



A meeting of Laois and Offaly Education and Training Board was held on Monday 26 July 2021 at 4:30pm via Microsoft Teams.

PRESENT

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Cllr Robert McDermott (Chairperson) | Mr Dave Cullen |
| Cllr Willie Aird | Ms Evelyn Dunne |
| Ms Maura Brophy | Cllr Caroline Dwane-Stanley |
| Ms Molly Buckley | Cllr Eddie Fitzpatrick |
| Cllr John Carroll | Cllr Padraig Fleming |
| Cllr Clare Claffey | Mr Shane Flesk |
| Ms Mary Cotter-Bracken | Cllr Frank Moran |
| | Mr Niall Tully |

IN ATTENDANCE

- Mr Joe Cunningham, Chief Executive
- Ms Jean Keating, Corporate Services
- Mr Joe Thompson, Youth Development Officer

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Cllr Catherine Fitzgerald, Mr Frank Smith, Cllr Mary Sweeney, Cllr Neil Feighery, Mr John Mollin.

2. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS LOETB MEETING

The minutes of the previous meeting, which took place on 24 May 2021 were circulated to members. Members approved the minutes and they were signed by the Chairperson.

- Proposed: Evelyn Dunne
- Seconded: Molly Buckley

3. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

There were no matters arising from the minutes.

4. GOVERNANCE

Risk Management

The Chairperson informed members that the Risk Committee met on the 25 June to review and update the Risk Register. Members of the Audit and Risk Committee went through the Corporate Risk Register in detail at a meeting on the 9 July. They were satisfied with same and recommended it to the Board for approval.

Members approved the Corporate Risk Register.

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Proposed: John Carroll
Seconded: Evelyn Dunne

Conflict 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.

5. CHIEF EXECUTIVES REPORT

The CE presented the following report to members.

Schools Directorate

Schools

Significant recruitment undertaken for 2021/2022 academic year including the appointment of an additional Deputy Principal at both Portlaoise College and Tullamore College, effective from 1 September 2021. Department of Education CL23/2021 clarifies the allocation of Assistant Principal Posts for 2021/2022 and the majority of our schools will benefit from the revised allocation. Preparations are underway to fill these positions early in the new academic year.

LOETB schools will participate in an ETBI Virtual Symposium event to facilitate collaboration on current learning from the introduction of one-hour classes in our sector. Principals and Deputy Principals will participate in updated training on lessons from the new Admissions Policies/Section 29 and Refusal to Enrol on 23 August.

We await further clarity and guidance from the Department of Education on the reopening of Schools for the new academic year.

Youth Services

Local Youth Club Grant Scheme 2021

DCEDIY allocated LOETB €73,991 for this Grant Scheme to administer to successful Local Youth Club / Group applicants. The scheme supports voluntary youth club activities for young people, with priority given to young people between the ages of 10 and 21.

Youth Capital Funding Scheme 2021 for Youth Services and Clubs/Groups (formerly the Youth Capital Grant Scheme and the Local Youth Club Equipment Grant Scheme) DCEDIY allocated LOETB €43,969 for this Grant Scheme to administer to successful targeted staff led youth services and youth clubs / groups applicants for 2021.

LGBTI+ Youth Service Grant Scheme 2021

DCEDIY allocated €5,000 to LOETB for this Grant Scheme to administer to successful applicants. The initiative is intended to provide for additional youth worker hours dedicated specifically to supporting young LGBTI+ people. Tullamore Youth Project was awarded the full €5,000 for the second year running.

Resilience and Effectiveness Initiative is a UBU Your Place Your Space

DCEDIY allocated LOETB €17,500 for this initiative to administer to successful UBU Funded Organisations / Projects. The Resilience and Effectiveness Initiative is a UBU Your Place Your Space initiative to support UBU Funded Organisations to deliver a more efficient and comprehensive service to young people, while ensuring that they have sufficient resilience to operate effectively in the medium to long term.

LOETB received Resilience and Effectiveness Initiative Expression of Interest from all 3 UBU Funded Organisations / Projects in Laois and Offaly and submitted to the DCEDIY for the 16 June 2021.

Chairmans
Initials

Music Generation

Current MG Laois Activities/ Projects

Bandwagon Schools Tour: The Bandwagon travelled to 12 MG Laois Primary Schools to celebrate the end of a challenging year – one of the most heartening projects ever undertaken in MGL, with live music performances across a range of genres brought the school year to a very positive finale. Funded by the Laois County Council 'Keep Well' campaign 2021.

Cruinniú na nÓg: Body Percussion workshops with Beat Goes On, in Camross NS, St Colmcille's NS Errill, The Rock NS, Cloneyhurke NS, Scoil Bhríde Rathdowney, Barnashrone NS, Ballyadams NS and on Saturday 12 June, bodhran and beatboxing on Fitzmaurice Place Portlaoise.

Sir James Galway and Lady Jeanne Galway collaboration, Music Generation National Development Office: MGL and LSM flautists attended workshops and took part in a collaborative video, June 2021.

End of academic year performances: Took place in national schools and on the grounds of Laois Music Centre, as well as a series of online performance videos for those who could not perform to an audience.

Collaboration took place with Laois Dance Platform and MGL harpers on 19 June, on Fitzmaurice Place.

Audio recording of The Impossible Dream: Martin Tourish recorded the audio for this suite of music in Laois Music Centre in the last 2 weeks of June, we look forward to the release of this music and the creation of an accompanying music video.

Summer Programmes: Trad Summer School took place from 1-3 July, scaled back in terms of range of instruments, over 60 young musicians took part with a team of 9 tutors.

Fleadh TV Performance: Released on Sunday 11 July, super performance by our harpers under the guidance of Siobhan Buckley, filmed in Charleville Castle.

Upcoming MG Laois Activities/Events

Summer School of Rock + Pop: Two-week music programme underway, with supports from Creative Ireland Laois, this programme has been extended in duration and enhanced by a team of 3 guest musicians from BIMM Institute, Dublin – ends Friday 16 July.

Festival in a Van: Taking place on the grounds of Laois Music Centre, on 16 July, presented by the Dunamais Arts Centre.

Faoin Speir: Collaborative project with MGL, Dunamais Arts Centre and Laois Arts Office, we secured €90,000 to provide a series of outdoor arts events running between Sept-April 2021-2022.

Montague Reception Centre Summer Project: Secured Funding to deliver music sessions in the Montague Reception Centre across Summer 2021.

Musical Memories: Programme continues throughout Summer in Community Care Home Settings and in Mountmellick Mens' Shed.

Cross-border Music Project: MGL leading on this with MG Carlow and Strabane Brass Band, funding secured via Dept of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht and Sport to culminate on 29 September 2021.

FET Directorate

Provision: Sustainability and the Green Economy

LOETB will significantly expand provision in the areas of sustainability and the green economy. We have been working with SOLAS as one of the lead ETBs in this sector and our role will continue to grow over the next 2 years. We are working on the following:

Chairmans
Initials

- A sustainability strategy for the Peatland Communities (driven largely by the changes in Bord na Mona and the Just Transition process).
- Increasing awareness of sustainability issues across FET with a view to embedding them into our provision. We are currently developing a sustainability digital badge for staff and a project-based approach for all FET Centres.
- Our Enterprise Support Team are working with employers in areas such as Lean and Agile management to further increase provision. In 2021, we will support over 100 employers and 1000 employees in the region.
- Our NZEB/Retrofitting provision in Mount Lucas will increase significantly in the next 2 years. In 2021, we will provide courses in these areas to over 400 participants.

Provision: Apprenticeship

LOETBs National Scaffolding Apprenticeship will launch on 13th September 2021 in Mount Lucas. We have agreed to support SOLAS and the ESB by providing Phase 2 electrical apprenticeship training for current ESB apprentices in Portlaoise. We envisage that the backlog (300 apprentices) will be cleared in 24-30 months. We are expanding our Phase 2 electrical provision (Tullamore) and Phase 2 plumbing provision (Mountrath) this year to support the national attempt to reduce the backlog.

LOETB FET Information Hubs

LOETB will open the first FET Information Hub in Lyster Square, Portlaoise in August. It is our intention to open the Tullamore Hub in Castle Buildings before the end of the year. These hubs will be managed by the FET Guidance team and have been designed to be a 'one stop shop' for learner information and supports. These hubs will have a significant, positive impact on our FET service going forward.

LOETB FET Branding and Remote Working hubs

LOETB FET Service has undertaken a significant re-branding exercise. The aim of this is to significantly increase awareness of our services. Over the next 12 months we will standardise our buildings, signage, advertising, communications, and our social media presence. As part of this process, remote working hubs will be made available to staff, learners and the wider community from this September.

FET Centre Refurbishments

Under the Devolved Capital allocation provided to LOETB by SOLAS, we have undertaken a number of refurbishment projects across the FET Service. Refurbishments in Portarlinton, Tullamore, Banagher, Abbeyleix, Edenderry and Mountmellick will ensure that the learning environment in LOETB is of the highest standard, and new and additional provision can be accommodated. These projects include classroom upgrades and repurposing and will be completed in 2021.

OSD Directorate

Human Resources

Recruitment for 2021/2022

The following staff appointments have been made in June and to date in July:

- 1 x Deputy Principal Portlaoise College
- 1 x Deputy Principal Tullamore College
- 2 x APII posts St Fergal's College
- 1 x API post Dunamase College
- 1 x Grade V Admin
- 62 teaching posts
- 1 x FET Manager Clara
- 1 x Electrical Instructor & panel
- 1 x Acting Adult Education Officer/Further Education Manager
- 1 x Acting QA Manager
- 1 x Resource Worker, Music Generation & Laois School of Music
- FET Tutor Panel
- 6 x Grade III posts

Posts advertised at present:

Electrical Instructor posts and cover panel
Resource Worker Banagher
Adult Educators
Ongoing advertisement of teaching posts
FET Tutor panel
SNA posts
Bus Escort posts

We are continuing with the WebEx video conference interviews and have re-introduced face-to-face interviews.

Pensions

Pension Description	No
Members Retired/Pensions issued	7

Payroll figures from May 2021 to July 2021;

14/05/2021	1,064,935.01	886
28/05/2021	1,083,119.59	904
11/06/2021	1,083,610.91	906
25/06/2021	1,090,759.07	905
09/07/2021	1,068,061.79	912
23/07/2021	1,083,962.51	806

Corporate Services

ICT

Birr FET Centre now complete from an IT perspective.
Office data migration to SharePoint continues.
Eir installation of GN broadband connection to new Admin Office expected by the end of July.
Preparation for programme movement and accompanying IT facilities at multiple sites.
Regular maintenance, prevention and replacement requests on an ongoing basis across schools, centres and offices.
Initial in-house cybersecurity and phishing campaign commenced.

Corporate Services

Communications Officer working on facility branding, social media postings and scheduling, branding across the organisation as required, working on video content for apprenticeships, and prospectus and brochures for different sectors of the organisation.

Team working on fit out and kit out of new offices in Portlaoise, ensuring necessary facilities and services are in place prior to migration.

Dealing with FOI and GDPR requests as received. Successful outcome from Office of the Commissioner for Environmental Information regarding queries in relation to risk assessments of Wi-Fi points in one of our schools.

Continued development of SharePoint access point for Procurement by schools and centres.

Working with IT section to progress mitigation strategies regarding potential cyber-attacks.

Reviews of internal processes and procedures by compliance officer.

Capital Projects and Buildings Works

Clonaslee College

Chairmans
Initials

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Approval received from DoE to proceed to construction for project – Grant Total €641,673.06. Allen Kenny Construction successful Tenderer. Site meeting held and works started 5 July 2021.

Portlaoise College – Phase 1 Reconfiguration Classrooms
Tender for works put up on Etenders; 9/08/2021 response date.

Portlaoise College – Canteen Canopy
Letter of Acceptance sent to Suirside Ltd. Initial Site meeting held last week.

Oaklands Community College, Edenderry
Stage 1 meeting held with DoE end of April 2021. Stage 1 signed off and approved by DoE.

Portlaoise Head Office/FET Accommodation
One response received – Letter of Intent/Acceptance sent to Michael Bracken Ltd. Works commenced 8/07/2021

Dunamase College – New School
Design Team appointed end April 2021. Details sent to DoE. 7 Surveys approved for site. Working on Signage for new Site

Dunamase College – Tower Hill
Final snags/guttering works completed – Final Account and Draw down completed.

Cloneygowan NS, Cloneygowan
Design Team appointed – Project closed.

Ard Scoil Chiaráin Naofa, Clara
Works on installation of additional accommodation – Staff Room/ASD Room to start on 19 July 2021.

Tullamore College
Replacement of Gutting Works starting 30 June 2021.

Coláiste Naomh Cormac Kilcormac
Approval received from DoE re Traffic Calming Project in the amount of €137,857.50. Invitation to Tender sent to consultants; two responses received.

Further Education Projects

- Portarlington FET Centre, Tarmac Works starting 12 July 2021.
- Laois School Music, Painting works approved. Site meeting to be arranged to finalise details works.
- Mount Lucas – New Warehouse Completed. Final Account to be agreed.
- Mount Lucas – NZEB Training Rigs currently being installed.
- Unit 3 Castle Buildings – Consultant approved preparing Tender documents
- Mountmellick FET Centre/Banagher FET Centre/Edenderry FET Centre minor projects – Letter Intent sent to Consultant currently in standstill
- Lyster Square Portlaoise, works ongoing.
- Axis Business Park Unit 24e, works ongoing.

Procurement

Recruitment Agency Services
Allpro Recruitment successful Tenderer – contract started 1 June 2021.

Supply of Video Production Services
Letter of Acceptance/Contracts sent to the 5 Framework Members – contract start date 5 July 2021.

Scaffolding Components and Systems
Letter Acceptance/Contracts sent out to 2 Suppliers

Waste Management/Class Materials Woodwork/Class Materials Metalwork/School Books/365 Training/Catering Birr OEC
Existing contracts extended for one year as per contract.

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Chairmans Initials

Finance

Budgets

Ongoing monthly monitoring of all school and centre budgets is being carried out.
Bank Overdraft.

AIB has advised the continuance of the bank overdraft facility for a further period of 12 months to June 2022.

Creditor Payments

2,700 invoices, amounting to €5,663,387.86 were paid in the second quarter of 2021.
Of these, 48% were paid within 15 days of receipt of invoices, and a further 46% were paid within 30 days.

23 purchase orders for €20,000 or above, totalling €1,094,593.55 inclusive of VAT, were paid in the second quarter of 2021.

Finances

Current Summary of finances to end of May 2021.

Summary of Workings to End May 2021

ITEM	Opening Grant Cash Balance	Adjustment to Opening Balance	Receipts	Payments	Closing Grant Cash Balance	% of Overall Total
Home Pay Grant	1,304,431	0	10,398,573	(12,346,808)	(645,804)	-8%
Home ONP Grant	750,038	0	895,221	(1,138,456)	506,803	6%
Main Scheme Grants	1,192,841	0	600,115	(389,239)	1,403,717	16%
Schedule	1,115,258	0	951,573	(1,014,640)	1,052,190	12%
Education & Training	1,431,540	0	16,562,574	(12,845,979)	5,148,135	60%
Gifts	793	0	167,228	(199,095)	(31,076)	0%
Other	855,769	0	659,522	(397,742)	1,117,549	13%
Reserves	197,322	0	265,538	(449,401)	13,459	0%
Other Funds	2,598	0	405	0	3,003	0%
	6,850,590	0	30,498,745	(28,781,359)	8,567,977	

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

A member queried the replacement of gutting works in Tullamore College as it is a newly built school. The CE confirmed that the issue was rubble that was left in the gutters by the main contractor and that the cost for the replacement of same will be taken from the funds agreed with the bondsman.

A member asked the CE to emphasize to the DoE that the proposed new site for Ard Scoil Chiaráin Naofa, Clara on the Kilbeggan road is far more suitable than its current location and that the town and catchment area would benefit greatly from having the school located adjacent to the existing primary schools.

Members noted the recent staffing appointments and commended the HR recruitment team on their hard work. The CE also thanked Board members who served on interview boards during the busy recruitment period.

6. FINANCE

Chairmans
Initials

Bank Overdraft

It was noted that the bank overdraft facility was successfully renewed and the Letter of Offer will issue presently.

7. CORRESPONDENCE

Item No	Correspondence From	Date / Ref No.	Details	Comments
1.	Department of Education and Skills	CL0030-2021	Parent's Leave Scheme For Registered Teachers employed In Recognised Primary and Post Primary Schools	Noted by Members
2.	Department of Education and Skills	CL0031-2021	Coronavirus COVID-19 - Arrangements for Staff other than Teachers and Special Needs Assistants who are employed in ETBs	Noted by Members
3.	Department of Education and Skills	CL0033-2021	Arrangements for Inspectorate Engagement with Post-Primary Schools 2021-2022 School Year	Noted by Members
4.	Department of Education and Skills	CL0034-2021	Updated Entry Criteria for the Gaeltacht Entry route to the English Medium Primary Bachelor of Education	Noted by Members
5.	Department of Education and Skills	CL0035-2021	Parent's Leave Scheme for Special Needs Assistants employed in Recognised Primary and Post Primary Schools	Noted by Members
6.	Department of Education and Skills	CL0036-2021	Application of 1st July 2021 FEMPI Pay Restoration of certain grades other than Teachers and SNAs employed by ETBs	Noted by Members
7.	Department of Education and Skills	CL0037-2021	Revision of 2011 Entrant Teacher Salaries with effect From 1 March 2021 - Application of Additional Incremental Skips	Noted by Members
8.	Department of Education and Skills	CL0038-2021	CL0038_2021 Home Tuition Grant Scheme 2021-2022 – Special Education Component	Noted by Members

8. Draft Policies

The following draft policies were circulated to members prior to the meeting. Members approved the draft policies as follows:

School Policies

Banagher College: Admissions Policy, Child Protection Policy, Code of Behavior Policy

Proposed: Caroline Dwane-Stanley

Seconded: Evelyn Dunne

Dunamase College: Admissions Policy, Anti-Bullying Policy, Child Protection Policy, Critical Incident Management Plan, Code of Behaviour Policy

Proposed: ~~Caroline Dwane-Stanley~~

Seconded: Evelyn Dunne

9. 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.

Birr OEC BOM, 1 May 2021

Audit and Risk Committee Meeting, 26 March 2021

Finance Committee Meeting, 26 March 2021

Banagher College 16 December 2020

Clonaslee College; 1 October 2020, 4 March 2021

Coláiste Naomh Cormac; 29 September 2020, 19 October 2020, 5 November 2020, 22 April 2021

Dunamase College; 9 November 2020, 8 February 2021

Oaklands Community College; 4 March 2021, 23 March 2021, 29 April 2021

Portlaoise College; 26 November 2020, 24 March 2021, 12 May 2021

St. Fergal's College, Rathdowney; 28 September 2020, 17 December 2020, 25 March 2021, 31 May 2021

Tullamore College; 23 September 2020, 11 November 2020; 15 December 2020

10. SERVICE PLAN 2021

The CE informed members that the Department sought a small amendment to the Service Plan 2021, and this amendment has been reviewed by the Department's ETB Financial Administrative and Personnel Unit, in consultation with other sections within the Department, having regard to the Oversight and Performance Delivery Agreements in place for LOETB. The Department confirmed that they are not seeking any further amendment to LOETB's Service Plan on foot of this review. The amended Service Plan must be brought to the attention of the Board so that it can be formally agreed/approved by the Board and thereafter it should be published on the LOETB website. Members approved same.

Proposed: John Carroll

Seconded: Evelyn Dunne

11. NEW FUNDED YOUTH PROJECT

Joe Thompson, Youth Development Officer, made a presentation to members on the new UBU Greenfield funding project. Mr Thompson explained that the mission of the funding scheme is *"to provide out-of-school supports to Young People in their local communities to enable them to overcome adverse circumstances and achieve their full potential by improving their personal and social development outcomes."* An LOETB Coordination Group consisting of the Director of Schools, Head of Finance, FET Managers and Youth Development Officer was established to oversee the UBU Area Profiling Process and to make recommendations regarding the selected location/theme for the UBU Greenfield Site to the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth Affairs (DCEDIY). In

addition to comprehensive data analysis, wide-ranging consultation took place with key stakeholders across Laois and Offaly. The outcome was that geographical location of the UBU Greenfield Project will be the immediate catchment area of Portlaoise (with particular focus on Kilminchy-Colliers, Esker Hills and Fairgreen), due its size of youth population, level diversity, pace of growth, dirt of targeted services and level of challenges. The focus of the new project will be on early intervention with 10–14-year-old followed by 15–19-year-old cohorts. A detailed discussion took place thereafter and members thanked Mr Thompson for his excellent presentation.

12. APPOINTMENT TO THE YOUTH WORK COMMITTEE

The Chairperson informed members that Maura Brophy wished to step down from the Youth Work Committee due to work commitments and that there is now a vacancy on the Committee. The Chairperson asked members for nominations to replace Ms Brophy.

Nominee: Pdraig Fleming

Proposed: Willie Aird

Seconded: Maura Brophy

Laois County Council have informed the CE that Pamela Tynan, Community Section, will replace Elaine Moore, as their representative on the Youth Work Committee. Members approved same.

Proposed: Willie Aird

Seconded: Caroline Dwane-Stanley

13. ESB WAY LEAVE, PORTLAOISE COLLEGE

The Chairperson informed members that LOETB had a request from the ESB to move a pole from the Portlaoise College (inside the boundary) site and replace same with a pit (outside the boundary but on LOETB land) and undergrounding the cabling. The CE conferred with the Chairperson (as per the Standing Orders) and he confirmed he is happy to proceed on this basis. LOETB will now seek DoE approval to allow a way leave for same. There was an urgency in this request as the ESB are connecting to a new housing estate near the School and needed approval to proceed with these works in order to connect the houses.

As per the Standing Orders; should there be a need for decisions to be made between meetings, the CE will confer with the Chairperson. Such decisions agreed with the Chairperson shall be recorded and taken as agreed. All such decisions will be notified to the Board at the next Board meeting. Members noted the decision.

14. LAOIS AND OFFALY COUNTY COUNCIL ARCHIVING OLD RECORDS

The CE informed members that a formal agreement has been signed between LOETB and Laois and Offaly County Councils for the archiving of old minute books and records. Members noted same.

15. VOTES OF SYMPATHY

A vote of sympathy was passed to:

- The family of Mrs Hannah Delaney, wife of the late Cllr Bill Delaney, who served on the Committee of Laois VEC.
- To Anna McCusker, Hair dressing Tutor at Tullamore and Portlaoise FET Centres on the passing of her husband.
- Colleen Elsofany, staff member in Mount Lucas, on the passing of her uncle.
- Kenneth Crann, Principal at Coláiste Naomh Cormac, Kilcormac, on the passing of his sister.
- Brendan Duffy, Cavan and Monaghan ETB, on the recent passing of his son Brendan Óg

16. VOTES OF CONGRATULATIONS

A vote of congratulations was passed to:

- The Offaly U20 footballers on becoming Leinster Champions
- LOETB students on their upcoming Leaving Certificate results

17. AOB

ETBI Annual General Meeting

The Chairperson informed members that the ETBI Annual General Meeting 2021 will take place online on Thursday 30 September 2021 from 11am-12.30pm. The CE will circulate further information on the meeting upon receipt of same.

18. DATE AND VENUE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Board will take place on Monday 26 July 2021 at 4.30pm, via Microsoft Teams.

Signed: Robert Mc Dermott

Date: 27/9/21

Chairperson

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