



A meeting of Laois and Offaly Education and Training Board was held on Tuesday 28 May 2024 at the LOETB Admin offices, Mountrath road, Portlaoise R32 XWY1 and online via Microsoft Teams.

Present

Ms Evelyn Dunne (Chairperson)
Ms Molly Buckley (online)
Cllr. John Carroll
Mr Jim Cashen
Mr Dave Cullen
Cllr. Caroline Dwane -Stanley
Mr Shane Flesk
Mr Frank Smith
Cllr. Neil Feighery (online)
Cllr. Eddie Fitzpatrick
Cllr. Pdraig Fleming
Mr Niall Tully
Cllr. Barry Walsh

In Attendance

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

1. Apologies

Apologies were received from Cllr. Willie Aird, Cllr. Robert McDermott, Cllr. Catherine Fitzgerald, Cllr. John King, Ms. Orla Doyle, and Ms. Maura Brophy.

2. Minutes of Board Meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting, which took place on 26 March 2024, were circulated to members. Members approved the minutes, and they were signed by the Chairperson.

Proposed: John Carroll

Seconded: Frank Smith

3. Matters Arising from the Minutes

There were no matters arising from the minutes.

4. Governance

Update from Critical Systems Oversight Committee:

Corporate Risk Register

Ms. Bracken informed members that there were no amendments to the Risk Register since the March meeting. She also informed members that the next Audit and Risk meeting will take place on 11 July 2024 and the Risk Register will be brought to this meeting.

Declaration 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. Finance

Bank Overdraft

Ms. Marie Bracken discussed the Bank Overdraft and stated that at the last board meeting the board recommended that the bank overdraft be extended from the current figure of €4 million to €5 million for the day-to-day working operations. This is currently under review by AIB and should be in place by the end of June 2024.

6. Draft Policies

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

Information Security Policy V1.1 (updated)

The Information Security policy is made up of seven sub-policies:

- Acceptable Use of IT Policy
- Access Control Policy
- Electronic Messaging Policy
- Password Policy
- Physical and Environmental Access Policy
- Remote Access Policy
- Vulnerability and Patch Management Policy

Proposed: Pdraig Fleming

Seconded: Caroline Dwane Stanley

The Chief Executive stated that there is an Information Security Management System (ISMS) audit scheduled for 30 May 2024. The Chairperson complimented all concerned on the work on the Information Security Policy and the sub-policies.

Procurement Policy

Proposed: Dave Cullen

Seconded: Evelyn Dunne

7. Correspondence

Item No	Correspondence From	Date / Ref No.	Details	Comments
1	Department of Education and Skills	CL0025.2024	Report of education needs for the purpose of the assessment of Need Disability Act 2005	Noted by Members
2	Department of Education and Skills	CL0028.2024	Appointment of Administrative deputy principals and staffing arrangements	Noted by Members
3	Department of Education and Skills	CL0029.2024	Allocation of Assistant Principal Posts 2024.2025	Noted by Members
4	Department of Education and Skills	CL0031.2024	Allocation of Assistant Principals posts	Noted by Members
5	Department of Education and Skills	CL0032.2024	Revised pay rates due under building momentum for tutors and adult education	Noted by Members
6	Department of Education and Skills	CL0033.2024	Revision of teacher salaries under Public Service Agreement 2024-2026	Noted by Members
7	Department of Education and Skills	CL0034.2024	Revision of Salaries for SNA	Noted by Members
8	Department of Education and Skills	CL0035.2024	Revision of Salaries and allowances for certain grades	Noted by Members
9	Department of Education and Skills	CL0036.2024	Revision of Salaries for Clerical and caretakers employed in National Schools	Noted by Members
10	Department of Education and Skills	CL0037.2024	Revision of Salaries of school secretaries and school maintenance	Noted by Members
11	Department of Education and Skills	CL0038.2024	Revision of salaries for school secretaries previously funded under Ancillary Grant Funding	Noted by Members

12	Department of Education and Skills	CL0039.2024	Grant Scheme for ICT infrastructure	Noted by Members
13	Department of Education and Skills	CL0040.2024	Information in relation to Standardise Testing & Other matters	Noted by Members
14	Department of Education and Skills	CL0041.2024	Guidance in post primary schools	Noted by Members
15	Department of Education and Skills	CL0042.2024	Say yes to Languages	Noted by Members
16	Department of Education and Skills	CL0051.2024	Prescribed material for Junior Cycle English	Noted by Members

8. Minutes of the Committees of the Board

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

- Ard Scoil Chiaráin Naofa 16 May 2023
- Ard Scoil Chiaráin Naofa 14 November 2023
- Ard Scoil Chiaráin Naofa 19 September 2023
- Ard Scoil Chiaráin Naofa 23 January 2024
- Ard Soil Chiaráin Naofa 19 March 2024
- Audit and Risk Committee 26 February 2024
- Clonaslee College 7 February 2024
- Dunamase College 31 May 2023
- Dunamase College 18 September 2023
- Dunamase College 13 November 2023
- Dunamase College 25 January 2024
- Oaklands College 12 December 2023
- Oaklands College 25 January 2024 (One item)
- Oaklands College 22 February 2024
- Portlaoise College 15 January 2024
- Portlaoise College, 11 March 2024
- St. Fergal's College 3 October 2023
- St. Fergal's College 6 February 2024
- Tullamore College 14 June 2023
- Tullamore College 15 November 2023
- Tullamore College 11 December 2023 (Extraordinary Meeting)
- Tullamore College 19 December 2023 (Extraordinary Meeting)
- Coláiste Naomh Cormac 6 February 2024

- Youth Work Committee meeting 24 October 2023

9. Leases and Licences

Ms. Marie Bracken discussed the following requirements:

Edenderry FET Centre

- Licence for additional accommodation of 200-250 square meters.

Proposed: Caroline Dwane Stanley

Seconded: Frank Smith

Tullamore FET Centre

- Amalgamation of all current leases for Castle Buildings/Ulster Bank
- Annual Cost: €693,395.45
- Effective: 1 September 2024
- Duration: 9 years and 11 months.
- Unit: Level 1 Units 3 and 4, Level 2 Unit 5, Level 3 Unit 8 and front conference room, Level 4 Unit 9.

Proposed: Caroline Dwane Stanley

Seconded: Frank Smith

10. Chief Executive's Report

Schools Directorate

SEN Provision Mapping: ETBI Provision Mapping Showcase

The ETBI Provision Mapping Showcase event took place on 16 April 2024. It involved schools presenting their approaches to aspects of the provision mapping process and fostering an environment of shared learning and collaboration. Two LOETB schools, Coláiste Naomh Cormac and Tullamore College contributed poster presentations on their engagement with the Provision Mapping Process. The Inclusion Co-ordinator, Josephine Moore contributed a poster on the development of Communities of Practice within LOETB.

Ethos/Identity Multi-Beliefs and Values (IMBV) Education

In-person CPD for teachers of IMBV and teachers new to the specification was facilitated in ETBI Naas on 9 April and Kilkenny Education Centre on 25 April. Online Information sessions for Principals and Deputy Principals on the specification took place on 19/20 February and 19/20 March.

ETBI National Ethos Lead Symposium

The Ethos Lead National Symposium took place on 22 April. This event was attended by Ethos leads from LOETB schools. The event brought together Ethos leads, educators, and

experts to share insights and best practice on creating inclusive and equitable learning environments.

Inclusion

LOETB have engaged with a Train the Trainers model with the Crisis Prevention Institute (CPI) to train nominated school staff as Instructors of the Verbal Safety Interventions and Disengagements. Each school has a certified instructor in the programme.

Community of Practice

Groups are working on Inclusion, Ethos, Digital Technology, and School Planning with involved leaders and school staff from the nine LOETB post-primary schools.

STEAM Programme

The new STEAM Programme had its showcase event recently at Portlaoise College. This was part of our ongoing partnership with Laois and Offaly County Councils that saw equipment, training, and supports provided to all our schools.

On the day, all nine schools came together to display the work that they had produced as part of the programme. As well as competing in the VEX Robotics on the day, students also showcased the work they created in the other three strands of the Programme: Podcasting, LEGO League, and Minecraft design. The podcasts were community based, with 'i-walk' audio tours of their localities, while other student teams recreated their towns and villages in Minecraft as sustainable and accessible communities. As well as the €5000 equipment and training that was supplied to each LOETB school as part of the programme, Laois and Offaly County Councils provided a prize fund of €6500. Both the formal and informal feedback on the event was very positive, with LOETB students reporting that they particularly liked seeing the work of other schools and enjoyed having their creations shown on the large screen as part of the different ceremonies on the day.

Over 200 LOETB students and 30 teachers were involved in the Programme, which was designed to offer increased opportunities in the area of STEAM to Junior Cycle students, while increasing engagement with the area of Computer Science. Currently, the plan is that the STEAM Programme - which included support from Microsoft and Createschool, as well as key partners Laois and Offaly County Councils - will continue for the school year 2024/2025.

Atlantic Technological University Computer Science Teaching

A partnership between LOETB, Offaly and Laois County Councils and Atlantic Technological University (ATU) saw teachers fully supported to complete modules of the Higher Diploma course in Computer Science teaching. So far, three LOETB teachers have completed all six modules to gain the full qualification, with the aim of either introducing the subject to their school for the first time or contributing to the teaching of Computer Science in a school where the subject is already established.

The arrangements for the course saw some modules hosted by LOETB in Tullamore and Portlaoise, with lecturers travelling from ATU, while the rest were completed online. It is hoped that the partnership will continue in the year ahead, with a new cohort recruited, while the current teachers are supported to complete further modules. The overall aim of

LOETB's leadership of the programme is to increase participation in Leaving Cert Computer Science across our schools.

Youth Services

DCEDIY has allocated €47,000 (plus an additional allocation of up to €5,000 for non-capital, once-off set-up costs in 2024) to LOETB to administer under the Targeted Youth Employability Support Initiative (TYESI) 2024. This initiative is intended to fund programmes, interventions, and actions to support young people aged 15-24 years who are not in education, employment, or training, by providing community-based interventions and support to improve their soft skills, confidence, and agency to ensure engagement by young people in progression pathways. In total, there was 1 Applicant who received an award of €47,000.

Integration Grant Supports to Ukraine (Migrant) Young People - Youth Organisation/Youth Clubs 2024

DCEDIY has allocated €75,000 to LOETB to administer under the Grant Scheme for 2024. This funding is to support local integration efforts through additional places in UBU Your Place Your Space funded organisations and existing clubs, and the formation of new clubs as appropriate.

Local Youth Club Grant Scheme 2024

DCEDIY has allocated €82,544 to LOETB to administer under Grant Scheme for 2024. 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. In total there were 33 Applications, which are currently being processed. It is anticipated that awards will be made to successful applicants in late June 2024.

Local Creative Youth Partnership

Laois and Offaly Local Creative Youth Partnership (LCYP) worked closely with the Portlaoise Family Resource Centre on the introduction of Creative Pilot Initiative in the early years setting. The co-ordinator delivered training to the Early Years Staff of Portlaoise Family Resource and the artist working with them so that children and young people are given space, voice, audience, and influence to have a meaningful voice in decision-making. Consultant Katie Chapple and Local Creative Youth Partnership co-ordinator conducted Focus Groups across Laois and Offaly in person as part of the Consultation and Development for Laois and Offaly Local Creative Youth Partnership.

Taekwondo Workshops and classes were requested by Ukrainian children and young people and other young people in the Tullamore area. The Local Creative Youth Partnership are supporting these workshops and classes up to the end of the year.

The LCYP funded a 'Battle of the Trad Bands' as part of the recent Portlaoise Trad Festival. This initiative targeted 12-18-year-olds.

To celebrate Biodiversity Week, Midlands Science will deliver two workshops (one in Laois and one in Offaly) on behalf of the LCYP. The workshops will focus on Eco Soap Making.

REALT

Enrolments in primary and post-primary in Laois and Offaly schools on 26 Feb 2024 – next update due in June 2024.

COUNTY	PRIMARY	POST-PRIMARY
LAOIS	217	126
OFFALY	253	105

Leaving Cert

Ukrainian will be examinable as a non-curricular LC subject in June 2026

Music Generation Offaly

Music Generation Offaly ran a very successful Easter music camp in partnership with The Academy of Music in Tullamore during the first week of the Easter school holidays. There were 2 groups in the morning session: 5–8-year-olds and 9–12-year-olds, with 15 children in each group.

Following a successful grant application from Offaly Arts Office, Music Generation Offaly was awarded funding under the Youth Arts Commission Grant to develop a songwriting project with the choir in Tullamore College, and alumni student Tolü Makay. The project is nearing completion and will finish with a recording session.

Singfest 2024 is back in TUS Athlone on Thursday 16 and Friday 17 of May and will see over 2000 primary school students from across Offaly and Westmeath take part in a series of choral workshops culminating in a "Big Sing". We are delighted to welcome Patrick Barrett from the Irish Youth Training Choir as guest conductor.

Planning is well under way for "We Are Music Generation" 10-year celebrations in Offaly: Céilúradh Mór which will bring together as many of our young musicians as possible for a Big Gig in three locations later this year.

FET Directorate

FET Strategy 2024-2027

The FET Service has commenced the development of a three-year strategy. The strategy will focus on establishing LOETB as a centre of excellence in growth sectors both nationally and regionally. The strategy will see LOETB become the lead provider in Construction,

Agriculture, and Green Skills nationally with an emphasis on programme development and Quality Assurance. The strategy will also establish visible progression pathways across the Service that are focused on employment and Higher Education in key regional sectors including IT, Bio-Pharma, Healthcare, Services and Engineering, with a further emphasis on creating alternative options for Post Primary students. Consultation has commenced with senior management and will continue with all staff in Q2 and Q3.

MMC Project Manager Apprenticeship

LOETB and Technological University Dublin (TUD) are currently building a consortium to develop a comprehensive suite of MMC programmes including a proposed national MMC Project Management Apprenticeship Programme.

The partnership is currently reaching out to industry stakeholders to participate in shaping a proposal to meet the specific needs of the Irish construction sector. That industry-led consortium will ensure the development of a suite of programmes that equip graduates with the skills and knowledge to effectively manage MMC projects and contribute to the future of the construction industry.

Meetings with industry leaders are focusing on

- The current and future industry need for MMC skills and professionals in Ireland.
- The potential structure and content of a suite of programmes at Levels 5-9 to address this need.
- Opportunities for future engagement with and participation in the consortium.

The apprenticeship will be a Level 7/8 programme in project management, with the successful candidates also successfully completing the training required for MMC operator at Level 5 of the National Qualifications Framework and MMC technician at Level 6.

The form of training would be on-the-job training alternating with short modules of off-the-job training. Technology University Dublin plan to deliver the off-the-job components, while the National Construction Training Centre at Mount Lucas plan to provide specialist 'praxis' modules (e.g., Plant; specific materials).

It is planned to formally present the programme proposal to the National Apprenticeship Office in June and, on receipt of approval, to begin programme development process that aims to gain Academic Council validation within the current calendar year.

ZEB Programme Development

The National Construction Training Campus at Mount Lucas has reviewed the EPBD (Energy performance of Buildings Directive) with the aim of developing fit for purpose awards as we move toward Zero Emissions buildings based on identifying skills gaps based on emerging trends within the Construction Sector.

New courses will be delivered including:

- ZEB Principles,
- Smart Ready Buildings,
- District Heating

- Optimising Indoor environmental quality
- E-mobility.

These new courses will allow new skills sets to complement existing qualifications and professions. Courses will also be set at an introductory level for homeowners and those looking to work in the green construction sector. The courses will range from micro qualifications to feeder programmes for universities.

All courses will be aligned with Industry and the National Construction Training Campus has held initial online panel events, with representation from policymakers/statutory bodies and subject matter experts. A consortium will be set up to develop and review new courses as they enter the pilot and sign-off stage.

CAIRN Homes Rig

LOETB and Cairn Homes are working in partnership on a second mobile rig which will promote the construction industry by giving practical exposure to variety of trades including plumbing, electrical, block laying, and MMC. It will be equipped with necessary facilities and resources to support engagement and outreach in a variety of relevant settings to include, schools, career fairs, and industry events. It will also be used for onsite training and workshops on Cairn sites across the Country.

LOETB will also provide Learner Support for Apprentices working on Cairns sites. The support focuses on supporting employers to enhance retention rates in construction-related apprenticeships through the provision of the following:

a) An Educational Support Programme during Apprenticeship Phase 1 that provides apprentices with skillsets that will enhance their capacity to approach Phase 2 of the Apprenticeship Programme with confidence.

The programme will include study skills, assignment writing, project mathematics, exam preparation techniques.

b) A series of Phase 2 Technical Support Programmes that are subject specific to relevant craft apprenticeships.

FET Agriculture Strategy

A key focus of the FET agricultural strategy is the introduction of additional agricultural education through the offering of Continuous Professional Development component awards and training programmes grounded on agricultural sustainability, a key consideration for farmers and industries in our region.

Our target audience for this strategy are part time farmers. A key aim of this project is to ensure continuation of part-time farming despite off-farm income and, where possible, upskill farmers such that the off-farm income is generated within the agricultural sector. The plan is to educate farmers in the region to get the most from their parcel of land, regardless of size, while ensuring its sustainability and viability for future generations.

A key part of this strategy will be the continuation of existing partnerships with Gurteen & Mountbellew Agricultural Colleges and Teagasc while hoping to foster new partnerships with key agricultural stakeholders and higher education institutions. Using these partnerships, our intention is to roll out the strategy nationally by 2027.

Organisation Support and Development Directorate

Finance

Budgets

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

Finances

Summary of finances to end of March 2024.

Summary of Working to End March 2024								
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	1,132,064	0	5,049,567	0	0	(11,199,706)	(1,018,075)	-5.08%
Associated Main Scheme Grants	1,174,542	0	1,079,872			(424,339)	1,830,054	9.18%
Capital Schedule	7,136,603	0	654,769			(3,004,870)	4,886,501	73.88%
Further Education & Training	1,842,154	0	15,981,170			(13,229,784)	4,693,541	26.39%
Youth Affairs	73,543	0	106,128			(140,673)	(61,023)	-0.78%
Agency	307,491	0	343,907			(822,478)	20,920	4.13%
Self Financing	93,285	0	181,247			(199,992)	74,540	0.09%
Third Party Funds	0	0	2,470			(2,470)	0	0.00%
Totals	11,859,652	0	27,589,129	0	0	(19,124,539)	10,318,130	

Difference between closing cash balance per financial systems and amount on investment documented below equals amount due to externals that is drawn in April.

Investment

NTMA

On Investment at end of March 2024		€8,029,861
Interest Earned to end of March 2024		€36,758
Interest Rate		1%
Investment Term	7 day	€8,029,861
	30 day	0

AIB

On Investment in Deposit Account at end of March 2024		€4,479,394
Interest Earned to end of March 2024		€3,992

Interest Rate	0.25%
---------------	-------

Creditor Payments

First Quarter 2024

4,249 invoices, amounting to €10,912,031.37 were paid in the first quarter of 2024. Of these, 45% were paid within 15 days of receipt of invoices, and a further 49% were paid within 30 days.

72 Purchase Orders for €20,000 or above, totalling €5,207,177.45 (inclusive of VAT), were paid in the first quarter of 2024.

Human Resources

Recruitment

The following posts have been filled since the last ETB meeting

- 1 x Grade VI
- 1 x Grade VII post
- 1 x Hairdressing tutor
- 2 x Electrical instructor posts
- Cover panel Electrical
- Sub-teacher panel
- FET tutor panel
- Principal Coláiste Naomh Cormac
- Teaching posts for 24/25
- 1 AP11 Clonaslee College
- SNA tutor panel
- Bus Escort Panel

Advertised post

Director of OSD

Deputy Principal Oaklands

- 1 x AP11 –Ard Scoil Chiaráin Naofa, Clara
- Post Primary Teaching Posts for academic year 24/25
- FET Teaching Posts for 24/25

Pensions Report – May 2024

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

In 2024, we have requested service to be transferred to LOETB for 3 members. In 2024, we received 6 requests to transfer out service.

Pensioner Increases

New scales for 1 January 2024 increases have been circulated and NSSO are working on applying pension increases for LOETB pensioners. LOETB pension files are fully cleansed, and we have no outstanding queries with NSSO.

Pension Liability Project 2023

We are currently checking 2023 data for Single Pension Scheme Benefit Statements, and we are on schedule to have all SPS Benefit Statements for 2023 issue by end of June 2024. Benefit/Leaver Statements (2013 – 2022) were issued to all LOETB staff who are members of the Single Pension Scheme on Thursday 14 December 2023. We have also issued 70 Leaver Statements for 2023.

Payroll

Pay Date	€	Payee
15/03/2024	1,408,968	1095
29/03/2024	1,565,397	1157
12/04/2024	1,489,899	1134
26/04/2024	1,337,701	1051
10/05/2024	1,649,074	1118

Corporate Services

Capital Projects and Buildings Works

Clonaslee College

- Additional Accommodation ASD 2022 & 2023 – Complete
- Additional Accommodation 4 rooms – with DoE Technical team

St. Fergal's College, Rathdowney

- All Weather Pitch – Planning Permission Received - meeting to be arranged with Consultant, Contractor, Principal, and LOETB
- Modular Accommodation – waiting on Task order No.1 to issue
- Gas Proving – Emergency Works Application sent to the DE - awaiting assessment

Portlaoise College

- Additional Accommodation – Stage 1 meeting held
- All Weather Pitch – Works currently ongoing
- Modular Accommodation – Waiting on Task order 1 to be issued and Fees to be agreed

Dunamase College

- Modular Accommodation – 6 classroom Modular Accommodation Ground completed
- New School - the Stage 2a is now closed with the project progressing to the next Stage 2b

Oaklands Community College

- New School – Stage 2a completed – new surveys are to be undertaken

Ard Scoil Chiaráin Naofa Clara

- New Extension – Stage 1 submitted

Coláiste Naomh Cormac, Kilcormac

- Pathfinder Programme – Stakeholders are currently evaluating tenders
- Approval received for refurbishment of 2 science rooms, together with an extension to include Art Room and project stored and a double SEN base.

Tullamore College

- Additional Accommodation modular received for 3 MNR classrooms and 2 SEN classrooms.
- Approval also received for a major permanent extension.

Mount Lucas

- Expression of Interest Stage 3 and Stage 4 on Tenders
- Design Team Appointed /Planning Application submitted to Offaly County Council.

Mountmellick FET Centre

- Car Park – Works ongoing

Portlaoise Institute

- Fire Doors upgrade works commenced

Kilcruttin Apprenticeship

- Phase 2 – Planning Granted – Tender Package being prepared

Information Communication Technology

- Ongoing work with the Internal Audit Unit and KOSI regarding ICT Audit and baseline standards
- A new phone system installed in Birr Outdoor Centre.
- A new asset management system was purchased with information currently being collated and uploaded.
- The procurement process for new email scanning solution has commenced.
- Site survey of additional premises for Edenderry FET Centre conducted with IT specification being procured.
- Site survey of new NZEB facility in Ferbane conducted and IT specification being procured.
- Network separation with additional broadband line for Birr Outdoor still in progress due to civil works required by Eir.
- Relocation of Tullamore Info Hub to new site to be completed in the coming weeks.
- Configuration requirements for new M-Files system for HR completed.
- Configuration requirements for new Finance shared services solution completed.
- Meetings relating to ICT aspects of additional classrooms for Portlaoise College and St Fergal's College have commenced.
- A survey was conducted for the new phone system for Edenderry FET Centre.
- Network for electrical apprentices in Kilcruttin Business Park finally completed after delay with broadband supplier.
- Regular maintenance, prevention, and replacement requests are being carried out on an ongoing basis across schools, centres, and offices.

Corporate Services (General)

- Election of Staff Members to Board of LOETB
- Completion of Annual Report
- Supporting IT Team with ISMS Audit
- Working with IPB on CyberRAT proposal and other insurance issues
- Finalising climate action plan
- Ongoing policy and procedure document review
- Processing data access requests, Section 41(b) requests, Oireachtas enquiries, and legal queries

Joe Cunningham

28 May 2024

The Chairperson complimented the students on the STEAM Programme and was impressed by their knowledge, enthusiasm, and interest.

A member of the Board highlighted the issue of underfunding for youth programmes in the Laois Offaly area, which has the lowest funding in the country and proposed that a delegation, to include Laois County Council and Offaly County Council, to meet with the Minister. All members agreed.

A Board member enquired about the current status of Birr OET Centre. The CE confirmed that the Centre is now under SOLAS funding and the intention is to develop a focus on biking given its location and the proximity of the Slieve Blooms.

The Chairperson congratulated the newly qualified apprentice scaffolders. The scaffolders were the first scaffolders to graduate as Apprentices from the programme delivered at the National Construction Training Campus, Mount Lucas.

11. Votes of Sympathy

The Board extends its sympathy to the following staff members on their recent family bereavements:

- Laura Watchorn - Ard Scoil Chiaráin, Naofa
- Kate O'Connor - Dunamase College
- Ann Marie O'Regan Ryan - Portlaoise College
- Anne Maria Guinan - Ard Scoil Chiaráin Naofa
- Sean Duggan - Banagher College
- Lauren Harding - Dunamase College
- Margaret Bailey - Tullamore FET Centre
- Teresa Cushen - Banagher College
- Antoinette Emerson - Midlands and Portlaoise Prison Education Centres
- James Moloughney - Portlaoise College
- Patricia Mulraney - Ard Scoil Chiaráin Naofa

12. Votes of Congratulations

The Chairperson and all members congratulated Marie Bracken, Director of Organisation Support and Development, on her forthcoming retirement at the end of June. They extended their gratitude and thanks for all her hard work and commitment she has devoted to the organisation throughout her employment with Offaly VEC and LOETB.

The CE also thanked Ms Bracken for her enormous contribution over the past 46 years of service and the dedication shown in managing the transition from VEC to ETB and wished her every success in her next chapter of life.

Ms. Bracken expressed gratitude to the Chairperson, CE, and Board members for their kind words. She acknowledged her enjoyment of working for Offaly VEC and LOETB over the past 46 years and wished everyone well in the future.

The Board also extended congratulations to Richard Murphy Deputy Principal at Oaklands Community College, Edenderry on his recent announcement regarding his upcoming retirement.

The Board extended its congratulations to the Offaly Under 20 Hurling team, and in particular players from ETB schools, on their Leinster final win and wished them best of luck in the upcoming All Ireland Final.

13 Any Other Business

Ard Scoil Chiaráin Naofa, Clara

Board approval is sought in advance for the purchase of c. 11.5 acres at Drayton Villas, Clara from Offaly County Council for a new school development and the associated sale of the playing field at the current school site on Fredrick Street to Offaly County Council. This matter is subject to the approval of the Stage 1 Report submitted to the Planning and Building Unit.

Proposed: John Carroll

Seconded: Evelyn Dunne

14 Date and Venue of next meeting

The date of the next meeting and venue is to be confirmed after the local elections which are to be held on 7 June 2024.

Signed: 

Chairperson

Date: 24/6/24