



KWETB Board Meeting
Minutes of the Board of KWETB held on Tuesday 23rd March 2021 at 10.30a.m.
Online Meeting through MS Teams.

- Present:** Cllr. Daragh Fitzpatrick in the Chair, Cllr. Tom Fortune Vice-Chair, Cllr. Kevin Duffy, Cllr. Angela Feeney, Cllr. Anne Ferris, Cllr. Peter Hamilton, Mr. Stephen Horan, Mr. Noel Merrick, Ms. Deirdre O'Donovan, Mr. David O'Gorman, Cllr. Lourda Scott, Ms. Alice O'Donnell, Ms. Siobhain Grogan, Mr. Noel Magee, Cllr. Paul O'Brien, Cllr. Íde Cussen, Cllr. Evie Sammon.
- In attendance:** Dr. Deirdre Keyes CE, Mr. Joe Kelly Director of OSD, Mr. Ken Scully Director of Schools, Mr. Ken Seery Director of FET, Dr. Áine Murphy KWETB, Ms. Orla Kealy KWETB, Ms Catherine Doran, KWETB.
- Apologies:** Cllr. Bernard Caldwell, Cllr. Patsy Glennon.
- Absent:** Ms. Aoife Ní Chéilleachair, Ms. Caoimhe Molloy,

Chairperson, Cllr. Daragh Fitzpatrick resided at the meeting.

Introduction

The Chair welcomed all members and reminded members of the meeting protocol for the online meeting, and to be conscious of muting microphones to decrease background noise and audio feedback. required quorum confirmed.

Minute ETB 01-03-21
No. 1 Conflicts of Interest/Disclosure of Interests

No conflicts of interest were declared by Board members.

Minute ETB 02-03-21
No. 2 Apologies, Sympathies & Congratulations

Apologies were received from Cllr. Bernard Caldwell and Cllr. Patsy Glennon.



The Board extended their sympathies on the passing of Marie McGuinness, a long serving tutor and teacher with KWETB. Marie taught in full-time and part-time programmes in VTOS and BTEI in Kildare VEC and KWETB for a long number of years. The Board held a minutes silence in her honour.

Minute ETB 03-03-21
No. 3 Adopting the Minutes of previous meetings

3.1 Minutes of Board meeting 23rd February 2021.

Proposed: Cllr. Paul O'Brien
Seconded: Cllr. Kevin Duffy
And Agreed

Minute ETB 04-03-2021
No. 4 Matters Arising from the Minutes

There were no other matters arising from the minutes.

Minute ETB 05-03-2021
No. 5 Chief Executive's Business

The Chief Executive (CE) gave the Board an update of the activities within the KWETB since their last meeting. The CE informed the Board the 2019 KWETB accounts had been laid before the House of the Oireachtas and are now ready for publication, bringing KWETB in line with all other ETBs on their audited accounts.

The CE brought to the Board's attention the sectoral review and published report completed by the Comptroller and Audit General (C&AG) on Financial Governance and Reporting in ETB's. It was noted this is very useful for our Finance Committee and Audit and Risk Committee (ARC) and would be shared with the Board.

The return to school of all KWETB primary schools and 5th and 6th years in post primary was confirmed. The dual leaving certificate model will present both accredited grades and the traditional leaving certificate exams. Over Easter the schools will be facilitating the oral and practical exams at local level overseen by the State Examinations Commission.

Our FET learners continue and remain primarily online, with the exception of courses that are identified as time sensitive assessments.

The CE reminded the Board the schools and centres continue their services as guided by their Covid Response Plans in line with the public health measures, guided by the HSE and the Department of Education (DE) Inspectorate. No outbreaks of Covid have been associated with KWETB schools.



The Board were informed of increased enrolment requests from the DE and a response is currently awaited from the DE on KWETB's response to this request. Second round applications from other patrons have also had an impact on the waiting lists of KWETB schools, meaning the DE must revert and analyse the subsequent numbers requiring school places. This will affect the approval of additional accommodation requests submitted.

The CE brought the Board's attention to the Action Items list and information continues to be populated via this platform on their SharePoint.

Minute ETB 06-03-2021

No. 6 Matters for approval, noting or adoption
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6.1. Adoption

The Chair confirmed there were no items for adoption at today's meeting.

6.2.1.a. Approval of Draft Annual Financial Statements (AFS) 2020 and Draft Statement of Internal Control (SIC)

Finance Committee Report (for recommendation RE AFS & SIC)

Audit and Risk Committee Report (for recommendation RE AFS & SIC)

Mr Noel Merrick Chairperson of the Finance Committee and Cllr. Kevin Duffy member of the ARC were invited to verbal report to the Board on the activities of the Committees. Written reports including the Committee's recommendation in respect of internal control and the AFS were also presented to the Board. Cllr. Kevin Duffy gave the Board an overview of the ARC's functionality serving on behalf of the Board, the positive nature of the internal and external engagements with the Executive, the Internal Audit Unit (IAU) and C&AG. The ARC has carried out its own review of effectiveness with positive outcomes. The ARC scrutinize activities such as reviewing previous audit recommendations (Audit Register) and analysing the tracking of actions to ensure the actions embed in the organisation. The audit register is a key management control and feeds into the risk register.

The ARC received detailed briefing of the AFS & SIC giving them an understanding of how the internal controls were rolled out and the procedures of assurances undertaken by the Executive. The ARC and the Executive held in depth conversations around the impact of Covid-19 on the internal controls and the ARC found the controls were in the majority maintained and even strengthened by the use of technology.

The C&AG sectoral report on Financial Governance and Reporting in ETB's related to many key controls and it was found there were no surprises within the report and KWETB are ahead of controls in certain areas.

As included in their written annual report to the Board, the ARC is of the opinion that internal control is operating effectively and appropriately within KWETB, based on assurances received from the CE and a review of internal controls.



Mr Noel Merrick Chairperson of the Finance Committee confirmed the Finance Committee had reviewed the report of the ARC that confirmed that internal controls are adequate and operating effectively in KWETB and the committee accept the SIC. The Chairperson of the Finance Committee noted he and the Chairperson of the ARC liaised also to ensure both committees were satisfied with the AFS and controls. The Chairperson acknowledged the non-compliant aggregate procurement figure explaining this is caused by the accumulated spend of the whole organisation. The Chairperson made available the annual report of the Finance Committee. It was confirmed the Letter of Representation was noted by the Committee and subject to audit and recommendations from the DE and C&AG, the Finance Committee recommend to the Board the adoption of the AFS and the approval of the SIC.

The KWETB APO Finance was invited to address the Board. An overview of the Operating Statement and Statement of Current Assets and Liabilities was given to the Board and a more detailed analysis was received by the Committees; Finance and ARC. There was increase in receipt and expenditure attributable to large capital projects of Maynooth Education Campus and Naas Community College, as well as an increase from SOLAS funding resulting from Youth Services and Co-Op hours coming under the FET remit. Covid grants were also noted to have accounted for a proportion of this in the form of PPE and other public health measures requirements across the organisation.

It was noted KWETB were in surplus at the end of 2020. There had been a longstanding deficit issue along with other ETBs across the sector and the DE put KWETB in funds to clear this deficit bringing KWETB into a surplus for end of 2020. It was confirmed the DE do not reclaim surplus funds once released to the ETB. These funds were released for capital projects in advance and will be used for the purpose of release in the progression of the capital projects. Although in the case of SOLAS they do reclaim surplus funds, but the 2020 surplus was mainly from capital funding from the DE.

Subject to audit by the C&AG, The Board approved the draft Annual Financial Statements 2020 and draft Statement of Internal Control.

Proposed by: Cllr. Angela Feeney

Seconded: Mr David O’Gorman

And Agreed

6.2.c. Ministerial Approval for Overdraft Facility

The Chair noted at the November 2020 meeting the Board approved permission to seek the overdraft from the Minister. Following Ministerial approval permission is now sought to use the overdraft if required.

Proposed by: Cllr Peter Hamilton

Seconded by: Cllr Kevin Duffy

And agreed.



6.2.d. Appointments to School Board of Management - BIFE, Greystones CNS and Greystones CC

The Chairperson of the Nominations Committee introduced the casual vacancy on the BIFE Board of Management (BOM) as approved by the committee at their meeting on the 24th February 2021.

BIFE nominee: Ms. Tracy O'Brien

Proposed by: Mr David O'Gorman

Seconded by: Cllr. Tom Fortune

Greystones CNS Nominee: Ms Evelyn Burns, Community Representative

Greystones Community College Nominee: Cllr. Gerry Walsh, Community Representative

Proposed By: Cllr. Daragh Fitzpatrick

Seconded by: Cllr. Paul O'Brien

6.2.e. Request from the Department of Education to use the Old Abbey Community College building in Wicklow town from 2021 for a period of 2-3 years.

The building is in need of remedial works which the DE would facilitate to make fit for purpose for accommodating the Wicklow Educate Together Secondary School.

Cllr Paul O'Brien supported this proposal and explained the need from the Wicklow Educate Together Secondary School and it would be beneficial for the KWETB to accommodate other schools.

Proposed by: Cllr. Paul O'Brien

Seconded by: Mr David O'Gorman

And Agreed

6.2.f. Request from the Department of Education to use the Old Maynooth Community College building from 2021 onwards.

The CE introduced to the Board the request received and advantages and risks associated as set out in their received documentation. The DE are seeking permission to develop an area of the old Maynooth campus for use by Stepping Stones Special School, Kilcloon as their current accommodation is unsatisfactory and they have an urgent need for relocation. The DE acknowledges the Gaelcholaiste Mhaigh Nuad (GCMN) remains the priority on this site, and the CE confirmed contact with the Principal of GCMN and satisfaction to share the premises. The CE explained this would increase confidence in funding for the remedial works required on this premises and the community could be served in many ways resulting from it. The CE confirmed the GCMN are content in their current location and do not intend to move to the old



Maynooth campus until it is fit for purpose for a 500 pupil school following works. The occupation by Stepping Stones Special School, Kilcloon would be as soon as possible following the consultant report, but hoping for September 2021.

A consultant has been approved by the DE for appointment and will assess the premises, engage with all stakeholders identifying the needs in the short and long term, and identify the possible separation according to needs, availability and projected requirements. KWETB are awaiting the funds from the DE for the consultant. If this is signed off shortly a consultant's report could be completed following another 2 months.

KWETB are cognisant of the community input to the sports hall of the premises and of the current community requests for use of the premises and will communicate to the DE the importance that third party requests can still be facilitated on site.

A number of concerns were noted around the duration and space allocation required for this request, the possible impact it would have on the immersion of the Gaelcholaiste and risk of dilution of Irish speaking influenced by an adjoining English speaking school, as well as safety and security concerns in relation to exits and entrances.

The Board approved the DE's request subject to recognition the GCMN remains the priority for site, campus management and appropriate protocols regarding safety access and security, and accommodation to third party community requests for use.

Proposed by: Cllr. Ide Cussen
Seconded by: Mr Noel Merrick

6.3. Noting

6.3.a. KWETB Boards of Management Minutes

The Director of Schools briefed the Board on new system of receipt for minutes, measures to standardise minutes implemented and approval and oversight structure put in place. Attention was drawn to a new excel introduced on their site to highlight the most recently added minutes for the Board's convenience. The Director of Schools explained some schools did not reach 5 meetings a year due to lack of quorum at attempted meetings. He also noted that not all 2020 minutes were available to the Board as not all signed and approved minutes have been received by the BOMs.

A discussion ensued on whether the Board note or approve the BOM minutes and the feasibility of approving all school BOM minutes was also questioned, noting the difficulty in approving when there is a lack of knowledge from members of the what is happening locally at each school.

The Chair of the Board confirmed that he would seek advice in relation to whether the Board note or approve the BOM minutes at the ETBI Chairpersons Reserve meeting and request a written response.



6.3.b. Policies (6) - ICT Technology Acceptance Usage Policy, ICT Internet Acceptable Usage Policy, ICT Password Policy, ICT Email Policy, Procurement Policy, Learning and Development Policy.

The policies above are available to the Board on their SharePoint and were developed at ETB sectoral level. Noted.

Minute ETB 07-03-2021

No. 7 Risk Management

The Director of OSD gave the Board a briefing on the report received, noting all risk rating remain unchanged since the January report received and there has been no movement of risks on the heat map to report. Accommodation and Covid-19 remain high risks with temporary accommodation required for 14 locations noted as a significant and immediate risk for September 2021. The prolonged time out of school is a risk to students which is continually noted since last year. 8 additional mitigating actions have been added to the register against risks. Through the SharePoint the Board have access to the Corporate Risk register, the Schools, FET, and OSD registers also.

Minute ETB 08-03-2021

No.8 Buildings Report

The Greystones CNS conciliation process continues and there is no update to report, a reminder was noted this is a confidential process therefore there is no information to share. As referenced in the risk report, the need for temporary accommodation for September 2021 is a concern affected by two factors of: 1) the length of time for planning; 2) the DE plan to roll out a framework of suppliers for drawdown for temporary prefabricated buildings, there is currently no timeline associated with this framework.

Notification was received recently that temporary school accommodations would be exempt from planning permission subject to certain conditions. KWETB are hopeful this will assist in securing temporary accommodations for September 2021, evaluation needs to be completed on the conditions of this exemption against the needs of the schools. As this exemption has only been issued by local authorities, the DE have not yet advised ETBs on its relevance to applications so clarity cannot yet be advised on whether it will relate to first year intakes, existing applications, or only new applications following the exemption announcement.

Two Additional School Accommodation (ASA) applications were submitted to the DE for Colaiste Craobh Abhainn for both short and long term needs. It was confirmed there has been no further response from the DE on the Long Term Projected Enrolment (LTPE) correspondence regarding CCA. In relation to the communication between the NDFA and KWETB on CCA Extension, it was confirmed the NDFA are contacted on a weekly or bi-weekly basis for updates, there is a good relationship established and the procurement of the design team is a slow process.



There was no update to offer on the potential site on the Curragh for the new school.

The development of BIFE was noted in the forefront of KWETB planning in the context of vision for FET. There is no update to provide from the DE on the redevelopment and this hinders specific planning until received. The contractors are onsite for the toilet refurbishment. Relating to the demountable toilet provision this tender is due for re-issue. ,this will be the third attempt to procure demountable toilets. KWETB are now looking to rent versus buy as difficulties in the supply chain are causing such delay in the procurement. The roof repairs necessity were noted and an update on this has been provided on the action items list since the January meeting.

It was agreed the Board would write to the DE requesting an update on BIFE development.

An evaluation on the cost effectiveness of the training centre in Naas has been considered and KWETB are looking to find an alternative location to provide Electrical Apprenticeship training. Funds were not secured for the necessary works required for the training centre to be made fit for purpose to accommodate Electrical Apprenticeship training. FET are currently looking at Kildare Town facility as this alternative as KWETB own the building making it more cost effective and sustainable. There is consideration for the Naas training centre to be used instead for warehouse and logistics training and it would be ready to accommodate this once public health measures allowed attendance.

Minute ETB 09-03-2021

No. 9 Correspondence for the Board

No correspondence for the Board's attention received.

Minute ETB 10-03-2021

No. 10 Members Business/Questions

At this point of the meeting the Chairperson gave his apologies as he needed to leave and handed the chairing of the meeting over to the Vice Chairperson, Cllr. Tom Fortune. The Vice Chairperson chaired the remainder of the meeting.

10.1. Agreement for date for In Camera meeting to approve outstanding In Camera Minutes

The proposed procedure for sharing of the outstanding in camera minutes was provided to the Board and a discussion was held around the timing envisioned to share these minutes digitally, the security concerns and the responsibility of confidentiality on members in receiving these in camera minutes digitally.

Wednesday 31st March 2021 at 10am was agreed to hold an in camera meeting to approve the outstanding in camera minutes. A proposal to share the minutes digitally 24 hours prior to the meeting was put forward.



Proposed by: Cllr Tom Fortune
Seconded by: Ms Deirdre O'Donovan

10.2. Update on Appointment of Consultant for Board evaluation

Cllr Tom Fortune updated the Board there were two applicant proposals submitted and dates for evaluation have not yet been set. The Head of Corporate Services was commended on her help to the working group in facilitating this process and ensuring the correct procurement procedures were followed. An update is planned to bring to the Board for the May agenda. If approval is required before this time, the Board may need to convene an exceptional meeting to approve appointment of a consultant.

10.3. Period Poverty

Cllr Anne Ferris, supported by a number of members, communicated a request to the executive to trial a pilot project on providing period products for learners of KWETB in some of our centres and at primary and post primary level, with a view to roll out. The Board held a discussion around the barrier of period poverty to attendance to education and acknowledge that legislation relating to this is imminent nationally.

Proposed by: Cllr Anne Ferris
Seconded by: Cllr Angela Feeney

10.4. CCA Kilcoole Land Purchases

Cllr. Tom Fortune spoke to the Board regarding two sites at Colaiste Craobh Abhainn which he voiced should be pursued by the KWETB in acquisitioning to benefit the school in space and accommodating playing fields as the current one will be imposed upon with the new extension. It was clarified a developer owns these sites and there is a perceived association with the Department on this land. The Board requests the CE to write to the DE requesting the possibility of pursuing acquisition of the two identified sites.

Proposed by: Cllr Tom Fortune
Seconded by: Cllr Lourda Scott

10.5. Appointment process to School Boards of Management

Mr Noel Magee spoke to his submitted question and sought clarity on the selection process to School Boards of Management, the methodology of selection and clarity on municipal areas standing in the selection process.

The Chairperson of the Nominations Committee, Cllr Paul O'Brien confirmed the committee had received his query and had drafted a response. It was agreed this would be shared with the whole Board also. It was confirmed the municipal areas are not factored into the selection, The scope of area for a nominee to be from is the entirety of Kildare and Wicklow counties, the territory covered by KWETB. Currently bio's are received from nominees and the committee



review and discuss their suitability, but this is limited as the information received varies significantly. Therefore, the Nominations Committee have developed an application form for nominees and the Board welcomed this development. Discussion ensued on the necessity of balancing the suitability of persons, geography of the persons and the diversity of the representation to the BOMs when appointing nominees. This will be discussed further at the Nominations Committee's next meeting. It was expressed clarity had been brought on nominations and when a nominee is brought before the Board for approval that is the appropriate time to raise concerns or dispute the nomination. The Nominations Committee were commended on the work and development they have achieved thus far.

Minute ETB 12-02-2021

No. 12 Date of next meeting

12) Date of next meeting

Tuesday 25th May 2021 – online meeting

Signed: _____

Cllr. Daragh Fitzpatrick

Date: _____

10/06/2021

(Chairperson)