



BORD OIDEACHAIS AGUS OILIÚNA
CHILL DARA AGUS CHILL MHANTÁIN

KILDARE AND WICKLOW
EDUCATION AND TRAINING BOARD

KWETB Board Meeting

Minutes of the Board of KWETB meeting held on Tuesday 26th September
2023 at 10.30a.m.

Venue: Blessington FETC

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



Introduction

The Board received an introduction to West Wicklow Further Education services in Blessington and Baltinglass centres from Anne McGrath, Blessington VTOS and BTEI Coordinator and Caroline McCabe West Wicklow Youthreach Coordinator. The Board were complimentary of the services and learned about the integration and shared staff between both Blessington and Baltinglass further education centres.

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| Minute ETB 01-09-2023 |
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| No. 1 Conflicts of Interest/Disclosure of Interests |
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The Chair requested for statements of conflict of interests. Board members declared no conflicts of interest.

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| Minute ETB 02-09-2023 |
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| No. 2 Apologies, Sympathies & Congratulations |
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Apologies were received from Alice O'Donnell, Stephen Horan, Cllr. Kevin Duffy and Cllr Íde Cussen. The Board offered sympathies to the families of; Louis Duffy, father of Board member Cllr. Kevin Duffy. Matt Daly, brother to head office staff member Bridget Daly Lynam.

The Board held a moment of silence as a mark of respect.

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| Minute ETB 03-09-2023 |
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| No. 3 Adopting the Minutes of previous meetings |
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3.1 Minutes of Board meeting 04th July 2023

Proposed: Cllr. Bernard Caldwell

Seconded: Cllr. Peter Hamilton

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| Minute ETB 04-09-2023 |
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| No. 4 Matters Arising from the Minutes |
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No matters were arising from the minutes of the previous meeting.

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| Minute ETB 05-09-2023 |
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| No. 5 Chief Executive update |
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The following points from the CE report were noted;

- Leaving Certificate success was noted and thanks to the dedication and hard work of our teachers, SNAs and leadership teams in our schools is very much acknowledged.
- Teacher Recruitment saw in excess of 270 teaching and management posts filled. Thanks was expressed to our Board members who facilitated interview panels. It was noted there remained some vacancies in teaching posts mostly for shorter term posts such as maternity cover, illness leave, posts which are not permanent offerings. Overall the Board recognised the recruitment process success this year.



Challenges to rural schools recruitment was acknowledged and the frustrations which accompany same. The Executive explained the survey exercise completed in consultation with the Principals and the measures input to remove barriers and obstacles to timely recruitment and filling of posts. The rural areas will always feel this challenge due to location and teacher's choice in application. A Board member noted that in their opinion the constitution and responsibilities of the Boards of Management in ETB Schools is too narrow and does not suit the demands of the BOM, they suggested a review of the governance role of Boards of Management in ETBS.

- FET Delivery levels are high and exact figures will be completed in October. A revised FET funding structure was noted to the Board, expected to go live in October 2024 planning and budgeting. This will improve the accessibility to learning programmes for learners and position the sector to achieve a key element of the FET strategy.
- Progress was noted on the new premises for Naas Head office as a lease was signed for Chestnut House, Millennium Park, Naas. We now await approval to fund the fit out from the Department of Education.
- The new Child Protection guidelines have been communicated to all KWETB schools, noting the welcome changes including protection of anonymity.
- The ETBI Conference is on Wednesday and Thursday this week and places are still available if any further members had interest.

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| Minute ETB 06-09-2023 |
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| No. 6 Matters for approval, noting or adoption |
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6.1. Adoption

There were no matters for adoption on today's agenda.

6.2 Approval

6.2.a. Overdraft Facility

The Board is requested to sanction the Chief Executive to write to the Minister requesting permission to obtain an overdraft facility if needed in the course of the year. This is an annual request, although the ETB have not needed to enact the overdraft in the past number of years.

Proposed: Cllr Patsy Glennon

Seconded: Cllr Bernard Caldwell

6.2.b. Female Parent Representative replacement

A nominee was provided by ETBsNPA (National Parents Association) to fill this vacancy. The Board approved nominee AnnMarie Roche as the female parent representative.

Proposed: David O'Gorman

Seconded: Cllr Tom Fortune

6.2.c. Leases - approval of leases.



This item was deferred from the July Board meeting. A number of leases as listed below were presented, with standard information as found on the Heads of Terms documents, to request retrospective Board approval. This retrospective approval is an exercise requested by the Department of Education across the ETB sector.

It was clarified lease payments are paid by the ETB. For FET leases, FET bid for the rental costs in their submission to SOLAS and DHFERIS fund the bid once approved.

It was noted that the Bray Civic centre lease is planned to be divested at the end of its term and the new FET College (redevelopment of the BIFE building) will then be able to accommodate the delivery of this centre.

It was confirmed break clauses are included in all new leases as part of our policy now, although this was not always the case for some of the older leases.

The challenge to find energy efficient premises for renting was noted to the Board.

The leases approved by the Board were;

- Bray Civic Centre (Block E) FET
- Career Path FET
- Carnew FET
- Curragh Community College
- Jigginstown Adult Education FET
- Jigginstown Youthreach Centre FET
- KWETB Kildare Administrative Office (Naas)
- KWETB Wicklow Administrative Office (Wentworth Place)
- Leixlip Youthreach FET
- The Murrough Wicklow (FET lease 1)
- The Murrough Wicklow (FET front of Building)

Proposed: David O’Gorman

Seconded: Cllr Bernard Caldwell

6.2.d. Charities Compliance Report 2022

Under the Charities Governance Code all registered charities are required to complete this Charities Governance Code Compliance Record Form every year. The Board has approved the annual report the last two years since 2021. No changes were made other than minor additions regarding actions against the compliance obligations.

Proposed: Cllr Patsy Glennon

Seconded: Cllr Tom Fortune

6.3 Noting

6.3.a. Audit and Risk Committee Report

The Board noted the ARC report provided. David O’Gorman, Member of the committee confirmed a productive meeting, the audit reports presented to the committee and the report provided to the Board today.



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6.3.b. KWETB Boards of Management Minutes

The improvement of receipt of minutes was noted by the Board. Some less populated minutes were noted and the Director of Schools shall follow up.

It was confirmed that all 10 KWETB DEIS schools have their DEIS plans in situ.

A discussion ensued regarding school meals provision and the contribution charged for meals from schools to students. An increase was received in this funding from the Department of Education, received mid-stream and therefore is relevant to provision going forward. All KWETB DEIS schools utilise this funding by providing hot meals to all students. Students who cannot afford the contribution to meals on a daily basis are identified and measures implemented. It was explained that a standard approach to charging contributions to the school meals across the KWETB schools is not feasible as there is a degree of variance in how each school operate the school meals provision. This includes what they offer using the funding (e.g. breakfast clubs, hot dinners, packed dinners for home etc.) and in the canteen operation; some are in house and some are external service providers, depending on the school's capacity and facilities. A Board member asked for the schools to revisit the need to charge any additional contribution for the school meal.

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| Minute ETB 07-09-2023 |
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| No. 7 Risk Management |
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The risk management report was provided to the Board. It was noted that the accommodation risk was raised to a high red risk, and as noted by the ARC the Executive are doing all they can to mitigate the risk.

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| Minute ETB 08-09-2023 |
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| No.8 Buildings Report |
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The accommodation issues and delays were discussed at length. The Board expressed their upset, disappointment and frustration at the delays, ongoing accommodation issues and at the effectiveness of communication channels between KWETB and the Department of Education (DE).

Blessington Community College delays to the temporary accommodation provision were discussed, noting the unrest in the community and that the BOM has written to TD's about KWETB's lack of action on same. The Board were assured KWETB have put in significant efforts in resolving the issues at Blessington Community College and actively requesting the DE provide updates. The longer term accommodation provision of Blessington Community College impacted on the delivery of short term modular accommodation. It was clarified that the planning permission exemption for schools only applies to a smaller size, this project is above the threshold.

The project stages were outlined to the Board including approval, different frameworks offered by the DE to achieve project builds, procurement, appointment of teams and surveys, noting that all dates provided for projects are estimates until the stages progress and transpire. The delays to many school projects were acknowledged and felt by the Executive also, noting that some are outside of KWETB's control where DE approval and DE managed projects are awaited. This is a nationwide issue.

The Executive agreed to request an update on the Colaiste Craobh Abhann NDFA managed project. The Executive agreed to provide an overview of BIFE buildings matters currently ongoing to the Board of Management of BIFE.

The concern for the lack of progress on Gaelcholáiste Mhaigh Nuad's permanent relocation was expressed and the Board were assured this remains high on the agenda and KWETB await update from



the DE on the formulation report. The school's attractiveness and decreasing enrolments were noted. The project management approach the DE brought in to manage building projects was noted as having its inefficiencies but also worked well in certain instances. The initial introduction challenges and incorrect communication channels were acknowledged and feedback was provided to the DE on same. It was noted that the SEN modular framework used to provide additional ASD units is not in line with inclusion.

It was clarified that Greystones Community College permanent build timeline is an estimate by KWETB as a timeline has not been provided by the DE, who are managing this project. The Board and Executive were reminded the temporary accommodation planning permission for Greystones Community College was granted for 3 years. Concern to student safety and frustration were expressed by the Board in discussing the logistics of students and staff crossing the road from two temporary sites between classes at Greystones Community College where there is no designated pedestrian crossing. It was outlined that the original planning permission did not include the pedestrian crossing, therefore the council will not install. It is a public road outside of KWETB's remit and the DE managed this project so would need to apply for the planning permission to do same. The risk and liability concerns were noted and as well as the Principal's efforts and KWETB's engagement and advice to the Principal on same. It was stressed by the Board that the CE raise this with Wicklow County Council and to contact the DE for a resolution and provision of a safe crossing.

A member left at this point leaving the Board without quorum, at 11 members present.

The Piper's Hill campus traffic management was raised. The Phase 1 ongoing was noted and the Board were updated that the Phase 2 application to the DE was not approved, but KWETB hope to re-engage on this. The Phase 2 proposal includes the second entrance which is a longer-term solution.

The Board's frustration on the impact to KWETB's reputation and in turn their reputation as members was vehemently expressed. The Board were reminded of the difference of expectations in delivery of projects at local level and then at national government level. The DE and DFHERIS fund and approve the ETB for building projects; the decision-making capacity and funding rests outside KWETB's remit.

The Chair noted the Board's frustrations around buildings projects and issues, and acknowledged these were shared by the Executive. He decided the Piper's Hill traffic issue and Greystones Community College crossing would be items on the next meetings agenda.

The Board expressed their wish to meet with the DE as a Board. On the Chair's proposal the Board agreed that the Chair would meet with the Senior Management Team on Monday 9th October to discuss the issues addressed at today's meeting and in pursuing Board contact with the DE.

The Executive confirmed that Bray Youthreach moved from Sunbeam House to the KWETB owned Florence Road premises as it was an emergency situation with the lease expiring, and this premises is still in need of much further work.

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| Minute ETB 09-09-2023 |
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| No. 9 Finance Report |
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The Finance report outlined the ETB is in line with expectations for this point of the year, with 67% of the budget expended by end of August 2023.

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| Minute ETB 10-9-2023 |
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| No. 10 Correspondence for the Board |
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No Correspondence received for today's Board meeting.

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| Minute ETB 11-09-2023 |
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| No. 11 Members Business/Questions |
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11.1 Update on Sceim Teanga - Siobhain Grogan

An update on the Scéim Téanga progress was requested and provided in written format ahead of the meeting. A discussion on the progress ensued and interest in the uptake of Irish conversational training and the competency and training survey issued to staff was noted. An observation suggested to the Executive was to incorporate simultaneous publishing of Irish with the English documents as they are made available.

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| Minute ETB 12-09-2023 |
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| No. 12 Date of next meeting |
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Date of next meeting;

Tuesday 28th November at 10.30a.m., Naas Community College.

We have received a save the date for the ETBI AGM for this date also, 28th November, from 12.30pm – 2pm with the location to be confirmed. Until further detail is received we will not make any changes to our planned meeting schedule.

Signed: 

Date: 

Cllr. Daragh Fitzpatrick
Chairperson of Kildare and Wicklow ETB