

KWETB Board Meeting
Minutes of the Board of KWETB held on Tuesday 15th September 2020 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, Cllr. Paul O'Brien, Ms. Deirdre O'Donovan, Mr. David O'Gorman, Cllr. Lourda Scott, Ms. Alice O'Donnell, Ms Siobhain Grogan, Mr. Noel Magee, Cllr. Bernard Caldwell, Cllr. Patsy Glennon, Cllr. Íde Cussen, Cllr. Evie Sammon.

In attendance: Dr. Deirdre Keyes C.E., Mr. Joe Kelly Director of OSD, Dr. Rory O'Toole Director of Schools, Mr. Ken Seery, Director of FET, Ms. Emer Roy KWETB, Dr. Áine Murphy KWETB, Ms. Orla Kealy KWETB.

Apologies: Ms. Caoimhe Molloy
Cllr. Kevin Duffy, Cllr. Ide Cussen and Cllr. Bernard Caldwell gave apologies for their departure at 12:40pm
Cllr Lourda Scott gave apologies for their departure at 12.55pm
Cllr. Angela Feeney and Ms. Siobhain Grogan gave apologies for their departure at 13:10pm
Mr. Noel Magee gave apologies for their departure at 13:20pm
Cllr. Patsy Glennon gave apologies for their departure at 13:55pm

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.

The Chair took this opportunity to announce the retirement of Director of Schools, Dr. Rory O'Toole. The Chair recounted and acknowledged the various roles and challenges Dr. O'Toole has taken on over his tenure with KWETB and thanked him on behalf of the Board for his work for KWETB. This was wholly supported by the Board.

Members of the public were in attendance at the meeting.

Minute ETB 01-09-20
No. 1 Conflicts of Interest/Disclosure of Interests

No conflicts of interest were declared by Board members.

Minute ETB 02-09-20
No. 2 Apologies, Sympathies & Congratulations

No Apologies were received. The Chair opened the floor to the Board for offer of congratulations or sympathies. The Board wished to commend schools and all involved in the reopening of schools.

The Chair expressed sympathies to Cllr. Lourda Scott on the passing of her mother, and a minute silence was held in her honour.

Minute ETB 03-09-20
No. 3 Adopting the Minutes of previous meetings

3.1 Minutes of Board meeting of 23rd June 2020
Proposed: Cllr. Peter Hamilton
Seconded: Mr. Noel Merrick
And Agreed

Minute ETB 04-09-2020
No. 4 Matters Arising from the Minutes

There were no matters arising from the minutes.

Some particulars were mentioned regarding previous matters from the last meeting, which the CE confirmed would be addressed under upcoming CE business.

Minute ETB 05-09-2020
No. 5 Chief Executive's Business

The CE began by seconding the Chair's acknowledgement of the retirement of Director of Schools, Dr. Rory O'Toole, and offered a sincere thank you on behalf of all staff across the various departments of the organisation.

The CE acknowledged the tremendous work over the past few months at school level, community and voluntary level, listing numerous stakeholders within and many of the challenges faced in delivering road maps for schools re-opening, including new schools launching in the middle of lockdown and Covid restrictions.

The CE detailed the risks to the organisation around Covid, and the continuation of providing the services of the ETB encompassing new guidelines and adapting with the new government procedures in place.

The challenges to the Further Education and Training sector were spoken of, including financial risks of some services, meaning they are not yet feasible to offer. The CE then praised the work completed to ensure other services such as Outdoor Education and Youth Services can operate, albeit minimally at this time.

The OSD team were commended in the support they have provided to ensuring procedures, procurement of equipment and services were completed in line with the Covid compliance measures. The CE also recognised the blended approach for back to offices, which is underway.

The CE addressed the matter of legal advices from the previous meeting, relaying this advice was only for the purposes of ETBs and Boards at this moment, confirming this was the guidance received from the ETBI. Operational guidelines to go along with this advice are not yet available. The legal advice has been integrated into governance training, which the Board are to receive this afternoon.

The Director of FET was invited to provide an update to the Board. The successes, challenges, risks and upcoming developments were outlined to the Board including the confirmation that all FET centres are now re-opened, and the continued and evolving professional and personal development in blended learning for both staff and students.

The Director of Schools then gave an overview of the schools' status, outlining many obstacles faced in the school setting, the risks caused to staff and student wellbeing, quality and sustainability of education provision. The Board were reminded of the extra requirements students and staff must comply with and the difficulties surrounding same. The OSD sector were tribute for their role in the preparation for the reopening of schools.

The Board recognised the effort at local level for the reopening of schools and FET services and suggested a physical acknowledgement of this work, to boost staff morale.

The CE thanked the Board for their important roles in supporting the schools through their responsibilities on Boards of Management.

The CE also responded to the Boards concerns over staff wellbeing by confirming the three top priorities emphasised for schools and services currently are health and safety, anxiety management and staff and student wellbeing, commending how staff have taken on the challenges of recent times and delivered successfully in their roles.

6.1 Adoption:

- a. Annual Report 2019 & Chairperson's report to the Minister

The Chair gave a briefing to the Board that the Department of Education and Skills (DES) requested certain changes to the document by all ETBs, and confirmed the changes were completed and provided to the Board in a document prior to the meeting.

Proposed by: Ms. Deirdre O'Donovan

Seconded by: Mr. Noel Merrick

And Agreed.

6.2 Approval:

- a. Appointments to Schools Board of Management

Clarification was received regarding the BOM nominee and the information was updated. The Board opened discussion for approval of Schools Board of Management nominees.

1. Scoil Chonglais, Ms. Terri Kenny, Female Community Representative Nominee

Proposed by: Cllr. Daragh Fitzpatrick

Seconded by: Cllr. Evie Sammon

And Agreed

2. Naas Community College, Mr. James Lawless, Male Community representative Nominee

Proposed by: Ms. Deirdre O'Donovan

Seconded by: Cllr. Daragh Fitzpatrick

And Agreed

3. Naas Community College, Ms. Funmilayo Adenuga, Female Community representative Nominee

Proposed by: Ms. Deirdre O'Donovan

Seconded by: Cllr. Daragh Fitzpatrick

And Agreed

4. Colaiste Chill Mhantain, Mr. Gail Dunne, Male nominee

Proposed by: Cllr. Daragh Fitzpatrick

Seconded by: Cllr. Paul O'Brien

And Agreed

The Board held a discussion on the vacancy on the Board of Management for BIFE to replace a Board member. It was decided this would be reverted to the Nominations Committee. The Terms of Reference of the Nominations Committee were discussed and it was confirmed these need to be finalised.

After discussion on the appointment of nominees to the trustee school, St Kilian's Bray, and the changes to the Board's role in nominations to the trustee schools following the legal advices received, it was agreed to defer this item.

b. Replacement of Single Manager for Greystones Community College and Gaelcholáiste Mhaigh Nuad and Process of selection of Board of Management

The Board approved the replacement of Dr. Rory O'Toole by Mr. Ken Scully, the new Director of Schools as single manager for both schools until such time as the new Boards of Management are in place.

Proposed by: Cllr. Peter Hamilton

Seconded by: Ms. Deirdre O'Donovan

And Agreed

c. Replacement to Finance Committee

The Chairperson of the Finance Committee, Mr. Noel Merrick, offered thanks to Ms. Nancy Hughes for her time and service on the Finance Committee.

The Board discussed the options around replacing the vacancy and it was decided this should go to the Nominations Committee to seek an external nominee.

d. Planning Application for Temporary Accommodation for Gaelcholáiste Chill Dara

Proposed by: Mr Noel Merrick

Seconded by: Cllr. Kevin Duffy

And Agreed

e. Covid 19 Emergency Temporary Leases/Licences

Clarification was provided regarding the fees for the Maynooth University arrangement.

Proposed by: Cllr. Kevin Duffy

Seconded by: Ms. Deirdre O'Donovan

And Agreed

It was confirmed to the Board that a register of all properties leased/licenced/owned is maintained. The Executive provided clarifications and assurances to the Board regarding the leases/licences brought for approval. It was agreed the Board receive the property register. The Director of OSD confirmed that that was possible and reminded the Board to make use of the Finance Committee who would have more time to review it in comparison to the Board.

f. FET Osprey Renewal of Licence

The Director of FET explained the necessity for above and provided clarifications to the Board relating to the size, duration and cost.

Proposed by: Cllr. Anne Ferris

Seconded by: Cllr. Kevin Duffy

And Agreed

g. FET M4 Business Park Lease for Manufacturing Training Centre

The Director of FET again spoke of the need for larger space due to demand for training, and provided clarification to the Board regarding conflicts of interest, and the other details to be

gathered after the lease was approved by the Board. The possibility of the Finance Committee reviewing the leases before coming to the Board for approval was suggested.

Proposed by: Cllr. Kevin Duffy

Seconded by: Cllr. Angela Feeney

And Agreed

h. Approval for Members to attend ETBI AGM (2nd October, online)

A discussion ensued regarding attendance to this AGM and it was decided that all members would be registered to attend and the below would be ratified as voting members.

1. Mr Stephen Horan
2. Ms. Deirdre O'Donovan
3. Cllr. Tom Fortune
4. Cllr. Evie Sammon
5. Ms. Alice O'Donnell

Proposed by: Cllr. Angela Feeney

Seconded by: Cllr. Peter Hamilton

And Agreed

6.3 For Noting:

a. KWETB Finance Committee report

Mr Noel Merrick, Chairperson of the Finance Committee gave an overview of the report provided. Noted by the Board

b. KWETB Boards of Management Minutes

It was noted they are not fully complete but we are making progress on providing these. The Director of Schools also stated following the legal advice received Boards of Management Minutes for Trustee schools are no longer for Board noting.
Noted by the Board

c. Schools Covid – 19 Policy Statements

The Director of Schools commended the CE for attending all schools to complete and sign off on these policies, and reminded the Board these will remain in situ due to Covid.
Noted by the Board

d. HR Report and relevant DES Circular Letters

Noted by the Board

Minute ETB 07-09-2020
No. 7 Risk Management Report

Director of OSD briefed the Board on Covid risk, operational risks, corporate risks and acknowledged staff in managing the risk continually surrounding Covid. The Board were reminded that Schools and FET have separate risk registers. The Director of OSD explained the heat map on report provided displays the highest risks and also detailed these by itemizing risks a, b and h, on this map. The Board were reminded they will see changes and trends with future reports. The Board were informed of the key principle risks.

Minute ETB 08-09-2020
No. 8 Buildings Report

It was acknowledged that a significant number of projects are being managed by the Buildings team. Clarification was provided in relation to the Greystones Community National School that KWETB are not the client for this project. The DES are directly managing this and therefore KWETB have not been in receipt of any detail or progress. The CE acknowledged the frustration and difficult situation and commended the Principals on their professionalism and commitment throughout. KWETB maintains active communication with the DES and have been assured by them that this is a priority situation. The Board expressed concern over the communication channels from DES and asked could ETBI intervene and that this was a high risk. It was agreed that local meetings regarding certain projects could benefit the members in providing communication to parents in their role on Boards of Management, and the CE and Director of Schools would be amenable to facilitate this. The CE praised the Principals in these instances for adapting to each changing situation and ensuring the provision of education continued.

Confirmation was provided that the extension commencement to Colaiste Craobh Abhann was expected to be prolonged up to 2022/2023.

The Director of OSD confirmed as on the buildings report, the external BIFE toilet refurbishment was retendered as no replies were received initially. Similarly, with the roof works for BIFE, no replies were received on latest tendering process.

The traffic management issues for both Pipers Hill Campus and Maynooth Education Campus were addressed. The Chair suggested at the next ETBI Reserve Forum he will raise the aforementioned concerns around; DES communication on projects and Piper's Hill car park issues.

Minute ETB 09-09-2020
No. 9 Finance Report

This was available to the Board with the agenda. The Director of OSD gave an overview of the report. The status of refunds following Covid intrusion to planned activities and services was queried. The Director of Schools and the CE informed the Board these have been monitored and refunds completed where appropriate.

Minute ETB 10-09-2020

No. 10 Correspondence for the Board

The Chair addressed the Board regarding the recent Garda investigation, informing them progress will be seen in the coming weeks or months and no further information can be discussed.

The CE confirmed the solicitor has been advising KWETB in entirety, encompassing both the reserve and the executive. This advice is through our IPB criminal indemnity policy.

The Chair read aloud a letter received 14th September, regarding notification of a review of the KWETB Corporate Governance Programme to be carried out by Dr. Richard Thorn. The Director of OSD will be engaging with Dr. Thorn throughout. The final report will be issued to KWETB by the end of October 2020 and shall be forwarded to the Board.

The Chair allowed for discussion to ensue regarding some items members had previously raised with him. One item voiced was the opportunity available to possibly provide for a community hub at Manor Mills Maynooth, once the schools vacate to the new campus. Details were previously emailed and the Board and members of the Executive welcomed the suggestion and engagement for future use of this premises.

The Board discussed the issue of complaint to Legal Services Regulatory Authority. The Director of OSD reminded the Board that, at the last Board meeting, he read out verbatim the contents of email correspondence from Philip Lee Solicitors to the Admin team confirming that a Section 68 letter was not required as they were on the OGP Framework. The Director of OSD stated that he was not aware of any other correspondence related to this matter that the Board were not aware of and that he was happy to share the correspondence he had with the Board if they felt it helpful. The Director of OSD also informed the Board that the legislation Section 68 was superseded by a new Section 150 letter. It was proposed that the correspondence related to this matter would be shared with the Board. The Board discussed the motion vis-à-vis the complaint to the Law Society

Proposed by: Cllr. Tom Fortune

Seconded by: Mr David O’Gorman

Minute ETB 11-09-2020

No. 11 Members Business

11.1. Review of Standing Orders

Director of OSD suggested to the Board that it was timely to carry out a review of Standing Orders and requested volunteers from the Board to assist.

Ms. Deirdre O’Donovan, Cllr. Evie Sammon and the Chair Cllr. Daragh Fitzpatrick volunteered to engage in this review.

11.2. Members Questions received

Questions received prior to the meeting were addressed. The CE addressed the question of the relationship between the DES and the ETB.

From a Board member perspective the following reports to the DES/Minister are required by the ETB Act and must be formally approved/adopted by Board resolution;

1. Service Plan
2. Annual Report
3. Strategy Statement
4. Annual Financial Statements

In addition, a comprehensive report from the Chairperson to the Minister accompanies the Annual Report.

Section 8 of the Code provides more details with regard to relations with the Minister - "there should be an ongoing dialogue between the Department of Education and Skills and ETBs based on a common understanding of the objectives of the ETB and the actions through which it seeks to achieve those objectives". Each ETB enters into a Performance Delivery Agreement with the department.

Other operational reports are submitted to the DES periodically these would include such items as monthly budget returns, staffing returns, updates on specific capital projects etc.

The CE also provided information on the procedure for special meeting of the Board.

This is provided for in the Standing Orders;

- a) A Special Meeting of the Board may be called at any time by the Chairperson on his/her own motion, or upon a requisition addressed to him/her, and signed by at least half of the Members of the Board.
- b) The Chief Executive shall summon a meeting of the Board on the request of the Chairperson, or by half of the Members of the Board or whenever he/she deems it necessary that the Board meets.

The Board were provided information surrounding the interviewing process and confirmation this is a Human Resources function to set out their processes, which are influenced by circulars issued by the DES.

11.3 Members Motion

A motion was received to stating:

"Any communication sent from or on behalf of the board of KWETB must be circulated to all the board members or any communication to or from the department of education or any organisation, the board must be given all of this."

A discussion surrounding clarification of the wording followed and was clarified this referred to correspondence "for or on behalf of the Board". To which the Executive reminded the Board this practice is already in place.

Motion Proposed by: Cllr. Tom Fortune

Motion Seconded by: Mr. David O'Gorman

Minute ETB 12-09-2020

No. 12 Date of next meeting

Scheduled date Tuesday 10th November – venue TBC

Proposed by: Cllr. Anne Ferris

Seconded by: Cllr. Evie Sammon

Signed: _____



Cllr. Daragh Fitzpatrick

Date: _____

10/11/2020

(Chairperson)