



loetb

Bord Oideachais agus Oiliúna
Laoise agus Uíbh Fháilí
*Laois and Offaly
Education and Training Board*

A meeting of Laois and Offaly Education and Training Board was held on Tuesday 27th January 2015 at 4pm in the Administrative Offices, Castle Buildings, Tara Street, Tullamore, Co. Offaly, in pursuance of notice.

PRESENT:

- | | |
|------------------------------|---------------------|
| Molly Buckley | Vivienne Keenan |
| Cllr. John Carroll | Denis Magner |
| Cllr. Eamon Dooley | Cllr. Carol Nolan |
| Cllr. Caroline Dwane-Stanley | Cllr. Mary Sweeney |
| Cllr. Catherine Fitzgerald | Cllr. Liam Quinn |
| Cllr. John King | Declan Costello |
| Cllr. Jerry Lodge | Mary Cotter Bracken |
| Cllr. Sinead Dooley | Anne Starling |
| Cllr. Paschal McEvoy | Frank Smith |
| Cllr. Eddie Fitzpatrick | Joe Thompson |

In attendance

- Joe Cunningham, Chief Executive
- Marie Bracken, Assistant Principal Officer
- Sadie Aherne, Assistant Principal Officer
- Jean Keating, Clerical Officer

1. PRESENTATION BY GEARÓID Ó'BRÁDAIGH:

Gearóid Ó'Brádaigh made a presentation to members on the roles and responsibilities of members under the Education and Training Boards Act 2013. Copies of the presentation were circulated to members.

The Chief Executive thanked Gearóid on behalf of all the members for the presentation.

2. APOLOGIES:

Maura Brophy sent her apologies.

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3. MINUTES OF LOETB MEETING – 3RD NOVEMBER 2014:

The minutes of the previous meeting which took place on the 3rd November 2014, were circulated to members, taken as read and signed by the Chairperson.

Proposed by: Molly Buckley
Seconded by: Mary Sweeney

4. MATTERS ARISING FROM MINUTES:

There were no matters arising from the minutes.

5. CHIEF EXECUTIVES REPORT:

Joe Cunningham, Chief Executive presented a report to members as follows;

Education Services

Inspections

A number of inspections have taken place in our schools since the term began and the reports have been very positive, acknowledging the excellent teaching and learning taking place and also making recommendations to further improve efforts.

St Fergal's College Rathdowney Whole School Evaluation

The inspection team noted the effective management of the school which it observed providing very effective leadership for learning. The quality of care provided for students is considered as being of an excellent standard. Many examples of exceptional practice in teaching and learning were noted.

Portlaoise College Junior Certificate School Programme (JCSP) Evaluation

The report was very positive. In particular, the School Self Evaluation (SSE) and School Improvement Plan (SIP) processes developed by the school were considered to be of an excellent standard.

As a result the DES inspection team have requested the Portlaoise College SSE template so that it can be made available to other schools on the DES website. All LOETB schools have also had the template issued to them.

DEIS Focused Evaluation in Oaklands Community College, Edenderry

The inspection took place in November. We are awaiting the report.

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Further Education and Training Services

Training Services

Laois and Offaly ETB submitted a detailed analysis of the resources required to manage the training services in Laois and Offaly to the DES in early January. The target timeframe for the completion of the transfer process is 1 July 2014.

Further Education and Training 2015 Service Plan

A new funding model for FET is currently being developed by SOLAS and the 16 ETBs. This model is based on the submission of Qualitative, Quantitative, and Financial data to SOLAS by ETBs and is intended to provide for greater flexibility of provision. The collection of Quantitative data will involve a new web-based application being developed by SOLAS which will allow ETBs to project outputs and outcomes, and to continually review service provision.

Following a submission to SOLAS, Laois and Offaly ETB was chosen as one of three ETBs (along with Cork ETB and Donegal ETB) to pilot the process.

QQI Feasibility Study

Draft Quality Assurance guidelines were recently published by QQI. An External Panel from QQI panel will visit Laois and Offaly ETB on 5 February to meet with Senior Management as part of a feasibility study into the appropriateness of the guidelines for FET provision.

Youth Services

Youthreach Staff Professional Development

Dr Niall Crowley, Jigsaw Offaly, facilitated a session - *Understanding challenging behaviours and practicing self-care* - with all Youthreach staff on Monday 5th January and will be working with each of the Youthreach centres individually to respond further to specific local issues identified during the generic session.

Youth Capital Funding 2014

Two Youth Projects in the Laois and Offaly ETB area successfully applied for funding under the Youth Capital Fund 2014. Both *Youthwork Ireland Laois* and *Tullamore Youth Project* received the full amount for which they applied; €14,987.01 and €1,681.57 respectively.

National Quality Standards for Volunteer-led Youth Groups

The Department of Children and Youth Affairs (DCYA) is rolling out a set of national standards for local volunteer-led youth groups and clubs. Our Youth Services Manager is

currently meeting staff from National Organisations working in Laois and Offaly and agreeing an Implementation Process for the Standards.

Youth Capital Funding 2015

DCYA-funded youth projects are entitled to apply for a further scheme in 2015. The *Type Two capital Projects Fund* focuses on health and safety improvements to premises (e.g. improved access for young people with disabilities; fire doors) and/or upgrade or refurbishment of premises (e.g. window replacements; heating upgrades). The closing date for this scheme is 27th February 2015.

Administrative Services

HR

A detailed business case was submitted to DES for additional administrative posts and revisions were subsequently requested to the proposal. I have requested a meeting to discuss the matter further and await a response to same.

We have currently advertised for a panel of Tutors for Further Education and Training. Shortlisting will take place next week.

Capital

Work on the new school building at Tullamore College is progressing well and over the next month the Contractor expects to make up any time lost due to recent adverse weather.

Procurement

Tenders have been completed for:

- Service/Maintenance of Fire Extinguishers/Hose Reels – Lir Fire Protection
- Service and Maintenance of Fire Alarm Systems – Horizon Safety Systems
- Agency Staff (Clerical/Bus Driver) – Shortt Recruitment
- Agency Staff (Caretaking) – Matrix Recruitment

Finance

DES has plans are in place to develop payroll and finance shared services. Implementation on the payroll shared service has commenced this month and is expected to be phased in over a 2½ to 3 year period. The finance shared service is at the initial data gathering stage.

Corporate Services

Legislation in relation to Data Protection, Freedom Of Information, and Protected Disclosures will come into effect for ETBs presently; a number of staff have attend training recently to prepare for the introduction of same.

Information Technology

A connection to Government Networks (GN) will be provided to the organisation in the second quarter of the year; this will facilitate access to systems currently used for Training Services

Members thanked Joe for his report and congratulated St Fergals College and Portlaoise College on their excellent evaluations.

Members also noted that Noreen Savage has retired from her post as Head of HR and asked that a letter is sent to her on behalf of the Board thanking her for her contribution to LOETB over the years.

Members requested the Chief Executive to write to the Department of Education and Skills on their behalf, regarding the need for additional administration staff in LOETB.

6. FINANCE REPORT – MONTHLY RETURN / V15 CO OFFALY VEC JANUARY – JUNE 2013:

A summary of workings of Laois and Offaly ETB up to the end of December 2014 was presented to members. Members approved same.

Proposed by: Anne Starling

Seconded by: Liam Quinn

A Statement of Internal Financial Control Page 3b on behalf of Offaly VEC up to the 30th June 2013, was circulated to members. Members approved the following statement.

Statement of Internal Financial Control Page 3b

As provided for under the Education and Training Boards Act 2013, Co. Offaly VEC was dissolved on 30th June, 2013 and all assets and liabilities and staff transferred to Laois and Offaly Education and Training Board. Up to the date of dissolution, the Committee of Co. Offaly VEC was responsible for reviewing and ensuring the effectiveness of the VEC's system of internal financial control.

I as Chairperson of Laois and Offaly Education and Training Board make the following statements based on the work of the former Chief Executive and Committee of Co. Offaly VEC.

Responsibility for the System of Internal Financial Control

As Chairperson of Laois and Offaly ETB, I acknowledge the responsibility of the Committee for ensuring that an effective system of internal financial control is maintained and

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operated. The system can only provide reasonable and not absolute assurance that assets were safeguarded, transactions authorised and properly recorded, and that material errors or irregularities were either presented or detected in a timely period.

Key Control Procedures

The Committee has taken steps to ensure an appropriate control environment by:

- Clearly defining management and staff responsibilities.
- Establishing procedures for reporting significant control failures and ensuring appropriate corrective action.

The system of internal financial control operated in Co. Offaly VEC is based on:

- Detailed administrative procedures
- Segregation of duties
- Specific authorisations
- Monthly management review of reports outlining the actual and budgeted results of programmes operated by the V.E.C.

The Committee's monitoring and review of the effectiveness of the system of internal control is informed by the:

- Work of the audit committee which oversees internal audit.
- Chief Executive Officer who has responsibility for the financial control framework.
- Recommendations made by the Comptroller and Auditor General in management letters or other reports.
- Recommendations made by the VSSU Internal Audit Service in their Internal Audit or other Reports.

An Internal Audit is provided by the VEC Support Services Unit.

Annual Review of Controls

The Committee of Co Offaly VEC conducted a review of the effectiveness of internal financial control in respect of the year ended 31st December 2012 but due to re-organisation did not carry out a further review in this accounting period.

Signed _____ Date: _____

Denis Magner, Chairperson, Laois and Offaly ETB

Proposed by: Eamon Dooley

Seconded by: John King

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A Statement to the Minister for Education and Science as required by the Code of Governance of VECs para 8.2 for Offaly VEC for the year ended 30th June 2013, was circulated to members. Members approved the statement.

STATEMENT TO THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION AND SCIENCE REQUIRED BY THE CODE OF GOVERNANCE OF VEC'S para 8.2.

I confirm the following, to the best of my knowledge and belief, on behalf of the Committee of Co. Offaly Vocational Education Committee for the year ended 30th June, 2013:

1. I acknowledge the statutory responsibility of the Committee in respect of the Financial Statement. All transactions undertaken by the Committee have been properly reflected and recorded in the accounting records. All receipts and expenditure associated with all activities of Co. Offaly Vocational Education Committee for the period have been included in the Annual Accounts.
2. I affirm that all appropriate procedures for financial reporting, internal audit, procurement and assets' disposal were carried out.
3. No circumstances have arisen or events occurred between the date of the Annual Account Statement and the date of this statement in respect of matters which would require adjustment to, or disclosure in, the financial statement or, which should be disclosed through some other medium other than those brought to notice.
4. Co. Offaly Vocational Education Committee has complied with all aspects of contractual agreements that could have material effect on the financial statement.
5. No transactions were entered into shortly before the accounting date with the intention that they should reverse shortly after that date, so as not to present a true and fair view of the state of affairs of Co. Offaly Vocational Education Committee.
6. I confirm that Codes of Conduct for members and staff have been put in place and are being complied with.
7. I confirm that Government policy on pay, as advised by the Department of Education and Science, is being complied with.
8. I confirm that the Guidelines for Appraisal and Management of Capital proposals are being addressed where appropriate.
9. I confirm that the Code of Practice for the Governance of VEC's has been adopted and is being complied with.

Signed: _____ Date: _____
Denis Magner, Chairperson, Laois and Offaly ETB

Proposed by: Mary Sweeney
Seconded by: Molly Buckley

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7. CORRESPONDENCE – CIRCULAR LETTERS:

The following circular letters were emailed to members, prior to the meeting, for noting only.

CL0071/2014 Revised Procedures for Suspension and Dismissal of Teachers and Principals

CL0073/2014 Work Stoppage by ASTI and TUI Members – 2nd December 2014

CL0074/2014 Payment of Tool allowance to Craft Workers under the Parallel Benchmarking Agreement for State Industrial Craft Workers

CL0001/2015 Combined Post-Graduate Diploma Programme of Continuing Professional Development for Teachers involved in Learning Support and Special Education 2015/2016

CL0002/2015 Graduate Certificate in the Education of Students with ASDs for teachers working with Students with ASDs in Special Schools, Special Classes or as Resource Teachers in mainstream Primary and Post Primary Schools 2015/2016

CL0003/2015 Post Graduate Certificate/Diploma Programme of Continuing Professional Development for Teachers working with students with Special Education Needs ASDs.

CL0004/2015 Work Stoppage by ASTI and TUI Members – 22nd January 2015

8. BOARDS OF MANAGEMENT MINUTES:

The following Boards of Management minutes were circulated to members prior to the meeting for their consideration. Members decided to defer the approval of the minutes until the next meeting of LOETB.

Banagher College: 22.10.2014

Clonaslee College: 17.10.2013 / 5.12.2013/ 8.4.2014 / 27.02.2014

Oaklands Community College: 11.12.2014

Portlaoise College: 2.10.2014

St. Fergals College: 23.9.2014 / 25.11.2014 / 9.12.2014

9. COMMITTEES – EXTENSION OF TERM OF OFFICE OF BOARDS OF MANAGEMENT OF SCHOOLS AND CENTRES OF EDUCATION OPERATED BY ETBS:

Members received a copy of a letter (dated 23rd January 2015) from the Department of Education and Skills regarding the extension of the term of office of Boards of Management of schools and centres of education operated by Education and Training Boards. Members discussed the letter in detail. The Chief Executive confirmed that these guidelines do not apply to community schools.

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10. NOMINATIONS TO BOARDS OF MANAGEMENT OF LOETB SCHOOLS AND THE 5 TRUSTEE SCHOOLS:

The Chief Executive informed members that he was requesting three nominees of the Board for each of the 8 ETB and 5 Community Schools. On the advice of Gearóid Ó'Brádaigh (BL), the Board agreed that at least 2 of these nominees should be Board members in order to be compliant with the Education and Training Boards Act 2013. Following a discussion on how to proceed with nominations it was agreed to defer the item to the next meeting and, in the meantime, members would inform the ETB of the BOMs they would like to serve on, in order of preference. The Chief Executive also informed members that they would also be in a position to nominate non-members as nominees to fill any remaining vacancies and, in the event that vacancies still remained following the forthcoming Board meeting, he would seek expressions of interest from the secretaries of the relevant Boards of Management to be brought before the Board for consideration.

*Proposed by: Eamon Dooley
Seconded by: Mary Sweeney*

11. TERM OF NOMINATION TO THE RESERVE MEMBER FORUM:

Mary Sweeney was nominated as LOETBs nominee to the Reserve Members Forum. A term of nomination must now be agreed. Members agreed on a 3 year term.

*Proposed by: Liam Quinn
Seconded by: John King*

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12. APPOINTMENT OF NOMINEE TO OFFALY COUNTY CHILDCARE COMMITTEE:

Members agreed to defer this nomination to the next meeting of LOETB.

13. APPOINTMENT OF NOMINEE TO THE GOVERNING BODY OF ATHLONE INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY:

The Chief Executive informed members that Athlone Institute of Technology has requested LOETB to forward the nomination of the Board before Friday 30th January 2015. In making the nomination AIT requested that the name of one woman and one man be submitted, with an indication as to which person is the first preference of the Board and the second preference of the Board.

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Nominations were made as follows;

Nominee: Denis Magner
Proposed by: Molly Buckley
Seconded by: Anne Starling

Nominee: Sinead Dooley
Proposed by: Eamon Dooley
Seconded by: Eddie Fitzpatrick

Both members were nominated as first preference as follows;

Nominee 1st preference: Denis Magner
Proposed by: Caroline Dwane Stanley
Seconded by: Molly Buckley

Nominee 1st preference: Sinead Dooley
Proposed by: Eamon Dooley
Seconded by: Eddie Fitzpatrick

The nominations went to a vote count resulting in **Denis Magner** being selected as Laois and Offaly ETBs first preference.

14. APPOINTMENT OF NOMINEE TO THE GOVERNING BODY OF THE INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY, CARLOW:

The Chief Executive informed members that the Institute of Technology, Carlow has requested LOETB to forward their nomination of the Board before Friday 30th January 2015.

Nominations were made as follows;

Nominee: Paschal McEvoy
Proposed by: Jerry Lodge
Seconded by: Catherine Fitzgerald

Nominee: Mary Sweeney
Proposed by: Molly Buckley
Seconded by: John King

Paschal McEvoy withdrew his nomination and **Mary Sweeney** was nominated to the Governing Body of the Institute of Technology, Carlow.

15. VOTES OF SYMPATHY:

A vote of sympathy was passed to the following:

- Crescentia Phelan, Portlaoise Office, on the death of her Aunt
- Anne Malone, Youthreach Coordinator, on the death of her Mother
- Poilin Hooban, Portarlinton AE, on the death of her Uncle and Mother in law
- Tayrn Rooney, Youthreach Clara and Edenderry, on the death of her Uncle
- Maeve Mangan, Clonaslee College, on the death of her Mother in law
- PJ McEvoy, Portlaoise College, on the death of his Brother in law
- Siubhan Lennon, Colaiste Naomh Cormac, on the death of her Grandmother
- Ide Mullane, Colaiste Naomh Cormac, on the death of her Aunt

- Eileen Mullaney, Principal, Coláiste Naomh Cormac, on the death of her Mother in law

16. VOTES OF CONGRATULATIONS:

A vote of congratulations was passed to the following:

- To all the schools in Laois and Offaly who entered the BT Young Scientist exhibition
- The 5 students in Oaklands Community College in Edenderry who are representing the school at NASA in Florida

17. AOB:

A member proposed that a policy be adopted in relation to Selection Boards for interviews. Another member requested that information be brought before the Board for their consideration. However, the Chief Executive informed the Board that staffing was an Executive function under legislation. He went on to inform members that Selection Boards are filled in accordance with Department of Education and Skills circulars. He then informed members that training for on interview skills would be organised presently.

18. DATE AND VENUE OF NEXT ETB MEETING:

Members agreed that 3 dates be made available for meetings or training as required.

The dates proposed are as follows;

Monday 23rd February 2015

Monday 23rd March 2015

Monday 27th April 2015

Proposed by: Liam Quinn

Seconded by: John King

The next meeting of Laois and Offaly ETB will take place on Monday 23rd February 2015 at 4.30pm in Portlaoise Further Education Centre, Tower Hill, Portlaoise, Co. Laois.

Signed: *Kea Magan*

Chairperson

Date: *23 - 2 - 15*

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