



loetb

Bord Oideachais agus Oiliúna
Laoise agus Uíbh Fháilí
*Laois and Offaly
Education and Training Board*

A meeting of Laois and Offaly Education and Training Board was held on Monday 23rd November 2015 at 4:30pm in the Boardroom, Tower Hill, Portlaoise, Co. Laois.

PRESENT:

Molly Buckley
Cllr. John Carroll
Mary Cotter-Bracken
Cllr Caroline Dwane-Stanley
Cllr Catherine Fitzgerald
Vivienne Keenan
Cllr John King
Cllr Jerry Lodge
Denis Magner

Cllr Paschal McEvoy
Cllr Carol Nolan
Cllr Liam Quinn
Anne Starling
Cllr Mary Sweeney
Joe Thompson

In attendance

Joe Cunningham, Chief Executive
Sadie Aherne, Assistant Principal Officer
Kathleen Donnellan, Administrative Officer
Heather Delahunt, Administration

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1. APOLOGIES:

Maura Brophy, Frank Smith, Eamon Dooley, Sinead Dooley, Eddie Fitzpatrick, Declan Costello sent their apologies.

2. MINUTES OF LOETB MEETING:

The minutes of the meeting which took place on the 28th September 2015, were circulated to members, taken as read and signed by the Chairperson.
Proposed by: Molly Buckley
Seconded by: Joe Thompson

3. MATTERS ARISING FROM MINUTES:

There were no matters arising from the minutes.

4. CORRESPONDENCE:

- **0042/2015** - Implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategy (2011-2020)
- **0043/2015** – HSE Post-Primary School Vaccination Programme 2015/2016
- **0046/2015** - Statistical Returns in respect of part-time courses in ETB (Vocational) Schools/Community Colleges in the 2014/2015 School Year
- **0047/2015** - Ireland 2016 Centenary Programme for the Education Sector
- **0048/2015**- Revised guidelines on access to PLC for certain participants in the asylum process for the 2015/2016 academic year
- **0051/2015**- Promotion of Healthy Lifestyles in Post-Primary schools
- **0053/2015**- Sick Leave Scheme for Registered Teachers in Recognised Primary and Post Primary Schools
- **0054/2015** - Sick Leave Scheme for Special Needs Assistants in Recognised Primary and Post Primary Schools
- **0055/2015**- Summer Works Scheme 2016 / 2017
- **0056/2015**- Use of Central Procurement Arrangements put in place by the Office of Government Procurement
 - Members raised concerns regarding the impact of procurement on small businesses and queried if the tenders could be awarded on a basis other than value for money. The CE explained that the ETB is constrained to award based on the most economically advantageous tender (MEAT) in certain cases. However, to support local and small business, the procurement of furniture for Tullamore College and Oaklands Community College was divided into sub lots in order to allow local companies be more competitive.
 - A member informed the meeting that in-house training for tendering was held by some local authorities for local businesses in other counties. This training proved to be mutually beneficial to both businesses and public bodies. The CE agreed to consider this proposal but in the interim advice can be given to any local business on our purchasing and tendering process and procedures.
- **0057/2015**- Travel Pass Scheme (Taxsaver Commuter Scheme) in the ETB Sector
- **ETBI RE: Education and Training Board Youth Work Committee**

Proposed by: Molly Buckley

Seconded by: John Carroll

5. CHIEF EXECUTIVES REPORT:

Joe Cunningham, Chief Executive presented a report to members as follows;

Education ServicesOpen Nights

The majority of the eight schools have held their Open Nights for 2016 enrolment. The response has been very positive with significant demand for Tullamore College and Edenderry and increases in applications for Portlaoise College, Coláiste Naomh Cormac, and St Fergal's Rathdowney. Clara's Open night is tomorrow, 24 November and Banagher College will hold their open night in January.

Banagher College Career and College Exhibition:

Banagher College held their first Career and College Exhibition on Tuesday 10 November. This proved to be a great success with approximately 500 people in attendance on the night and about 100 people exhibiting. There were 45 stands including all the major universities, IOTs, and Colleges of Further Education. The Army and An Garda Síochána were present as well as exhibitors from Lidl, Allure School of Hairdressing, and NIS IT Maintenance. Bank of Ireland and Banagher Credit Union provided advice on student loans and Further Education and Apprenticeship training was well represented by Laois and Offaly ETB and Longford and Westmeath ETB.

Combined with the exhibition there were three talks running simultaneously, which proved very worthwhile. These included;

1. Applying for a third level grant: Mary Connell, Laois and Offaly ETB
2. The transition from post-primary to third level: Kay Mitchell, NUI Maynooth
3. A guide on how to use career websites effectively: Careers Portal

Overall the night proved to be a great success with very positive feedback from exhibitors and all who attended. A special thank you to chief organisers Lily Kinahan and Claire Kenny. It is intended to hold this exhibition again next year and to have a similar event in Portlaoise.

Scholarships:

Three students from Tullamore College have won third level scholarships:

1. Conor Lynch (2 scholarships): NUIG Entrance Scholarship and the All-Ireland Scholarship (JP McManus) which was presented by the Minister for Education and Skills on Saturday last. This scholarship is worth €6,750 per year. Conor is studying Engineering at NUIG
2. Dylan Harvey: Dept. of Education & Skills (DES) Scholarship. Dylan is studying Science at NUIG.

- 3. Stephen O'Connor: Entrance Scholarship to NUIM. Stephen is studying Geography and History.

Public Speaking:

The team from Coláiste Naomh Cormac won the Regional BPW Public Speaking competition and went on to come 2nd in the All-Ireland BPW Public speaking competition which took place in the Court Hotel in Tullamore at the weekend.

School Guest Speakers at Coláiste Naomh Cormac, Kilcormac:

Leaving Cert student Nicole Davern is currently competing with her family in the RTE show, Ireland's Fittest Family. The Daverns are also past pupils of the school and the team will visit the school to speak to Junior Classes tomorrow, Tuesday 24 November.

Past Pupil Claire Nevin recently spoke to our Senior pupils. Claire finished in top of her class in Trinity College and will be moving to Strasbourg in January for her placement as Human Rights Advisor for the Delegation of the European Union to the Council of Europe.

Further Education and Training Services

Mount Lucas

The transfer date is planned for 1 January 2016. Meetings have taken place with SOLAS, CIF, Bord Na Mona, and City & Guilds regarding the development of a strategic plan for provision.

Training Services

The transfer of Training Services to LOETB is planned to take place on 1 March 16. A Staff Training plan has been developed and will commence with LWETB next week (Recruitment and Registration). We have also organised training with KWETB regarding Quality Assurance (TQAS).

Strategic Expectations Pilot

Our final meeting with SOLAS will take place on 4 December.

Birr OEC

There has been a 12% increase in receipts year to date. We are currently working on the development of winter provision and continued expansion of the new marketing strategy into 2016.

Youth Services

Youthreach

The internal review of the Youthreach programme will take place on 3/4 December.

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Youth Club Grants

Applications are currently being processed at present and it is hoped to notify successful groups in the coming weeks.

Administrative Services

Human Resources

- Appointments have been made to posts at Grade VII and VI Officer on a temporary acting-up basis. Consequential vacancies have also been filled internally and three posts at Grade III will be advertised on our website and in the local press from tomorrow.
- Interviews took place last Wednesday for a Youthreach Coordinator at Mountmellick Further Education Centre; a letter of offer to the recommended candidate will be issued this week.
- A Training Manager and three Training Officers have been appointed (on a temporary basis) to manage and support the Training Services provision. These appointment were made in response to the sanction received from the Department of Education and Skills. A fourth Training officer post will be advertised presently.

Capital

- The work on the roof at Tullamore College is progressing well.
- Minor roof repairs have been approved for commencement at Clonaslee College.
- Work is progressing on additional accommodation for Ard Scoil Chiarain Naofa, Clara. In addition, a letter of intent has gone to the successful contractor to replace the windows on the main building.
- Works on the additional accommodation at Oaklands Community College is due to complete this week.
- Work to lay tarmac at the car parks at Birr OEC and Portarlinton FEC is approved for commencement.

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- CCTV camera are currently being installed at Abbeyleix FEC and Portarlington FEC.
- Both Oaklands Community College and Ard Scoil Chiarain Naofa, Clara are on the DES Capital projects list announced last Tuesday 17 November.

Finance

- A new format of the Financial Statement (V15) has been devised and issued from the DES in mid-October; figures from the old format V15 for the eighteen month period July 2013 to December 2014 have been transferred to this new format, which is being put to the board for approval.

Procurement

- Tenders were sought for refurbishment works at Youthreach, Edenderry. The closing date for receipt of tender is today.
- Tenders are also being sought for:
 1. maintenance and upgrade of fire extinguishers for the scheme; closing date 7 December 2015
 2. Furniture and equipment for Tullamore College; closing date 13 January 2016.
 3. Catering in Birr OEC; closing date 25 November 2015.

Corporate Services

- Training for members of school Boards of Management took place in Portlaoise and Tullamore over the last two weeks. Training on Children Protection legislations is currently being planned.
- The Management Team, with support from IPB, have developed a draft Risk Register and Risk Management Strategy, which will go before the next meeting of the Audit Committee.
- A Midlands Skill Forum has been established with representation from the relevant statutory agencies. Athlone Institute of Technology chairs the group. A joint application has been made to the Dept. of Education and Skills to fund a Project Manager, which would commence in the first quarter of 2016.

Information Technology

- A new DCG room has been completed at Clonaslee College
- A review of all servers at all sites is currently being carried out to ensure appropriate back-up facilities, anti-virus, and storage capacity are in place

6. REPORT FROM AUDIT COMMITTEE:

The Chairperson of LOETB Board read aloud the following report from the Chairperson of Audit Committee:

Audit Committee's Summary of work in accordance with Section 15.4 of the Code of Practice for the Governance of LOETB.

The Audit Committee, at meetings held on 10 September 2015 and 16 November 2015, examined and reviewed the following internal audit reports:

- Adult Literacy
- Community Education
- Youthreach
- Receipts, PLC Receipts, Night Class Receipts

The Audit Committee also examined and reviewed the Management letter from DHEW on behalf of C&AG for the 18 month period July 2013 to December 2014.

The Audit Committee have also examined and reviewed the minutes of:

- Audit Committee meetings from July 2013 to date
- Finance Committee meetings from July 2013 to date
- LOETB meetings from July 2013 to date

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

Signed: *Oliver M. Connors*
Oliver M. Connors
Chairman of Audit Committee

Proposed by: Mary Sweeney

Seconded by: Liam Quinn

7. REPORT FROM FINANCE COMMITTEE:

The Chairperson of LOETB Board read aloud the following report from the Chairperson of Finance Committee:

To: Chairman, LOETB.

I wish to report that the Finance Committee held a meeting on Tuesday 17th November 2015.

The members considered the Financial Statement for the 18 month period July 2013 to December 2014, the Working papers, Statement of internal Control, the Audit Committee's summary of work in accordance with Section 15.4 of the Code of Practice for the governance of ETB's, details of finances to 31/10/2015, Capital Expenditure & Balances to 31/10/2015 and the monthly balancing statement for October 2015.

We received an update on the payment to Sammon Construction and a briefing on the lease agreements for unit 8 Castle Buildings and Youthreach, Clara, which were proposed and seconded. We were satisfied with the above and with the answers given to our queries.

We recommend acceptance of the accounts as presented.

Peter Scully, Chairman,
Finance Committee
7th November 2015.

Proposed by: Catherine Dwane Stanley

Seconded by: Jerry Lodge

For information purposes the Chairperson also read a resolution of Laois and Offaly ETB regarding lease of premises at Clara and Unit 8 Castle Buildings, Tullamore.

8. FINANCE REPORT

- **A summary of workings of Laois and Offaly ETB up to the end of October 2015 was presented to members.**

Members approved same.

Proposed by: Anne Starling

Seconded by: Vivienne Keenan

- **Financial Statement for the Eighteen Months Ended 31 December 2014**

The Board considered and reviewed the above Financial Statement, expressed satisfaction with the contents, and recommended that it be formally approved.

The Board also considered and reviewed the Statement of Internal Control and the Chairperson's Report to the Department of Education and Skills pursuant to Section 19.1 of the Code of Practice for the Governance of Laois and Offaly Education and Training Board.

The Board recommended the adoption of the Financial Statement for the eighteen months to 31 December 2014.

Proposed by: Anne Starling

Seconded by: Vivienne Keenan

The Board also recommended the adoption of the Statement of Internal Control and the Chairperson's Report to the Department of Education and Skills pursuant to Section 19.1 of the Code of Practice for the Governance of Laois and Offaly Education and Training Board. They also recommended that the Statement of Internal Control be signed by the Chairman.

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- **The possible necessity & subsequent permission to open a Bank of Ireland Bank Account**

The CE explained to the Board the possible need to set up a Bank of Ireland account for the Training Services; while LOETB now bank with AIB (as a result of their successful tender), the software for the Training Services is currently only compatible with Bank of Ireland accounts.

It is hoped that this can be amended before the transfer of services occurs, but in the event where this does not happen, permission must be sought in advance from the Board to open such an account.

The Board agreed to this request.

Proposed by: Anne Starling

Seconded by: John King

9. BOARDS OF MANAGEMENT MINUTES:

The following Boards of Management minutes were circulated to members prior to the meeting for their consideration

Banagher College Board of Management Minutes Draft 30.6.15 & 26.03.15

Proposed By: Vivienne Keenan

Seconded By: Denis Magner

Proposed By: Vivienne Keenan

Seconded By: Denis Magner

Clonaslee College Board of Management Meeting 14.5.15

Proposed By: Vivienne Keenan

Seconded By: Jerry Lodge

St Fergal's College, Rathdowney Board of Management Meeting Minutes, 26.5.15, 29.09.15 & Draft 19.10.15

Proposed By: John King

Seconded By: Paschal McEvoy

Proposed By: John King

Seconded By: Paschal McEvoy

Proposed By: John King

Seconded By: Paschal McEvoy

Portlaoise College Board of Management Minutes 26.5.15

Proposed By: Caroline Dwane Stanley

Seconded By: Mary Sweeney

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10. DELEGATION OF AUTHORITY TO BOARD OF MANAGEMENT TO SUSPEND/EXCLUDE A STUDENT:

The CE explained to the Board that, based on advice from ETBI, and in accordance with Section 44 (1) (a) of the Education and Training Board Act 2013 and the procedures relating to S. 29 Appeals, it is prudent for the ETB to delegate authority to the BOM of schools to suspend/exclude a student.

A concern was raised as to whether or not this delegation would infringe on any current issues? The CE confirmed that there were no on-going issues that would be affected by this decision.

Banagher College , Coláiste na Sionna

Proposed by: John Carroll Seconded by: Vivienne Keenan

Coláiste Naomh Cormac, Kilcormac

Proposed by: Liam Quinn Seconded by: Mary Cotter Bracken

Ard Scoil Chiaráin Naofa, Clara

Proposed by: Vivienne Keenan Seconded by: Denis Magner

Tullamore College

Proposed by: Anne Starling Seconded by: Molly Buckley

Oaklands Community College, Edenderry

Proposed by: Molly Buckley Seconded by: Liam Quinn

St. Fergal's College, Rathdowney

Proposed by: John King Seconded by: Joe Thompson

Portlaoise College

Proposed by: Caroline Dwane Stanley Seconded by: Mary Sweeney

Coláiste Chluain na Sli, Clonaslee

Proposed by: Vivienne Keenan Seconded by: Jerry Lodge

11. POLICIES FOR ADOPTION

Policy on Force Majeure Leave for LOETB

Proposed By: Vivienne Keenan Seconded By: Mary Sweeney

Compassionate Leave Policy and Unpaid Leave Guidelines for Teachers and SNAs

Proposed By: Vivienne Keenan Seconded By: Mary Cotter Bracken

Code of Conduct for Staff of LOETB

Proposed By: Anne Starling Seconded By: John Carroll

Code of Conduct for Members of LOETB

Proposed By: Molly Buckley

Seconded By: Carol Nolan

Clonaslee College – Admissions & Enrolment Policy

Proposed By: Vivienne Keenan

Seconded By: Jerry Lodge

Coláiste Naomh Cormac – Child Protection Policy

Proposed By: Carol Nolan

Seconded By: Mary Cotter Bracken

Colaiste Naomh Cormac – Admissions Policy 2015/16

Proposed By: Liam Quinn

Seconded By: John Carroll

Coláiste Naomh Cormac – Code of Behaviour

Proposed By: Liam Quinn

Seconded By: Mary Cotter Bracken

12. VOTES OF SYMPATHY:

A vote of sympathy was passed to the following:

- Angela Walshe, Banagher College on the death of her Mother
- Michael Doolan, Tullamore College, on the death of his Uncle
- Mary Quinn, St. Fergal's College, Rathdowney, on the death of her Uncle
- Mary O'Connor, Tullamore College on the death of her Uncle
- Noreen Sweeney, Principal of Clonaslee College and Maura Sweeney teacher in Oaklands Community College on the death of Noreen's Mother and Maura's Grandmother, Annie O'Donovan.
- Tom Moore, Clonaslee College, on the death of his brother
- A special tribute was paid to staff member, Catherine Tynan, who recently passed away. Catherine worked in the Literacy Service at Portlaoise Further Education Centre until her illness. All Board Members wished to be associated with this tribute. The CE paid special tribute to the wonderful person Catherine was, remarking that she would be sadly missed, both personally and professionally within LOETB, and in particular by the students. He noted Catherine's great sense of humour, which her colleagues in Tower Hill will sorely miss. He articulated how suitable Catherine was to her role and how she took great pride in her work. Sympathy was expressed to her family, friends, and colleagues on this very sad occasion.

13. VOTES OF CONGRATULATIONS:

A vote of congratulations was passed to the following:

- Laois Ladies Camogie Team on their All Ireland success

12. AOB:

- **Tullamore College Board of Management Draft Minutes 4.11.2015**

Proposed by: Molly Buckley

Seconded by: Anne Starling

- **Resignation of Chairperson**

Denis Magner announced to the Board that he would be stepping down from his position as Chair of Laois and Offaly ETB at the next meeting. He reminded the Board that upon taking up his position last year he pledged that his tenure as Chair would only be for one year to allow the position of Chairperson to rotate. Denis thanked the Board for their assistance throughout the year and the Chief Executive for the professional and productive relationship they shared whilst carrying out their roles in an efficient and discreet manor. He informed members that he held the position with great pride. He went on to say that it was a privilege to hold the office of Chairperson, particularly as a representative of staff as such an appointment was the exception rather than the norm on any VEC/ETB Board in the country. He welcomed the rotation of Chairperson as he felt it gave all members a chance to hold the position.

Members of the Board paid tribute to the tremendous job by Denis as Chair. The Board noted that Denis served his term as Chair with both professionalism and impartiality, offering sound advice to Members. It was also noted that Denis had served on the Board of Offaly VEC/Laois and Offaly ETB diligently over many years, including acting on many Boards of Management. Members wished to be associated with all comments made.

The CE wished to be associated with all comments made, including the Chairman's description of their working relationship which they carried out both effectively and quietly. The CE thanked Denis for his dedication to Laois and Offaly ETB and for his contribution to the Board throughout the years.

- **Declan Costello**

The CE informed members that Declan Costello's tenure as a parents' representative on the Board of LOETB was ending at the end of 2015. The CE paid tribute to the work and commitment shown by Declan to the VEC/ETB over the past number of years. He informed members that LOETB would write to the National Parents' Association to seek a replacement.

Declan Costello's apology was read aloud to the Board by Mary Cotter Bracken. Included in the apology was his appreciation to the Members of LOETB and Offaly VEC for their assistance over the past number of years.

- **Gaelcholáiste**

Members welcomed the announcement of a fourth post-primary school in Portlaoise and voiced their eagerness for LOETB to become the patron of the new school. A number of members spoke of the need for a Gaelcholáiste in Portlaoise and asked the CE to support such an initiative. Other members spoke of the need to ensure that Portlaoise College, first and foremost, as an ETB school, had our full support to ensure its continued growth and development.

The CE confirmed that there was no further information available from DES at present on the process for determining patronage of the proposed school. He welcomed the announcement of new schools for Portlaoise, in particular for St. Francis School and Kolbe, and confirmed to the Board that the ETB would certainly be interested in the patronage of a new school at post-primary level. He re-iterated his support for a Gaelcholaiste and Coiste Bunaithe Portlaoise but also reminded members of the need to ensure the continued growth of Portlaoise College. The CE informed members that he would seek further information on the proposed school and update them at the next meeting.

13. DATE AND VENUE OF NEXT ETB MEETING:

The next meeting of Laois and Offaly ETB will take place on Monday 25th January 2016 at 4:30pm in Castle Buildings, Tullamore.

Signed: Liam Quinn
Chairperson

Date: 25/1/16.

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Chairman
Initials