZEB or Retrofit programmes at The National Construction Training Campus, Mount Lucas in 2023.

- This accounts for 1 in every 2 people trained nationally (2023)

The Adult Literacy for Life (ALL) figure reported does not account for literacy provision in the Prison Service and SOLAS have agreed that these figures should be included. On that basis, the actual ALL figure is approximately 2700 (41%).

Whilst Job Placement figures are not available presently, FET Service placed over 1,500 learners into employment last year and we expect the 2023 figure to exceed that.

All other targets; Skills to Compete, Widening Participation and Progression within FET will be surpassed by the end of 2023.

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

### **i) Site Simulation**

LOETB has acquired 3 Machine simulators from the Canadian-based company CM Labs with multiple items of Plant and the Tower Crane. They are housed in a new purpose built fully ventilated unit on site in Mount Lucas. Two of the Simulators are stationary and the third is a mobile unit that can be taken to schools, trade shows, and events to promote the centre and associated training. SOLAS has agreed to incorporate simulation training as part of the New Entrants training programme and the Simulation Units will allow for more machine training time per candidate along with facilitating machine training for a new and wider audience. The simulators can generate reports on how each candidate operated the machines and several scenarios can be tailored to suit the needs of each cohort including New Entrants, Utilities Trainees, and Senior Cycle students. The simulators will provide learners with a risk averse training environment, whilst also significantly reducing the carbon footprint of the site.

### **ii) NZEB & Retrofit Mobile Training Unit:**

LOETB has leased a large Articulated Expanding Mobile Training Rig to increase learner accessibility to training at Mount Lucas. The aim of the unit is to bring the same learning experience gained at the centre to construction sites and schools that are currently outside of the existing Centres of excellence. The rig will include Solar Panels and all aspects of Retrofit and NZEB training. It will include a fully working heat pump, ventilation system and an interactive TV. The Mobile Rig will be branded and will act as a promotion tool for both the training in NZEB/Retrofit and the National Construction Training Campus at Mount Lucas.

### **iii) LOETB/SOLAS/IPS Prison Pilot Programme:**

LOETB has been working with the Prison service to roll out NZEB & Retrofit Training within the Prison training schools of both The Midlands and Wheatfield prisons. To date this has included site visits to and from the Prisons, upskilling of the Prison service Work Training Officers (WTO's) and sharing of designs programme material. The aim is to upskill the WTO's and then allow them to shadow on existing courses in Mount Lucas. Once fully trained the pilot courses will roll out in both Prisons under the supervision of Mount Lucas Instructors.

The learners in the prisons will gain certification in NZEB Fundamentals (City & Guilds) along with Retrofit Insulation Skills (QQI)

### **Launch of Tertiary programmes**

On Friday 7 July, Simon Harris, Minister for Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Skills, launched 23 new tertiary degree programmes to be run in the next academic year. They are aimed at learners who would like to transition from further to higher education and are on offer across 11 locations, in five areas of study: business; ICT; arts; engineering; manufacturing and construction; and health and welfare. LOETB has partnered with South East Technological University (SETU) at its Carlow campus to increase access to degree courses in Business and Software Development for learners. Learners will be able to complete the first two years of four-year degree programmes in Portlaoise Institute, then progress to complete the final two years in Carlow. This initiative removes common barriers to entry such as accommodation costs, travel, and CAO entry points. Learners on these courses are recognised as registered students of both SETU and LOETB, and thus can avail of student facilities and supports across both organisations. Third level registration fees will not apply for the first two years of each of these programmes. The response to this launch has been very positive and we have received several queries and applications. Information Sessions in relation to these programmes will be held on the following dates in LOETB Information Hub, Lyster Square, Portlaoise:

- Tuesday 18 July, 2pm
- Thursday 20 July 7pm



## **Ministerial visit to LOETB**

Minister of State for Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science, Simon Harris TD visited 3 LOETB centres in Offaly on Monday 3 July. He started the day at Mount Lucas with a visit to the National Construction and Training campus, announcing the launch a range of construction related stackable micro credentials to include the QQI Level 5 special purpose award in construction skills for energy conservation.

Minister Harris then travelled to Tullamore to officially open the new Enterprise Hub at the Midlands Skills Centre in the Axis Business Park. The Enterprise Hub opened in early 2022 and has contributed to continuous growth in enterprise engagement. Minister Harris ended his tour at the new Information Hub at Castle Buildings in Tullamore. LOETB is committed to supporting learners on their learning pathways and we believe that the hubs provide a supportive environment for learners to explore possible pathways and to make informed decisions about their future.

## **OSD Directorate**

### **Human Resources**

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

- 54 teaching posts
- 1 Assistant Training Manager
- 1 APII post Midlands Prison
- 1 School Support Co-ordinator
- 1 Principal Tullamore FET
- 1 Deputy Principal Portlaoise College
- 1 Deputy Principal Tullamore FET
- Sub teacher panel
- Plumbing instructor panel
- 1 Grade VII Training Services
- 1 Grade VII Community Training Officer

We have advertised the following posts:

- 23 teaching posts
- 7 Adult Educators
- 1 Community Education Facilitator
- 1 Electrical Instructor
- Academic Personal Assistant Panel
- FET Tutor panel

Report on Pensions to date since 01/01/2023

<b>Pension Description</b>	<b>No.</b>
Members Retired/Pensions issued	3
Widow/Widower Pensions issued	2
Members/ Widows to return pension forms	0
<b>Total Pensions issued to date:</b>	<b>5</b>

In 2023, we have requested service to be transferred to LOETB for 17 members, 9 of which are complete. In 2023, we received 32 requests to transfer out service, 19 of which are complete.

#### Pensioner Increases

NSSO are working on application of 1st March 2023 increases. LOETB has 265 pensioner increases applied and 13 outstanding queries and these are being worked through presently.

#### Pension Liability Project

LOETB has been working on this project since March 2023. All pension data for year ending 2022 was submitted to Actuary on 08/06/2023. Actuarial Valuation Report Pension Scheme Disclosures for year ending 31 December 2022 issued to LOETB on 14/07/2023.

#### Single Pension Scheme Remediation Project

LOETB commenced initial engagement with ESBS on SPS Remediation Project on 10/07/2023. It is a statutory requirement that LOETB gives each member an annual Pension Benefit Statement. To facilitate this, an examination of all data on 1009 members of the SPS Pension Scheme has now commenced. Once complete Benefit Statements for 2013-2022 can be issued in full. LOETB will then be able to submit data files to DPER for SPS Databank.

#### Service Project - updating service on Core system (non SPS schemes):

<b>Year Started with LOETB</b>	<b>Number of Employees</b>	<b>Number Service Updated on Core</b>
2022	1	1
2021	21	21
2020	8	8
2019	15	15
2018	16	16
2017	6	5
2016	11	11
2015	6	6
2014	5	5
2013	6	6
2012	14	13
2011	14	10
2010	24	16
2009	16	8
2008	23	2
2007	38	5
2006	27	0
2005	15	3
2003 – 1990		5

So far, we have completed service for 156 members on Core System.

#### Payroll Figures

12/05/2023	1,291,450.48	1037
26/05/2023	1,332,253.94	1055
09/06/2023	1,367,431.57	1060
23/06/2023	1,354,092.74	1043
07/07/2023	1,261,626.32	1028

## Finance

### Budgets

School and centre budgets continue to be monitored on a monthly basis.

### Finances

Draft summary of finances to end of May 2023.

Summary of Workings to End May 2023								
ITEM	Opening Grant Cash Balance	Adjustment to Opening Balance	Receipts	Credits Transfer	Receipt Targets	Payments	Closing Grant Cash Balance	% of Overall Total
Main Scheme Grant	985,570	0	14,228,489	0	0	(15,702,890)	(488,831)	-5.08%
Associated Main Scheme Grants	1,484,582	0	501,201			(388,017)	1,597,767	9.38%
Capital Schedule	12,992,897	0	1,493,351			(3,111,087)	11,375,160	75.88%
Further Education & Training	677,443	0	21,572,841			(18,121,061)	4,129,223	16.39%
Youth Affairs	60,670	0	0			(301,842)	(241,172)	-0.78%
Agency	817,543	0	1,095,124			(1,214,799)	697,868	4.13%
Self Financing	52,327	0	211,988			(292,669)	(28,355)	0.09%
Third Party Funds	0	0	1,700			(1,700)	0	0.00%
Totals	<b>17,071,031</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>39,104,693</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>(39,134,065)</b>	<b>17,041,660</b>	

### NTMA

On Investment		€7,000,000
Interest Earned to end of June		€35,134
Interest Rate		1%
Investment Term	7 day	€7,000,000
	30 day	0

### Creditor Payments

4,516 invoices, amounting to €9,665,302.44 were paid in the second quarter of 2023. Of these, 49% were paid within 15 days of receipt of invoices, and a further 45% were paid within 30 days. 51 purchase orders for €20,000 or above, totalling €4,310,896.21 inclusive of VAT, were paid in the second quarter of 2023.

## Corporate Services

### Capital Projects and Buildings Works

#### Clonaslee College

Additional Accommodation ASD 2022 & 2023 – Currently with Project Management Team/Reconfiguration works started 3 July 2023.

#### St. Fergal's College

Gym Facility application sent to DoE. Awaiting approval.  
Summer Works Scheme Roof Works 2022 – Works to commence early August 2023.

#### Portlaoise College

All Weather Pitch – Waiting on clarification of Contractor Insurances from IPB Insurances  
Line Marking Track – Line marking to be completed by end July 2023

#### Dunamase College – Tower Hill

Modular Accommodation – 6 classroom Modular Accommodation Ground works started 28th June 2023

#### Coláiste Naomh Cormac, Kilcormac

Additional Accommodation – ASA Unit 100sq metres has been approved. Works to commence in July.

#### Tullamore College

Render Works completed waiting on inspection from Architect  
Guttering Works – Completed waiting on inspection from Architect  
Leaks in Roof – Completed waiting on inspection from Architect

#### Gaelscoil NS Birr

Ground Works to entrance has commenced including piling of the foundations.

#### Kilcruttin Electrical Apprenticeship

Consultant appointed. Responses received from Contractors on eTenders are currently being assessed and a Tender Report is to be prepared.

#### Mountmellick FET Centre

Proposed Car Park. Planning permission clarification returned to Laois County Council with Request For Tender to be put on etenders following receipt of Planning.

#### Tullamore FET Centre

Upgrade of classroom to Science Room. Works have commenced at Castle Buildings.

#### EV Charging Points at FET Centres

Three responses received are currently being evaluated.

#### Procurement

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

- Science/Home Economics Equipment – Successful letters going out this week
- Catering Schools – Tender Competition currently to be evaluated
- Print & Design – Tender Competition currently to be evaluated
- Website Tender – currently being evaluated
- Hoist Maintenance – New Service Agreement done
- Travel management & Ancillary Services – OGP Framework 2 Lots 1/08/2023 to 31/07/2025
- BER Assessor Training – Assessor appointed per SEAI guidelines
- Cleaning Supplies – New OGP Framework 1/06/2023 to 31/05/2025
- Bottled Water – New OGP framework 3/06/2023 to 2/06/2026
- Bottled Gases – New Framework EPS 5/04/2023 to 4/04/2024
- Class materials Woodwork/Metalwork/ICT training/Video Production/Scaffolding Materials/First Aid/PPE/Lifejackets all extended agreements

#### ICT Department

- New computers rooms being setup in Portlaoise Institute
- Reconfiguration of Portlaoise Institute network to go with a full cloud solution and removes ties with Portlaoise College network
- Complete reconfiguration of ASCN Clara network to remove server and go with a full cloud solution
- Hardware purchased to install in new classrooms for Dunamase College and Clonaslee College once rooms are completed
- Partial reconfiguration of Tullamore College to implement a hybrid solution using both cloud and onsite server

- Server upgrades completed across all sites
- ICT department in continued talks with DarkTrace to implement artificial intelligence-based email scanning solution
- Discovery talks have begun to seek a Privileged Access Management (PAM) solution to align with our cyber insurance requirements
- Ongoing work with Internal Audit Unit and KOSI regarding ICT Audit and baseline standards
- New high spec desktop computers to be installed in Abbeyleix FETC in order to better improve the delivery of the Art with Animation course
- Regular maintenance, prevention, and replacement requests on an ongoing basis across schools, centres, and offices

### General

- Working on the development of a Critical Incident Response playbook
- Providing continued support to schools/centres/offices in responding to continuing HSA Inspections.
- Working with IT Department and IAU on introduction of Baseline Standards Cyber Security Framework
- Initial planning phase for move of remaining OSD staff to Portlaoise HQ
- Cooperating with other ETBs in review of Data Breach Reporting procedures
- Continued review of CCTV systems and associated DPIAs.
- Supporting schools and centres with freedom of information requests, and data subject access requests as necessary.

### Communications:

- Brand development for additional FET Accommodation in Clara
- Brand development for new mobile rig supporting Mount Lucas MMC Campus
- Advertising for National Ploughing Championships and Tullamore Show
- Procurement of merchandise for LOETB, FET, and Schools
- Ongoing social media campaigns to support LOETB activities
- Finalising promotional videos for the organisation

Members thanked the CE for his detailed report and a discussion took place thereafter.

The Chair enquired about the costs for those travelling to Japan as part of Music Generation Laois trip. The CE informed members that an application for grant funding to the National Development Office had been successful and therefore costs would be minimal.

A member complimented Music Generation Offaly on the work that they have done over the last couple of months.

A member stated that she was disappointed with the response from DoE regarding the need for a new Primary school in Portlaoise given the waiting lists in all the schools in the town. It was suggested that a delegation should seek a meeting with the Minister for Education to progress this matter. The CE referenced the correspondence sent to Oireachtas members on the matter in response to which Minister Fleming is seeking a meeting with the Minister and Deputy Stanley raised the matter with the Minister of Education in the Dáil. Deputy Flanagan has also offered his support to advance discussions. The CE committed to arranging a meeting with relevant parties in advance of the next Board meeting.

Members complimented LOETB on the launch of the new Tertiary programmes that are commencing in September.

A member complimented the new Information Hubs that are now opened in both Laois and Offaly. He stated that it was great to see these centres opened to the community and it provides learners with a supportive environment to explore the different career pathways that are now available.

The Chair enquired as to when it is likely to see the roll out of NZEB and Retrofit training in the Prison service. The CE explained that good progress is being made at present between the IPS and LOETB and committed to an update at the next meeting.

A member referenced the new agricultural courses that are running in Gurteen College and noted that it was great to see the Equine and Biodiversity courses on the programme. The member suggested that course information be circulated to Macra Na Feirme and other local relevant organisations.

### **15. VOTES OF SYMPATHY**

The Board extended its sympathy to the following on their recent family bereavements:

Hazel Guinan – Coláiste Naomh Cormac

Val Byrne – Midlands Prison

Miriam Conway – Midlands Prison

Amy Mullally – Portlaoise Prison

Shane Molloy – Portlaoise Prison

Breda Delaney – Midlands Prison

Debbie Dollard – QA Department

Molly Buckley – Board member

Kenneth Crann – Coláiste Naomh Cormac

The Sherlock family

The Fitzpatrick and Downey families

### **16. VOTES OF CONGRATULATIONS**

There were no votes of congratulations noted by the members.

### **17. AOB**

A member queried if an officer has been appointed to manage our responsibilities as laid down by the Official Languages Act. The CE informed members that a submission has been by ETBI to DoE on behalf of all ETBs.

The Chairperson thanked Mary Cotter Bracken who submitted her notice to resign from the Board as she no longer meets the criteria of a parent representative. The CE and members thanked Ms. Cotter Bracken for her hard work and contribution to LOETB over many years and wished her the very best for the future. Ms. Cotter Bracken thanked the Board for all their support and good wishes.

### **18. DATE AND VENUE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of the Board will take place on Tuesday 26 September 2023 at 4.30pm.  
Venue TBC.

Signed: *Evelyn Dunne*  
Evelyn Dunne (Oct 4, 2023 23:00 GMT+1)

Date: Oct 4, 2023

Chairperson