



KWETB Board Meeting
Minutes of the Board of KWETB held on Tuesday 23rd February 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, Ms. Caoimhe Molloy, Cllr. Patsy Glennon.

In attendance: Dr. Deirdre Keyes C.E., 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:

Absent: Cllr. Bernard Caldwell, Ms. Aoife Ní Chéilleachair

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.

A rollcall of members present was called by the Board administrator and required quorum confirmed.

Members of the public were in attendance at the meeting.



Minute ETB 01-02-21

No. 1 Conflicts of Interest/Disclosure of Interests

No conflicts of interest were declared by Board members.

Minute ETB 02-02-21

No. 2 Apologies, Sympathies & Congratulations

Congratulations were extended to both the Chairperson and the Director of Schools on the birth of babies into their families.

No other apologies or sympathies were notified.

Minute ETB 03-02-21

No. 3 Adopting the Minutes of previous meetings

3.1 Minutes of Board meeting 26th January 2021.

Proposed: Cllr. Kevin Duffy

Seconded: Mr David O’Gorman

And Agreed

Minute ETB 04-02-2021

No. 4 Matters Arising from the Minutes

There were no other matters arising from the minutes.

Minute ETB 05-02-2021

No. 5 Chief Executive’s Business

The CE informed the Board on the return of the special classes as of Monday 22nd February 2021 to KWETB schools. Addressing the return to schools of other classes, the CE confirmed further detail and direction is awaited from the Department of education (DE), and work will begin to consider the details of the Leaving Certificate options of combined accredited grades and traditional leaving certificate exams.

FET continue online for the present under current level 5 restrictions. Last week saw the launch of two new upskilling programmes for people in the hospitality and tourism sector, of which KWETB are a leader in providing the relevant upskilling and reskilling of employees across the sector. The Minister for Further and Higher Education Simon Harris TD also joined staff of KWETB



for a virtual event and thanked and acknowledged the continued hard work completed by FET and the ETB as a whole to support such.

Work is underway in assessing school places involving engagement with DE and schools. A full report will be brought to the Board once finalised. There is particular focus on the areas of Naas, Newbridge, Celbridge, and Greystones/Kilcoole. The CE extended thanks to the Board for their support and continued focus in advocating locally from Boards of Management in highlighting the need for accommodation and school places.

Currently, the ETB is preparing its annual financial statements for 2020 and the statement of internal control for the next Board meeting in March to enable submission to the Department by 1st April 2021. There is also much work underway within recruitment and the buildings programme, with full updates to follow at the March meeting.

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| Minute ETB 06-02-2021 |
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| No. 6 Matters for approval, noting or adoption |
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6.1.a. Service Plan 2021

KWETB Finance Committee report

The CE gave a brief introduction to the Service Plan 2021 before handing over to the Chairperson of the Finance Committee to give further detail. The Board were informed of the alignment of the Service Plan to the Statement of Strategy 2020-2024 for the first time, incorporating KWETB's core values and objectives.

The Chairperson of the Finance Committee, Mr Noel Merrick, gave the Board a full briefing on the report provided, noting a deficit in the membership of the committee which has been referred to the Nominations Committee. The Chair of the Board confirmed the Nominations Committee were due to meet this week and this would be on the agenda.

The Board were also informed that the Finance Committee had reviewed the contracts over the value of €25,000 and any queries were resolved. One lease in particular was noted, Naas Training Centre and the intention to keep a focus on this at each meeting of the Finance Committee. The Chairperson of the Finance Committee referred to the analysis of the Service Plan by the Finance Committee and acknowledged the work which had gone into this comprehensive plan and the committee's recommendation to adopt the plan.

It was highlighted to the Board there was a documented deficit in non-pay which had been accumulated over a number of years which was allowed by the DE, meaning the ETB could continue to spend where this deficit occurred. This deficit was cleared recently with a grant provided by DES to the amount of €850,000.

The annual financial statements of 2019 are now with the Secretary General of the Department who will review and then lay before the House of Oireachtas. KWETB have now cleared their accounts from 2016 up to 2019 and are now looking at the 2020 accounts.



Within the Service Plan there are a number of sections incorporating a strong narrative around the ethos of KWETB and detailed sections on the services provided, including the 3 main areas of School, Further Education and Training and Organisation Support and Development (OSD). KWETB Performance Delivery Agreement (PDA) with the Department of Education also provides oversight of the Service Plan. The intended statement of services is laid out through 4 key areas of goals, priorities, actions and Key Performance Indicators (KPI's).

The Chairperson of the Finance Committee explained that the accounts were showing a deficit between receipts and expenditure, but this was due to the fact that this plan does not refer to money in accounts carried over from the previous year. It refers to monies received after the 1st of January 2021.

The CE provided an overview of the Service Plan as per the document provided to the Board, particularly surrounding the activities on each of the 4 pillars of strategic priority within the Service Plan; teaching and learning; working and learning environments; staff and corporate Governance.

The KWETB Finance Manager was invited to address the Board. It was confirmed KWETB do not predict an overall deficit for 2021 and are in a healthy financial position. Though it may read as deficit, the balances carried forward from last year are not recorded in this plan. The Board were reminded these figures are projections and will change throughout the year. The Finance Committee are notified of each change, with any changes reported at each committee meeting.

The expenditure figure is as determined as per letter of determination received from the DES. The figure for FET funding is the bid figure which KWTEB have pitched to SOLAS and it is anticipated this will change as confirmation has not yet been received. Any figure changes will be reported throughout the year as they occur. It was explained to the Board the new youth funding programme, UBU, is now superseding other streams of funding previously noted on Service Plan. Agency money was clarified to include funding such as Music Generation funding, school generated funding, and funding from other departments e.g. Department of Health.

The Board put forward some queries around the Service Plan. It was noted the learner support plan is geared toward FET learners and post primary level more so than primary. Clarification was provided that the plan was aiming to provide support to DEIS schools and School Completion Programmes explaining the perceived focus on post primary within the plan. Referencing the priority of supporting students at risk of educational disadvantage, the Board were informed of the difference in funding for programmes in FET. For example Youthreach has a good retention in completion at a rate of 90%. Whereas Community Training Centres (CTC's) has a higher drop out rate of non-completers and this is often influenced by the demographic of the learner. Each programme is funded in line with the parameters prescribed by SOLAS and this varies depending on the area which they wish particular focus to be given. An explanation on care teams was provided; the objective of care teams shall be to reach further than the children most in need. This will include for children which concerns are noted e.g. for child protection reasons, living in temporary accommodation and other concerns noted by the school. The aim is to develop care beyond the academics within the school environment and try to help by putting additional supports in place.



Two points were noted to check; details on the map within the document and the provision of an acronyms list.

The Director of OSD advised the Board that the KPI for OSD areas refers to the objective rather than the actions and thus measures progress against the objective rather than actions undertaken.

It was explained the Board attendance target of 90% was seen as attainable to account for unforeseen circumstances where members could not attend.

The delay in Child Protection training was acknowledged and the Board were informed the ETBI training is imminent. The Executive are currently looking at gaps in our own training and will provide training to those members of Boards as priority.

The Board received confirmation the Service Plan is reviewed each year by the DE in the performance delivery agreement review and its implementation is also monitored by the Finance Committee. KWETB are required to report to the DE on meeting objectives as set out. The report on the Service Plan goes to the Finance Committee and could be shared with the Board also. A discussion around a 6 month review of the Service plan was welcomed by the Executive and the Chairperson of the Finance Committee to capture challenges and changes faced throughout the year. This will be presented to the Board.

The detail of 100% compliance with statutory reporting deadlines of the ETB Act was clarified. This is in relation to reporting on accounts, staffing resources, learner numbers etc. The Board were informed the Executive keep a schedule of reports tracked on a weekly basis. Last year KWETB met all their statutory reporting requirements.

The Board adopted the KWETB Service Plan 2021 subject to any changes which the DE may request following submission.

Proposed: Cllr. Peter Hamilton

Seconded: Mr. David O’Gorman

And agreed.

6.1.b. Standing Orders Review

Queries raised at January meeting

Supplementary Information

The standing orders working group met to review the comments made at the previous meeting, these were addressed and supplementary information provided via the agenda, which was explained in full to the Board by member of the working group Cllr. Evie Sammon.

A discussion between members ensued on a few of the standing orders. Concerns were noted on standing order 3.8 in relation to ‘in-camera’ sessions. It was highlighted ‘in camera’ sessions should be of the exception and the circumstances for requiring meetings should be set out. Clarity was offered in relation to the context of legal privilege within this standing order, in that if a legally privileged item were for discussion on the agenda, it could not be discussed in a public domain. If it were it would then lose its legal privilege. It was noted that it was a very important note within this standing order.



Regarding the new standing order relating to professional advices, clarity was offered on setting a timeframe for legal advices received to be communicated to the members. It was clarified the timeframe would be decided by the Board as per each advice sought.

The 7 days notice of the Board meeting on the KWETB website standing order and the deadline for members to request to attend was referenced.

The removal of 7.1 relating to procedure for decisions required between board meetings was queried and information was provided that there was no authority in the legislation for the Chairperson to make a decision on the Board's behalf and in this instance a special meeting would be called.

The Board discussed the venue for hosting Board meetings, and varying opinions were offered on the appropriateness of the county buildings for venue of these meetings. A view was offered to host the committee meetings in the schools/centre settings and Board meetings in the county chambers to facilitate ease of access for all attending. The standing orders drawn on the commencement of this Board were to host meetings alternating in each county in KWETB school and centre buildings, for the purposes of having presence amongst the KWETB locations. The county chambers were found to be less functional for engagement and comradery of the Board in comparison to the round table setting practised in schools/centres. The discussion concluded on the necessity for flexibility within the standing orders, and to avoid over-prescribing elements of the standing orders to restrict future decisions. The standing orders were adopted with concerns as outlined above noted. Cllr Tom Fortune wished his preference to meetings to be held in the Council Chambers to be noted.


Proposed: Cllr. Kevin Duffy
Seconded: Mr Noel Merrick

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| Minute ETB 07-01-2021 |
| No. 7 Members Business |

The Chair clarified there were some items received which would be covered at the next meeting of the Board in 4 weeks' time.

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| Minute ETB 08-02-2021 |
| No. 8 Date of next meeting |

Date of next meeting
Tuesday 23rd March – online meeting

Signed:  Date: 15/04/2021
Cllr. Daragh Fitzpatrick

(Chairperson)