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A meeting of Laois and Offaly Education and Training Board was held on Tuesday 24 January 2023 in the Information Hub, Lyster Square, Portlaoise, Co. Laois and via MS Teams.

**PRESENT**

Cllr Robert McDermott  
Cllr Catherine Fitzgerald  
Cllr Willie Aird  
Mr Jim Cashen  
Cllr John Carroll  
Cllr John King  
Mr Frank Smith,  
Cllr Barry Walsh

Mr Dave Cullen  
Ms Evelyn Dunne  
Cllr Caroline Dwane-Stanley  
Cllr Eddie Fitzpatrick  
Cllr Pdraig Fleming  
Mr Niall Tully  
Cllr Clare Claffey  
Ms Mary Cotter Bracken

**IN ATTENDANCE**

Mr Joe Cunningham, Chief Executive  
Ms Marie Bracken, Director OSD  
Ms Rebecca Preston, Corporate Services  
Ms Josie Lalor, Corporate Services

**1. WELCOME/APOLOGIES**

The Chair welcomed Josie Lalor and wished her well in her new role in Corporate Services.

Cllr. McDermott thanked everyone for their commitment and co-operation during his time as Chairperson. The CE thanked Cllr. McDermott for all his work during his time as Chair and looked forward to continuing to work with him as a Board member.

Apologies were received from Mr Frank Moran, Ms Molly Buckley, Cllr Neil Feighery and Ms Maura Brophy.

Mr McDermott mentioned the next item on the agenda is the election of a new chairperson.

## 2. ELECTION OF CHAIRPERSON

Cllr. McDermott called for nominations to the position of Chairperson.

Ms Evelyn Dunne (staff representative) was nominated on the proposal of Cllr. Catherine Fitzgerald, seconded by Cllr. John King.

The CE informed members that section 1.12 of the Code of Practice for the Governance of ETBs states that 'it is considered good practice to maintain a clear division of responsibility between the running of the Board and the day-to-day management and operation of the ETB'. Members noted same and also that, under the same section, 'the selection of Chairperson is a matter for the Board'. In the absence of any other nomination to the role, Ms Dunne was duly elected Chairperson.

Ms Dunne then took over as Chair of the meeting. She was wished well in her role by members and the CE.

## 3. MINUTES OF LOETB BOARD MEETING

The minutes of the previous meeting, which took place on 29 November 2022 were circulated to members.

Members approved the minutes and they were signed by the Chairperson.

Proposed: John King

Seconded: John Carroll

## 4. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

There were no matters arising from the minutes.

## 5. GOVERNANCE

### Update on Risk Management

Marie Bracken informed members the next Audit and Risk meeting will take place on 7 February 2022 and that the Risk Register will be brought to this meeting.

### Declaration of Interest

As per Schedule 3, Paragraph 10, Section 3 of the (ETB) Act 2013 and the Agenda Notice, no conflicts of interest were declared.

## 6. CORRESPONDENCE

Item No	Correspondence From	Date / Ref No.	Details	Comments
1.	Department of Education and Skills	CL0075.2022	Commencement of the Education (Provision in respect of Children with Special Educational Needs) Act 2022	Noted by Members

			and Commencement of remaining sections of the Education (Admission to Schools) Act 2018	
2.	Department of Education and Skills	CL0077.2022	Once off cost of living measure to support increased school running costs	Noted by Members
3.	Department of Education and Skills	CL0078.2022	Bereavement Leave Scheme for Registered Teachers employed in Recognised Primary and Post Primary Schools	Noted by Members
4.	Department of Education and Skills	CL0079.2022	Bereavement Leave Scheme for Special Needs Assistants employed in Recognised Primary and Post Primary	Noted by Members
5.	Department of Education and Skills	CL0001.2023	Advice on the use of assessment instruments/tests for Guidance or for additional and special educational needs (SEN) in post-primary schools	Noted by Members
			Ethics/Standards in Public Office Return for the period 1 <sup>st</sup> of January 2022 to the 31 <sup>st</sup> of December 2022 – uploaded to SharePoint	Noted by Members

## 7. DRAFT POLICIES

- **Right to Disconnect Policy**

Proposed: Catherine Fitzgerald

Seconded: Robert McDermott

- **Public Sector Climate Action Mandate**

Proposed: Barry Walsh

Seconded: John King

- **Use of Premises Policy**

Proposed: Pdraig Fleming

Seconded: Willie Aird

- **LOETB Privacy Notice**

Proposed: Caroline Dwane Stanley

Seconded: John Carroll

- **Professional Development Policy for employees**

Proposed: Caroline Dwane Stanley

Seconded: Robert McDermott

## 8. REVIEW OF TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR COMMITTEES

The following Terms of Reference were uploaded to SharePoint in advance of the meeting for review by Board members. No changes were made and the Terms of Reference were approved.

**Audit and Risk Committee**

Proposed: Willie Aird

Seconded: Padraig Fleming

**Birr Outdoor Education and Training Centre**

Proposed: John Carroll

Seconded: John King

**Finance Committee**

Proposed: Catherine Fitzgerald

Seconded: Barry Walsh

**Youth Work Committee**

Proposed: Caroline Dwane Stanley

Seconded: Padraig Fleming

**9. Board Review of the Code of Conduct for Members/Staff**

The Codes of Conduct for Board Members and Staff were uploaded to SharePoint in advance of the meeting.

Ms Bracken explained to members that the Code of Conduct is set out in line with the Code of Practice for Governance of ETBs. Members were satisfied with same and no changes were made.

Proposed: John King

Seconded: John Carroll

**10. BOM Nominations**

**Ard Scoil Chiaráin Naofa:**

Two nominations were received for parent's representatives Fiona Dunne and Adrina Moran.

Proposed: John Carroll

Seconded: Caroline Dwane Stanley

**Tullamore College:**

A nomination was received for parent's representative Lisa Gethings.

Proposed: Willie Aird

Seconded: Caroline Dwane Stanley

## 11. Minutes of Committees of the Board

The following minutes of the Committees of the Board were circulated to members prior to the meeting. Members noted same.

Audit and Risk Committee minutes, 16 September 2022

Ard Scoil Chiaráin Naofa minutes, 20 September 2022

Clonaslee College minutes, 6 October 2022

St Fergal's College, 16 June 2022

St Fergal's College, 4 October 2022

## 12. Lease and Licence Agreements

Marie Bracken discussed the requirement for an additional 153 metres squared to the Vision 85 lease at the same rate to provide additional classroom space displaced from Portlaoise College.

Proposed: Barry Walsh

Seconded: Willie Aird

## 13. Board Effectiveness Evaluation

Board members received a MS Form link to complete an evaluation in relation to the effectiveness of the LOETB Board in advance of today's Board meeting.

The results were compiled and uploaded to SharePoint for Board members.

The results were discussed during the meeting, and the CE committed to providing additional training and presentations on the education and training sector to members as required.

## 14. BOARD ATTENDANCE

Ms Bracken reminded Board members that in line with Section 3.8 of the Code of Practice for the Governance of ETBs, Board members are expected to have 100% attendance at meetings.

## 15. CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT

### **Chief Executives Report January 2023**

#### **Schools Directorate**

#### **Schools:**

- **PEDL:** The Programme to Enhance Digital Literacy (PEDL) is a five-week programme designed to increase parent's competence and confidence in using digital technologies. Currently running in ASCN Clara, Portlaoise College and Banagher College. Participants

have been invited to attend a graduation in Trinity College on Wednesday 18 January. PEDL has also received funding from the

- Erasmus+ programme - European partners will attend graduation and attend meetings with LOETB Schools' Support and TCD on Thursday 19 and Friday 20 January.  
[www.pedl.ie](http://www.pedl.ie)
- **SNA Webinar Series:** Monday 23 January in association with Laois Education Centre with Shaun Greville and Dr Alison Doyle will facilitate an introduction to the Pathological Demand Avoidance (PDA). This webinar is available to all LOETB teachers and SNAs.
- **First Aid Training:** Training for SNAs in our schools will take place at Midlands Skills Centre on Wednesday 18 January, Friday 20 January and Wednesday 25 January 2023.
- **Ethos:** National ETB Awareness week takes place from 27 February to 3 March. LOETB Schools will focus on promoting one core value per day in their school. Schools also planning on hosting local launch of ETB Patrons Framework during this week. The national campaign will include national heroes, who are all past pupils of ETB schools. LOETB will feature in the national campaign as well-known singer and former Tullamore College student Tolú Makay has contributed through a recording of her recent return visit to Tullamore College. Tolú gave of her time to meet with a current student at the school to discuss music and creativity.
- **Computer Science Teaching:** LOETB Schools' Support working with Offaly County Council to support teachers in gaining an additional qualification to teach Computer Science.
- **CESI Conference:** LOETB Schools' Support invited to make a presentation at the Computers in Education and Society Ireland (CESI) conference in Galway in March. The presentation will focus on a coordinated approach in supporting schools with digital planning.
- **DEIS Planning:** A forum of one representative from Portlaoise College, ASCN Clara, Tullamore College, and Oaklands Community College was formed with the second meeting on 24 January.
- **Communities of Practice (CoP):** Ethos, Inclusion, and Digital Technologies CoPs held in January. Three more meetings for each to be held before the end of the school year.

### Youth Services:

- **UBU Your Place Your Space:** The DCEDIY allocated €415,778 to LOETB to administer under Grant Scheme for 2023.  
Offaly Traveller Movement; €57,047  
Youth Work Ireland Laois Youth Project; €113,730  
Youth Work Ireland Midlands / Tullamore Youth Project; €116,458  
Foróige / Portlaoise UBU Youth Service €128,544
- **UBU Your Place Your Space, (New Cycle):** UBU New Cycle commences in January 2023. Closing date for submission is May 2023
- **Local Youth Club Grant Scheme 2022:** DCEDIY have made a commitment to Local Youth Club Grant Scheme 2022, allocations to be announced in February 2023.
- **Youth Capital Funding Scheme 2022:** DCEDIY have made a commitment to Youth Capital Funding Scheme 2022, allocations to be announced in March 2023
- **Local Creative Youth Partnership:** Department of Education confirmed that pre-commitments can be made now for 2023 spend on the basis of a level of allocation for 2023 of the same order as 2022 i.e. €100,000 from DE and €30,000 from DTCAGSM for each LCYP.

- **Community of Belonging: Traveller Culture:** Laois Traveller Action Group (LTAG) led initiative, supported by Laois Offaly Local Creative Youth Partnerships (LCYP) through the Laois Education Support Centre (LESC) Community of Belonging are working together to develop awareness, visibility and sharing of Traveller Culture in the region. In exploring and sharing Traveller culture in our region we propose the sharing of stories as a point to begin. Stories can be told with words, images, objects, songs dance, or movement as a basis for local Traveller Culture programme for schools.
- **Jigsaw:** Providing vital supports to young people surrounding their mental health. The three original LCYP Pilot initiatives Laois Offaly, Limerick Clare and Kerry were invited by Jigsaw to work collaboratively and creatively to help each geographical area where the Jigsaw service could become more accessible for a certain group/cohort of young people who don't traditionally use the service. It could involve co-producing a project with different types of young people in the community. There are so many different possibilities. Obviously, it's about what is important and of value for the community and young people.

### **Music Generation:**

**New Choir Project with Ukrainian Community in Laois Music Centre:** Music Generation Laois, through funding from Healthy Ireland Laois in Laois County Council, are establishing a Ukrainian Community Choir. This project will run from January to March and will culminate with a performance in Portlaoise at the end of March.

**Long-term music provision in Montague and Hibernia DP Centres:** Music Generation Laois has provided short term music programmes in both the Montague and Hibernia DP Centres since 2019. In December 2022, Music Generation Laois commenced long-term (i.e. weekly) music programmes in both locations, currently funded by Laois Partnership.

**Weekly Music Club supported by LOETB Creative Youth Partnership:** A weekly music club, supported by LOETB Creative Youth Partnership commenced in Laois Music Centre in September, with young people from CAMHS and Laois Travellers Action Group taking part in weekly, free of charge, music sessions.

**St Patrick's Festival Dublin 2023:** The Music Generation Laois Trad Orchestra, and the Music Generation Harp Collective will perform at this year's St Patrick's Festival in Dublin, on the Ceili Stage, on Friday 17 March.

**Music Generation Offaly:** Ms Geraldine Relph appointed as Development Officer from 1 January.

### **REALT (Regional Education and Language Team) Co-ordinator:**

The REALT Co-Ordinator helps Ukrainian families find a school place (primary and post-primary) for their children. In addition, the REALT Co-ordinator liaises with the Transport Section of DE and Bus Éireann to organise school transport as required. Laois has 789 and Offaly has 619 Ukrainian refugees.

#### Enrolments in primary and post-primary schools

Co Laois: Ukrainian children in primary = 108, post primary = 75

Co Offaly: Ukrainian children in primary = 94, post primary = 35

### **FET Directorate**

**FET Progress Report 2022:** LOETBs FET Service supported 17132 beneficiaries in 2022. This represents a growth of 41% on the 2021 figure (12075).

**Supporting Jobs:** LOETB's agreed target, in the Strategic Performance Agreement with SOLAS, for 2022 is 2,087. Using the economic status of learners in the immediate aftermath (4 weeks) of participation on LOETB programmes, 4,187 people reported as employed.

**Creating Pathways:** LOETB has adopted an integrated FET Centre approach over the last number of years which has significantly enhanced opportunities for learners to identify progression pathways for themselves within their local area. The integration of guidance services across the entire FET Service means that learners are supported to make informed decisions in relation to progression.

**Access:** The integrated approach also offered Community Education learners an opportunity to become comfortable in our FET Centres, leading to many learners progressing to a certified programme within the centre. The number of learners who progressed from Community Education in 2022 to a course at the same or higher level was 787 – an increase of 20% on 2021.

**Progression:** The number of beneficiaries who progressed from a FET course in 2022 was 5369. This represents a growth rate of 35% on our 2021 total. LOETB's FET Centres have very well-established links with local third level institutions. Tullamore FET Centre enjoys a very collaborative relationship with Technological University of the Shannon (formerly Athlone IT) whereby learners on Level 5 and 6 courses are facilitated to attend Open Days, participate in subject-specific workshops, etc. This offers learners opportunities to become more familiar with the campus and to explore course options before making informed decisions, with the support of the Guidance Service, when completing CAO applications. Similar arrangements are in place with SETU (formerly IT Carlow) whereby learners from Portarlinton and Abbeyleix FET Centres, and Portlaoise Institute, are facilitated with specific workshops to encourage them to explore course options. In 2022, 195 learners progressed to third level education from LOETB's FET Centres, according to our PLSS data.

**Fostering Inclusion:** LOETB have placed Inclusion firmly at the forefront of our approach to FET, culminating in LOETB Inclusion Week 2022 which involved staff from across the entire ETB. There were 44 events, involving almost 3,000 staff and learners. Event themes included Interculturalism, Ability, Irish Sign Language, Mindfulness, Mental Wellness, multi-agency networking events. Four Lunch and Learn programmes were hosted by experts from the HSE, NUI Maynooth, AHEAD and the Irish Refugee Council. LOETB has made significant progress in terms of widening participation, increasing certification at lower levels, and increasing provision for Literacy and Numeracy in 2022.

The number of beneficiaries of LOETB's Adult Literacy Service increased from 2000 in 2021 to 2755 in 2022 (almost back to 2019 levels), with the number achieving certification at 650, a 76% increase in certification from 2021. LOETB engaged with 420 Ukrainian refugees, to assess their levels of English to determine the range of programmes required to address their educational needs. LOETB supported fifteen members of the Traveller Community to undertake the Traveller-specific Diploma with NUIG.

Recognising the importance of the Learner Voice, LOETB organised two AONTAS FET Learner Forum events for over 100 FET learners in 2022. Support for People with Disabilities continued through our work with the NLNs and mainstream with 2022 being the first year that LOETB provided 'personal assistance' for students across a number of our full and part time programmes.

**Lifelong Learning:** LOETB reached into every community across Laois and Offaly to promote lifelong learning through our Community Education service which saw our beneficiaries reach 2960, a 58% increase on last year. LOETB provided support to

communities through the Reach fund (formerly MAEDF) again in 2022. 510 individual learners received support to purchase a device to assist them in their studies enabling them to complete their courses successfully. Grants totalling €328,850 were provided to Community Groups who submitted applications to LOETB, all of which involved projects that addressed educational disadvantage.

In 2022, over 7000 beneficiaries participated in Lifelong education and training programmes. These range from full and part time programmes, and single modules to full certificate programmes.

**Upskilling Through Careers:** Over 3,000 employees availed of the opportunity to upskill and reskill through LOETB's Skills To Advance provision in 2022, with a considerable focus on skills for the green economy.

These include careers in the following sectors - Micro Generator / SOLAR PV /Domestic Gas Safety /Domestic Heat Pumps /Retrofit and NZEB/ Remote Working. Also, all SMEs and all enterprises of any size are being encouraged to develop a Lean Approach to their business – an approach that generates positive outcomes for the environment, the enterprise operational costs and Ireland's climate change ambitions.

Targeting Key Skills Needs: LOETB provides employment-focussed training in a strategic amalgam of sectors that takes cognisance of current labour market analysis, the area's status as a Just Transition region, LOETB's Traineeship commitments and the post-Covid learning environment. Thus, LOETB has identified the following sectors as critical to the continued growth of the Midlands region:

- Healthcare, Hospitality, Engineering, Construction, Green Skills, Agriculture and Bio-Diversity.

### Healthcare

In response to the increased need for suitably qualified workers in the Healthcare and childcare industries, LOETB expanded our offering of full and part-time provision of courses in both areas in 2022. In 2022, two Level 6 Childcare were provided in Mountmellick via Employed Traineeship provision, and the new Level 5 Early Learning and Care programme was introduced in both Birr and Edenderry FET Centres.

A new Dementia Care programme at Level 5 was rolled out through a contracted training provider, which addresses skills gaps identified by nursing home employers locally and nationally.

### Hospitality

LOETB have been working proactively with the Hospitality sector under Skills to Advance and traineeships for new entrants. Once the new entrants are in employment we will continue to work and engage with the sector to provide upskilling opportunities, providing them with a clear progression pathway. In 2023, we will continue to provide training in the following areas for the hospitality sector, Lean Management, Supervisory Management, Leadership and Excel, providing low skilled workers in the sector with opportunities for career advancement.

### Construction & Renewable Energy

LOETB is working with TUS to develop a Construction Pathway for new entrants, current construction operatives and construction professionals. This work has included the development in 2022 of Special Purpose Award in Sustainable Construction Skills that comprises three component awards in Retrofit Insulation Skills, External Wall Application and Air Tightness and Vapour Control.

- 1,162 NZEB/Retrofit learners progressed through the National Construction Training Campus in 2022 ensuring that LOETB attained 44% of the annual national retrofit target.

- LOETB provided Heat Pump Installation QQI Level 6 to 220 learners in 2022 meeting 75% of national targets as set out in the Skills For Zero Carbon Report in November 2021.
- LOETB trained 253 learners in Micro Gen and Domestic Solar PV in 2022 (over 100% of the National Target).

### Green Skills & Remote Working

Since piloting a national programme in remote working in 2019, LOETB has worked collaboratively with Grow Remote, the IDA and SOLAS on various iterations focussing on a sector that has the potential to impact significantly on Ireland's climate action ambitions. In 2022 LOETB provided Leading Remote Teams upskilling to 395 participants and Remote Work Ready training to a further 96 learners and is currently planning a community-based iteration of the programme in two rural communities in the region. In 2023, the Remote Work Ready and Leading Remote Team programmes will go through for QQI Validation as Level 5 and 6 modules respectively.

### Agriculture & LEAN

The collaborative approach has also been evident in LOETB's agricultural strategy that has Teagasc, Bord Na Mona, the Agricultural Colleges at Gurteen and Mountbellew and farmers as active stakeholders. In 2022 LOETB provided the Sustainable Agriculture Traineeship to 35 learners as a key ingredient of its ongoing response to Just Transition. Recognising the need to broaden the focus to the wider farming community – as opposed to just part-time farmers employed by Bord Na Mona – LOETB has developed a Strategy in Agriculture that aims to utilise upskilling

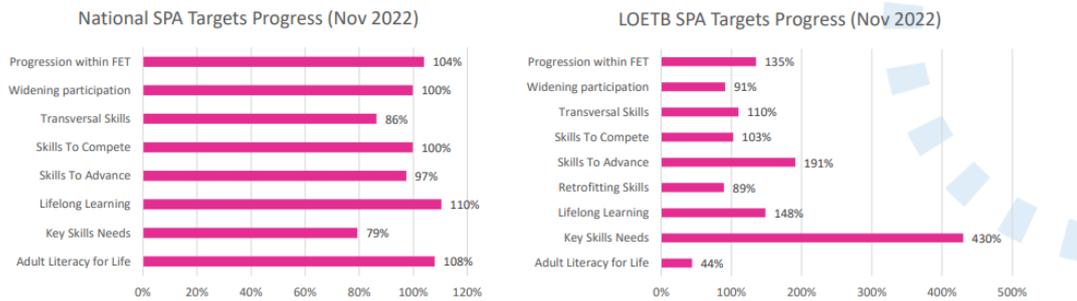
1. To assist farmers in the Laois Offaly area in protecting the environment while maintaining or increasing the value of their output.
2. To enable farmers in the Laois Offaly area to apply knowledge and skills of agricultural management in a sustainable way.
3. To safeguard the viability of family farms in the Laois Offaly area by identifying new incentivised sustainability schemes available to them and giving them the skillsets required to avail themselves of the opportunity offered.

The first programme in this new suite of provision in Agriculture will be Lean Management - A programme that has attracted 117 learners in 2022 and has proven to be a huge success with SMEs in the region. The application of Lean Management Principle and Techniques to the agriculture is expected to produce significant savings to the sector and mirror the positive environmental impact resulting in other sectors

### ***LOETBs Strategic Performance Agreement (SPA) Progress***

The table below provides a breakdown of LOETBs progress on the targets set out as part of our Strategic Performance Agreement with SOLAS. The graphic also outlines the sectoral progress against the national targets.

# SPA Targets Progress (Nov 2022)



\*The Adult Literacy for Life (ALL) target is currently being recorded as a unique learner figure, 2800 (in line with the national ALL strategy). LOETBs target was originally calculated as 6371 beneficiaries, our actual ALL beneficiaries figure for 2022 was 7200.

## 2023 Strategic Projects:

- LOETB as lead on Bio-Diversity (Sustainable Agriculture) Sectoral Pilot
- Establishment of jointly developed Tertiary programmes
- Computer Science & Business – SETU/LOETB
- Digital Construction – TUS (DASBE)/LOETB
- Computer Science & Applied Science – TUS(Athlone)/LOETB
- Expansion of 2106+ Apprenticeship provision and Apprenticeship support
- Expansion of Electrical & Plumbing (Phase 2) provision – Tullamore & Mountrath
- Construction of Phase One of National Demonstration Park for MMC, Mount Lucas
- LOETB as lead on new Construction 'Wet Trades' Traineeships

## OSD Directorate:

### Human Resources:

The following posts have been filled since the last ETB meeting:

- 1 x AEO
- 1 x APII Ard Scoil Chiarain
- 6 x APII Tullamore College
- 1 x APII Coláiste Naomh Cormac
- 1 x Professional Development Co-ordinator
- 1 x Grade VII Training Services
- 1 x Grade VII Corporate
- 1 x Grade V Corporate
- 1 x Music Development Officer, Music Generation
- 1 x Caretaker, Mount Lucas Training Centre
- Substitute teacher panel
- FET tutor panel
- SNA sub panel
- Teaching posts
- 1 x Attendant Dunamase College

### Advertised and interviews to be held:

- 1 x Youth Services Resource Worker

1 x REALT co-ordinator  
 1 x Acting Deputy Principal Ard Scoil Chiarain  
 1 x Community Education Facilitator  
 1 x Grade VI Finance

## Finance

### Budgets

Working with schools and centres to balance out 2022 budgets on a cash basis.

### Finances

Draft summary of finances to end of November 2022.

<b>Summary of Workings to End November 2022</b>						
<b>ITEM</b>	<b>Opening Grant Cash Balance</b>	<b>Adjustment to Opening Balance</b>	<b>Receipts</b>	<b>Payments</b>	<b>Closing Grant Cash Balance</b>	<b>% of Overall Total</b>
<b>Main Scheme Pay Grant</b>	182,617	(3,273)	29,488,179	(29,890,216)	(222,693)	20%
<b>Main Scheme ONP Grant</b>	323,089	35,959	1,762,480	(2,039,446)	82,082	-7%
<b>Associated Main Scheme Grants</b>	1,707,895	7,393	1,819,699	(1,766,099)	1,768,888	-156%
<b>Capital Schedule</b>	2,361,653	(32,786)	2,273,144	(3,725,403)	876,608	-77%
<b>Further Education &amp; Training</b>	513,925	(12,214)	31,803,947	(36,952,526)	(4,646,868)	410%
<b>Youth Affairs</b>	17,942	0	788,412	(648,313)	158,041	-14%
<b>Agency</b>	1,151,603	2,773	1,969,432	(2,075,823)	1,047,986	-92%
<b>Self Financing</b>	(33,173)	2,148	983,975	(1,150,685)	(197,735)	17%
<b>Third Party Funds</b>	0	0	17,048	(17,048)	0	0%
		0			0	
<b>Totals</b>	6,225,551	(0)	70,906,316	(78,265,558)	(1,133,690)	

### Creditor Payments

4,542 invoices, amounting to €9,977,633.52 were paid in the fourth quarter of 2022.

Of these, 51% were paid within 15 days of receipt of invoices, and a further 41% were paid within 30 days.

58 purchase orders for €20,000 or above, totalling €2,989,937.12 inclusive of VAT, were paid in the fourth quarter of 2022.

### NTMA

LOETB have resumed investing surplus funds with NTMA from January 2023. NTMA are offering an investment rate of 1%. There is currently €6.5 million on investment, €3 million for one month period and €3.5 million for one week period, with the option to rollover. Currently, NTMA are offering an investment rate of 1% on all maturities out to 1 year.

## Corporate Services

### ICT

- Onboarding of new SIEM & SOC system on-going and currently at the fine-tuning stage and would hope to have it completed in the next few weeks.
- Majority of MAEDF devices configured and in the process of roll out.
- FET Centre & Services App near completion and on track for roll out at the end of the month.
- New student information and study room for Portarlinton FET progressing well and should be completed in the first week of February provided furniture arrives on time.
- Upgrading of server backup solution for all sites in progress.
- Staff training for lasted phishing campaign to begin in the coming days.
- Regular maintenance, prevention, and replacement requests on an ongoing basis across schools, centres and offices

### Capital Projects and Buildings Works

- Additional Accommodation ASD 2022 & 2023 - Approval received from DEpt. Of Education (DoE).
- Additional Accommodation Classrooms 2023 – Approval received by DoE
- Development of a Masterplan for site has been commenced.

#### St Fergal's College

- Application re Gym Facility sent to DoE. Awaiting approval from DoE
- Summer Works Scheme 2022 approval received from DoE – It is hoped to appoint the Contractor for this works shortly.
- All Weather Pitch – Consultant appointed. Consultant prepared Tender Documents. However, approval received for Additional Accommodation through the Department's Framework and accordingly a master plan for the site is currently being prepared by MCOH

#### Portlaoise College

- Additional Accommodation – waiting on a meeting date from the DoE re Stage 1.
- All Weather Pitch – Tender documents being prepared.
- Application sent to DoE re Additional Accommodation.

#### Dunamase College

- Modular Accommodation – meeting held with Consultants Jan 2023. Hope to have on site as soon as possible, but in an event by Easter.
- New School – Preparation of Stage 2a has commenced

#### Oaklands Community College, Edenderry

- New School - Stage2a completed, some minor changes to layout advised by the DoE. This work has been completed and forwarded to DoE. The matter of the provision of a Playing Pitch is also being considered by DoE.

#### Ard Scoil Chiarain Naofa, Clara

- New School on site at Drayton Villas – MCOH are currently preparing the Stage 1 documentation for submission to the DoE.
- Liaison with Offaly Co Council in relation to the site ongoing.

#### Coláiste Naomh Cormac, Kilcormac

- Additional Accommodation – 1002m Approved – meeting held with Architect and School Principal on Monday, 16 January 2023.
- Science Rooms – Report and Costings completed and sent to DoE. Awaiting DoE approval.

#### Tullamore College

- Render and guttering works and ongoing
- Additional Accommodation – updated Brief received from DoE in relation to accommodation.

#### Gaelscoil na Laochra ,Birr

Meeting held with DoE – LOETB to assist with payments.

#### Further Education Projects

- Banagher FET Centre: Banagher to be completed early 2023 – snags/gas issues to be completed
- Abbeyleix and Mountmellick FET Centres – Refurbishment of Toilets
- Lyster Square: snags to be sorted – Final Account being prepared
- Mount Lucas Project: Expression of Interest on eTenders, closing date 20 January 2023
- Mount Lucas Project 2022: Design Team Appointed

- Kiltruttin Electrical Apprenticeship – Consultant appointed – drawings and conservation report to be completed
- Mountmellick FET Centre: Proposed Car Park – Consultant appointed – site meeting 11th Jan 2023
- Tullamore FET Centre: Upgrade Classroom to Science Room Tender gone to Consultants for Project

## **Procurement**

Procurement Section are currently working on the following projects for Tendering:

- Portable Fire Equipment – OGP framework to be extended Jan 2023
- Fire Alarm Maintenance Framework – Tender details sent to OGP to run Mini-Competition
- Way to Pay – Framework Contract activated new contract in place from Feb 2023
- Science/Home Economics Equipment – Tender Competition to be posted on eTenders
- Catering Schools – Tender Competition to be run March 2023
- School Books New Library Resources Grant – purchasing details sent to schools
- Print & Design – Tender details to be sent to OGP to run Mini-Competition

## **General**

- We continue the roll out of online GDPR training to schools and centres. Administration staff are now receiving additional training on Cybersecurity. Rollout of this online training to continue across the whole organisation on a phased basis.
- Initial insurance premises valuation with IPB to be carried out in the following schools/centres (Ard Scoil Chiaráin, Clonaslee College, Birr OEC and Abbeyleix FET Centre in Q1 2023.
- Protected Disclosures Report for 2022 now published on LOETB Website.
- Preparation of the Annual Report for 2022 has commenced.
- Preparation of the Service Plan for 2023 has commenced.

## **Communications**

- Liaising with SOLAS on development of video promotions
- Supporting Community Education in relation to Podcasting
- Undertaking a Certificate in ETB Strategic Communications with the PRII
- ETB Heroes media campaign featuring former and current ETB learners and staff who have excelled in their chosen field and who represent the best of what ETBs do. Heroes include RTE1 Newsreader Ray Kennedy, Singer Tolu Makay, TG4 Rugby presenter and producer Máire Treasa Ní Dhubhghaill, Teacher Michael Farrell and Olympian Jack McFadden. We will also meet current and past ETB staff and learners who have been inspired by their ETB Heroes.
- National ETB Excellence Awards hosted by Ray Kennedy. Large in-person event taking place on Thursday 2nd March in Croke Park with awards presented by ETB Heroes and special guests.
- ETB Anthem competition: ETB learners are invited to compose a national anthem for Education & Training Boards
- “My ETB” creative multimedia competition
- Staff tea party and other events at local ETB level
- "Your ETB" National Staff video competition
- National, regional and local media campaign including press launch
- Social media campaign

**Joe Cunningham**  
**Chief Executive**

24 January 2023

Members thanked the CE for his detailed report and a discussion took place thereafter.

A member suggested introducing an information session for students in traineeships and apprenticeships in relation to the use of ROS (tax credits, allowances etc.).

A member had a query in relation to the responsibility of a School in terms of ASD units. The CE informed members that any School can now be directed by the Minister to accommodate an ASD unit to meet demand and that all School Admission policies had been updated to reflect the direction of the Minister. The CE informed members that plans are in place to have four units in both Portlaoise College and Dunamase College once works are completed.

A member raised the situation where students travelling to the METAC training facility in Mountrath from Donegal as part of their apprenticeship training and that there is a scarcity of accommodation. The CE noted the matter but explained that off-the-site phases are managed and scheduled by SOLAS in different locations around the country and apprentices may well have to travel depending on their phase of training.

In response to a query from members, the CE provided an update to members on the status of the DEIS programme in our schools.

## **16. VOTES OF SYMPATHY**

A vote of sympathy was passed to:

- To Aoife Daly, teacher in Dunamase College, on the passing of her grandmother
- To Joanne Hassett, teacher in Banagher College, on the passing of her aunt
- To Emily Lloyd, teacher in Banagher College, on the passing of her uncle
- To Siobhan Bowe, Clerical Officer in Banagher College, on the passing of her aunt
- To Honor Kinsella, teacher in Colaiste Naomh Cormac, on the passing of her mother
- To Molly Fox, teacher in Ard Scoil Chiarain, on the passing of her grandmother
- To Rebecca Doorley, teacher in Ard Scoil Chiarain Naofa, on the passing of her father
- To Andrea Egan, teacher in Ard Scoil Chiarain, on the passing of her uncle
- To Bridget O'Rourke, Bus Escort in Ard Scoil Chiarain Naofa, on the passing of her mother
- To Frank Walsh, Head of Corporate Services, on the passing of his mother
- To Lily Kinahan, Principal in Banagher College, on the passing of her mother-in-law
- To Catherine Buckley, secretary in Ard Scoil Chiarain Naofa, on the passing of her uncle
- To Pat Culleton, on the passing of his son Ronan

## 17. VOTES OF CONGRATULATIONS

A vote of congratulations was passed to:

Coláiste Naomh Cormac, Kilcormac on the performances of the Junior Ladies and Senior B boys' team in the Leinster championships

Ard Scoil Chiaráin Naofa, Clara and Tullamore College on their competitive fixture in the North Leinster semin-final.

St Fergal's College, on their senior hurling team reaching the South Leinster final after extra time and a penalty shoot-out.

## 18. AOB

### **Letter of Engagement**

Marie Bracken discussed the letter which was uploaded to SharePoint for noting.

### **Board Member Expenses**

Marie Bracken explained to members that a recommendation was made by the Internal Audit Unit to add a second layer of approval to any travel claims over three months. However, this is not possible on the Core system.

Accordingly, Ms Bracken reminded members to enter their travel claims monthly, and that assistance is available if they are having any issues with submission of claims.

### **Venue for Board meeting**

A member suggested having a Board meeting in Mount Lucas Training Centre to allow Board members to view the facilities available, and this was agreed.

### **Award Presentations**

A member suggested that Board members be invited to award presentations and this was agreed.

## 19. Date and venue of next meeting

The next LOETB Board meeting will take place on Tuesday 28 February in the Enterprise Hub, Midlands Skills Centre, Axis Business Park, Tullamore, Co. Offaly.

Signed: *Evelyn Dunne*  
Evelyn Dunne (Feb 28, 2023 17:55 GMT)

Date: Feb 28, 2023

Chairperson