



A meeting of Laois and Offaly Education and Training Board was held on Tuesday 28 March 2023 at 4:30pm at the Information Hub, Lyster Square, Portlaoise. Members also joined the meeting via Microsoft Teams.

PRESENT

Ms. Evelyn Dunne (Chairperson)
Cllr. Willie Aird
Ms. Maura Brophy
Ms. Molly Buckley
Cllr. John Carroll
Ms. Mary Cotter Bracken
Mr. Dave Cullen
Cllr. Caroline Dwane Stanley
Cllr. Neil Feighery
Cllr. Catherine Fitzgerald

Cllr. Eddie Fitzpatrick
Cllr. Pdraig Fleming
Mr Shane Flesk
Cllr. John King
Cllr. Robert Mc Dermott
Mr. Frank Smith
Mr. Niall Tully
Cllr. Barry Walsh

IN ATTENDANCE

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

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Mr Jim Cashen.

2. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS LOETB MEETING

The minutes of the previous meeting, which took place on 28 February 2023 were circulated to members. Members approved the minutes and they were signed by the Chairperson.

Proposed: John Carroll
Seconded: John King

3. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

It was noted that a date in the CE report incorrectly stated February instead of March. The minutes will be corrected and sent to the Chairperson for signing.

4. GOVERNANCE

Update on Risk Management

The Risk Register was reviewed by the Audit and Risk Committee meeting on the 23 February 2023. Marie Bracken gave a detailed presentation outlining the updates to the Risk Register.

Members of the Audit and Risk committee were happy to recommend the updates to the Board for approval.

Members noted the updates to 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



23 March 2023

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 31/12/2022

The Audit and Risk Committee, at meetings on 28 February 2022, 25 March 2022, 8 July 2022, 16 September 2022 and 9 December 2022, examined and reviewed the following:

1. Minutes of the;
 - Audit and Risk Committee meetings from 01/01/2022 to 31/12/2022
 - Finance Committee meetings from 01/01/2022 to 31/12/2022
 - LOETB meetings from 01/01/2022 to 31/12/2022
2. Reviewed Corporate Risk Register and recommended same to the Board at each meeting in 2022.
3. Reviewed all Building and Capital Works and Procurement in 2022.
4. Reviewed the following Correspondence from the Office of the Comptroller and Auditor General
 - Report from C&AG on LOETB 2021 accounts reviewed at the Audit and Risk Committee on 9 December 2022.
 - Management letter re the 2021 accounts was presented to the Audit and Risk Committee at the February 2023 meeting.
 - Denis Cromie and Xia Ren from C&AG attended via MS Teams at the Audit and Risk Committee meeting on 7 February 2023 to review the audit of the 2021 accounts
5. Reviewed the following Internal Controls in LOETB
 - Draft Statement on Internal Controls 2022
 - Report on Controls in place in LOETB as at March 2023
 - Control Environment Questionnaire Covid-19
 - Statement from Chief Executive for financial period January to December 2022
6. Reviewed Letter of Engagement from OCAG 2022 Audit which set out the basis on how the audit of the financial statements will be conducted.
7. Reviewed the approved internal audit plan for LOETB for 2021-2023

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



23 March 2023

Finance Committee's Annual Report for year ending 31 December 2022

The Finance Committee, at meetings on 28 February 2022, 29 March 2022, 8 July 2022, 16 September 2022 and 9 December 2022, examined and reviewed the following;

1. Reviewed and recommended the Service Plan 2022 to the Board
2. Reviewed the Annual Report of the Audit and Risk Committee for 2021
3. Reviewed the Draft Statement on Internal Control and letter of Representation which was recommended by the Audit and Risk Committee
4. Head of Finance discussed with the Board members the LOETB's NTMA Investment and its current interest rate
5. Considered and recommended the Annual Financial Statements 2021 to the Board
6. Reviewed and recommended Chairperson's Comprehensive Report to the Minister of Education
7. Reviewed and noted the Letter of Determination from DES in respect of year ending 31 December 2022
8. Reviewed SOLAS funding for 2022
9. Proposed that the current Bank Overdraft be extended for another year
10. Recommended Bank Overdraft
11. Considered the monthly accounts and other financial reports for 2022
12. Reviewed all Building and Capital Works and Procurement in 2022
13. Reviewed all Leases in 2022
14. Birr OETC were commended by Offaly County Council on their efficiency and co-operation in relation to the centre accommodating the Ukrainian refugees at such short notice.
15. Approved the Annual Report of the Finance Committee
16. Recommended LOETB's Annual Report 2021 to the Board for approval
17. Reviewed the LOETB Corporate Procurement Plan and Final Multi Annual Procurement Plan (MAPP) for 2022
18. Completed the Finance Committee Effectiveness Evaluation in January 2023.

Members noted the Annual Report of the Finance Committee for 2022.

7. FINANCE

7.1 Annual Financial Statements 2022

Emily McAuley informed members that the Finance Committee reviewed the Working Papers and Annual Financial Statements (AFS) for 2022 in detail at the meeting on 23 March and recommended the adoption of same by the Board. Ms McAuley took members through the AFS in detail. A discussion took place on the notes regarding the financial statements and

members were satisfied with the accounts as presented. The Board approved the AFS for 2022.

Proposed: Caroline Dwane Stanley

Seconded: Eddie Fitzpatrick

7.2 Statement on the System of Internal Controls

Ms Bracken explained that Statement on the System of Internal Controls is a document on the internal control procedures that were in place in LOETB during 2022 and to date in 2023. Ms Bracken took members through each section of the Statement. The Audit and Risk Committee and the Finance Committee, at meetings on 23 March, reviewed the draft Statement on System of Internal Controls and recommended that the Chairperson of the Board sign same.

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

Proposed: Willie Aird

Seconded: Catherine Fitzgerald

7.3 Letter of Representation

Members reviewed LOETB's Letter of Representation to the Comptroller and Auditor General (C&AG). Marie Bracken explained to members that the format for the letter is laid down by the C&AG. Ms Bracken informed members that the Audit and Risk Committee reviewed the Letter of Representation at their meeting on 23 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 its meeting on 23 March, also reviewed the Letter of Representation.

Members approved the Letter of Representation.

Proposed: Molly Buckley

Seconded: John Carroll

7.4 Bank Overdraft

LOETB's overdraft facility, per sanction received from the Dept. of Education, is due to expire in June 2023. The current overdraft facility is €4 million, and this will need to be extended for a further year.

The Finance Committee, at its meeting on 23 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 another year.

Members agreed in principle that the proposal should be accepted.

Proposed by: Frank Smith

Seconded by: Niall Tully

8. CORRESPONDENCE

Item No	Correspondence From	Date / Ref No.	Details	

1.	Department of Education	CL 0014.2023	Post-Graduate Certificate/Diploma Programme of Continuing Professional Development for Teachers working with Students with Special Educational Needs (Autism)	Noted by members
2.	Department of Education	CL 0015.2023	Amendments to Junior Cycle Irish T1 and T2 specifications and assessment arrangements for Classroom-Based Assessments 1 and 2 (For student cohorts 2022/25 and 2023/26)	Noted by members
3.	Department of Education	CL 0017.2023	Launch of the Primary Curriculum Framework	Noted by members

9. ANNUAL REPORT 2022

A copy of the draft Annual Report for 2022 was circulated to members. The CE took members through the various sections of the Annual Report and explained that the Statement of Services will correspond with the activities on our 2022 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 details performance against planned activity.

Members adopted the Annual Report for 2022.

Proposed: Neil Feighery

Seconded: Willie Aird

Chairperson's Comprehensive Report to the Minister

Marie Bracken 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 new or significant financial developments that are exceptional in 2022.

Ms Bracken 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.

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

Proposed: Pdraig Fleming

Seconded: Eddie Fitzpatrick

10. MINUTES OF COMMITTEES OF THE BOARD

The following minutes of the Committees of the Board were circulated to members prior to the meeting for noting.

Audit and Risk Committee: 7 February 2023

Finance Committee: 23 February 2023

Banagher College BOM: 23 November 2022

Banagher College BOM: 11 January 2023

Oaklands Community College: 13 December 2022

11. VOTES OF SYMPATHY

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

- Kathleen Ivory – Ard Scoil Chiaráin Naofa, Clara
- Paradzai Havatitye – Portlaoise Prison Education Centre
- Eileen Brennan – Ard Scoil Chiaráin Naofa, Clara
- Ann Marie Scully – Portlaoise College
- Emma Delaney – Dunamase College
- Portlaoise College on the passing of staff member Vanda Rafter
- Maeve Elliffe – Ard Scoil Chiaráin Naofa, Clara
- Conor Cosgrave – Tullamore College
- Mary O'Connor – Tullamore College
- Shane Molly – Portlaoise Prison Education Centre

12. VOTES OF CONGRATULATIONS

- Coláiste Naomh Cormac, Kilcormac on reaching the All-Ireland Junior C Camógie Final.
- Coláiste Naomh Cormac, Kilcormac on winning the All-Ireland Senior Hurling B Final.
- Tullamore Camogie Club on celebrating its 50th Anniversary; the club held a launch and exhibition to mark this achievement.
- Ard Scoil Chiaráin Naofa, Clara who reached the Senior D All-Ireland Football Final.

13. NOMINATION TO YOUTH WORK COMMITTEE

- Ms Anne Marie Kirrane was nominated to replace Pamela Tynan from Laois County Council on the Youth Work Committee.

Proposed: Willie Aird

Seconded: Catherine Fitzgerald

14. DATE AND VENUE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Board will take place on Tuesday 23 May 2023 at 4.30pm at Mount Lucas Training Centre, Mount Lucas, R35 XW10.

Signed: *Evelyn Dunne*
[Evelyn Dunne \(May 25, 2023 00:07 GMT+1\)](#)

Date: May 25, 2023

Chairperson