

**MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS OF A BOARD MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY
21 APRIL 2005 AT 2.30 PM IN THE BOARD ROOM**

1. PRESENT Mrs M Alexander (Chairman)

Mr P H Aiken	Mr C Mackin
Councillor J F Bell	Mrs C M McCaul
Mrs S R Brownlee	Rev C D McClure
Mr M P Campbell	Very Rev L M McVeigh
Alderman F E Crowe	Very Rev S Rice
Mrs M E Donnell	Mr A G Sleator
Councillor J Hanna	Rev Canon F D Swann
Alderman G A Hatch	Rev Canon W R Twaddell

2. IN ATTENDANCE

Mrs H M McClenaghan, Mr W Burke, Mr J Curran, Mr T M Heron, Mr A P Murphy, and Mr G P Butler.

3. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Rev J Byrne, Councillor W J Martin, Mr W Mayne, Mr P C McAleavey, Mrs D A McBride and Mr J W Saunders.

4. APPOINTMENT OF OFFICERS

On the proposal of Canon Swann seconded by Alderman Crowe, the report** (B/04/05/2) prepared by the Human Resources Manager was adopted.

The Chairman congratulated Mr A P Murphy on his appointment as Head of Support and Property Services and welcomed him to the Southern Education and Library Board and his first meeting of the Board.

5. MINUTES OF BOARD MEETING HELD ON 24 MARCH 2005

On the proposal of Mr Sleator, seconded by Mrs Brownlee the minutes* (B/3/05/3) of the meeting held on 24 March 2005, subject to the amendments listed below, were approved as an accurate record and signed by the Chairman and the Chief Executive.

Minute 11

Page 7 Table showing names of members voting:

Include the name of Mrs Donnell among those who voted against the proposal bringing this total to 22.

Page 8: first line:

Insert the additional line: "Mr Mackin also expressed disappointment that some members had used the opportunity provided by the discussion to make inappropriate and offensive comments about other members of the Board".

Page 8: Record of vote in relation to the motion of no confidence in Mr Gardiner:

Amend to include 1 member voted against the proposal.

Minute 15 Page 10: - Education Committee:

Insert the following paragraph after the current fifth paragraph on page 10:

“Mr Campbell said that as a result of his visit to a number of schools in England and Wales as part of the Enquiry Team he had found that Principals in those two countries had found their equivalent scheme SDPM to be a very positive experience. The Northern Ireland Enquiry Team in recommending a Performance Review Scheme suggested that a rapidly introduced scheme would not work as evidenced by research conducted by Industry in Education. It takes time and requires ongoing review and change. Mr Campbell added that PRSD should be designed to enable the truly professional teachers to reflect on, and to systematically improve his or her practice.”

Minute 12 Page 9 Youth Service – Budget 2005/06:

Amend the last sentence in the first paragraph by inserting a full stop after “.. across the 5 boards”, deleting the remainder of the line and adding the following additional sentence line:

“It was noted that while Board Officers had been involved in the consultation Board members had not had the chance to comment on the proposed changes”.

Minute 19 Page 11 Best Value Committee minutes of meeting held on 27 February 2005:

Amend the first line of the second paragraph to:

“Mr Aiken noted that the Library Service had been included in the present programme for Best Value Review and asked that this Review be carried out early in the new programme”.

(Councillor Bell (2.43 pm) and Rev McClure(2.46 pm) entered the meeting during discussion of this item).

6. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

6.1. DE LETTER TO THE CHAIRMAN : REAPPOINTMENT OF SERVING MEMBERS OF THE BOARD (m6.3)

The Chairman read an extract from a letter from the Department of Education regarding the Reconstitution of the Boards which outlined the position regarding the members in the special interest category. As a result of this letter and further discussion that both the Chairman and the Chief Executive had had with Department of Education Officials she informed members that those members who had already served two terms would have to make application through the open application process. They would then be assessed on their merits and if approved would only be able to serve up to a point at which they

had achieved a maximum of 10 years' service. The Chairman also informed members that the deadline for applications had been extended from 18 April until 22 April. The members affected by this change had been informed.

6.2. DE RESOURCE ALLOCATION PLAN 2005/06 DETERMINATION OF SCHEME (minute 11)

Mrs McClenaghan informed members about the status of Board members who had orally resigned from the Board at the meeting on 24 March 2005. As any member wishing to resign is required to write to the Chief Executive of the District/Borough Council and the Permanent Secretary of the Department of Education informing them of their resignation and as to date no letters had been received by either party the members were still members of the Board. Mrs McClenaghan informed members that the six members concerned would continue to receive papers and invitation to all meetings as before.

In response to a question from Mr Mackin, Mrs McClenaghan informed members that the six members would also continue to serve on Boards of Governors.

Mrs McClenaghan then addressed the position of members elected to the Board to represent the interests of Councils. She informed members that the members concerned would cease to be members of the Board on 9 May 2005 as this was the date of the count for the Local Government elections.

Canon Twaddell expressed his concern regarding the absence of Councillors from the Teaching Appointments Committee at such a crucial time with many appointments being made for September. He asked that his anxiety about the situation be recorded. Mrs McClenaghan in response stated that the Teaching Appointments Committee would have to continue without Councillors as long as it had a quorum. Councillor Bell asked if it was legal for the Teaching Appointments Committee to meet without the Councillors. Mrs McClenaghan undertook to seek legal opinion on this.

Having sought legal opinion Mrs McClenaghan reported back to members that the position was as she had stated and that the Councillors would cease to be members on 9 May 2005. She confirmed that the legal opinion on the Teaching Appointments Committee was that it could operate without the Councillors.

6.3. ANIELB ANNUAL CONFERENCE (minute 23)

Mrs McClenaghan reported that the Chief Executives of the five Boards had discussed this matter recently and had agreed that in the present financial climate they would advise that the event should be a single day rather than a residential. She noted however that the final decision in regards to this matter was with the Planning Committee of the ANIELB.

Mr Aiken said that as a new member he had found the residential aspect of the Conference extremely useful. It had enabled him to get to know not only the members of his own Board but also those members who were in other Boards. He highlighted examples where other Boards had held special residential events as part of the induction of new Board members.

Mrs McClenaghan in response stated that it would not have been normal practice for the Southern Board. Mr Aiken said this was why he felt the residential for all five Boards was important.

Alderman Hatch asked if the decision of the ANIELB Planning Group would come back to the Board for discussion or decision. The Chairman responded that the decision was a matter for the ANIELB Planning Group and that it did not come back to the Board.

Mr Sleator referring to minute 13 of the previous Board meeting asked if Mr Heron or Mr Murphy could make a presentation on the implications of the sale of the land.

Mrs McClenaghan said that as the sale of land would not be officially completed until 30 April 2005 it is was not possible for the actual sale figure to be disclosed. She advised members that it was however slightly above the figure of £1.5 million as set by the District Valuer. A figure of almost £900,000 had been set aside to compensate UBIFHE for the period up to 2003. Mrs McClenaghan confirmed that UBIFHE was seeking additional funding in relation to compensation for interest payments that they had incurred as a result of the scheme. Mrs McClenaghan stated that she had written to the Department of Education seeking a response to two questions:

1. Is it possible for one public body to make an interest payment to another public body? And if so:
2. What is the process for agreeing the amount?

She informed members that no response had been received as yet from the Department.

She further informed members that if current arrangements continued the SELB could retain £200,000 plus 50% of the remainder for capital works. The Department of Education had confirmed that the first call on the proceeds from the sale of the land would be for the payback to UBIFHE and the remainder would then be split as per the arrangements outlined above.

Alderman Crowe informed members that the reason that UBIFHE had incurred interest payments was that they had to borrow money to build the new section to replace the part of the building they had vacated to facilitate the Senior High School.

7. CHAIRMAN'S BUSINESS

The Chairman reported back to members on her meeting with the Minister for Education, Mr Gardiner on 4 April 2005. She informed members that a minimum of £500,000 would be made available to the Board for cross-Board working which results in redundancies and joint agreements regarding the delivery of services. This amount might be increased but no written confirmation of the arrangements had been received yet.

Mr Sleator sought assurances that staff would not be disadvantaged by the scheme in relation to potential other developments being undertaken through the Staff Commission for the Review of Public Administration.

Mrs McClenaghan in response identified three separate processes currently being undertaken:

1. The Board has determined that there would be a number of redundancies in the current financial year in order to make savings. A total of £1 million had been set aside for this and letters seeking expressions of interest had been issued recently to all staff.
2. The £500,000 from the Department of Education for collaborative work between Boards. She informed members that the Chief Executives of the five Boards were currently having discussions on how this might be taken forward.
3. The Review of Public Administration. She informed members that at present we do not know the arrangements and that it was unlikely that these would be known until October or November at the earliest. Mr Curran confirmed that the settlements arising from these discussions would not be more advantageous than those relating to the other two processes.

Mr Sleator expressed his concern that the collaboration redundancy process appeared to represent a back door method of securing the desired outcome from the Review of Public Administration.

Mr Aiken queried whether there was a need for the Policy Committee to meet on a more frequent basis to deal with the outworkings of the processes outlined by Mrs McClenaghan.

Mrs McClenaghan in response said that this matter would be dealt with in more detail later on in the agenda and that Committees would be kept informed and involved where decisions were required.

8. REVIEW OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION : CONSULTATION

Mrs McClenaghan drew the attention of members to the copies of the Review of Public Administration document that had been tabled. She outlined the difficulties caused by the timing of the reconstitution of the Boards for the preparation of a response to the document. She put forward the suggestion that the Policy Committee of the present Board should meet on not more than two occasions to consider the document and should report its discussions to the June Board meeting. The reconstituted Board could then develop the views at the September meeting of the Board.

The Chairman then asked members if they were happy that it moved forward in this way. Alderman Hatch said it would be difficult if Councillors were not able to participate in the group during their position after 9 May as discussed previously. Mrs McClenaghan said that officers had been aware of this and were therefore suggesting that the meetings should take place before that date.

Following some discussions on dates and times it was agreed the Policy Committee would meet on 28 April 2005 at 12 noon and if necessary the second meeting would take place on 4 May at 2.30 pm.

Mrs McClenaghan then spoke about the induction arrangements and asked that the Policy Committee would also discuss this matter at their meetings. She emphasised that this should not stop any other members putting forward suggestions to her on this matter.

Members agreed with the proposed arrangements.

Councillor Bell informed members that he had received an invitation to a Conference on Friday, 22 April in Antrim. He sought clarification from the members and officers present whether they had any knowledge about the Conference and the specific item on a Unitary Authority. Mr Curran confirmed that he had received an invitation to the Conference and had intended to attend but was now not able to do so. He informed members that some of his colleagues would be attending.

9. NEW PROCUREMENT AND DELIVERY ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE SCHOOLS' ESTATE : PROPOSED DISCUSSION AT SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING ON 28 APRIL 2005

Mrs McClenaghan informed members about the document and pointed out its significance to the way forward. She provided members with the web address of the document www.deni.gov.uk/about/consultation/Procurement_del/Final_Report.pdf. She informed members that the document would be considered at the Services Committee meeting on 28 April 2005.

(Councillor J Hanna entered the meeting at 3.18 during discussion of this item)

10. FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

10.1. REPORT BY HELM CONSULTANT : PROPOSED DISCUSSION AT SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING ON 28 APRIL 2005 *(if report has issued by that date)*

Mrs McClenaghan reported that HELM had been asked by the Department of Education to carry out an analysis of the financial arrangements of the five Boards. This report had now been given to the Department of Education and although the Chief Finance Officers had been provided with an overview of the findings the document had not yet been released by the Department of Education.

10.2. REPORT BY DR JACK : PROPOSED REFERRAL TO AUDIT COMMITTEE MEETING ON 16 JUNE 2005

The Chairman spoke about her meeting with the Minister for Education on the morning of the launch of the Jack Report. The Chairman reported that at that meeting she had told the Minister that the Southern Education and Library Board would be examining the report with a view to checking current practices within the Board and implementing any findings where they were appropriate.

Mrs McClenaghan informed members that copies of the full report could be obtained via the DENI website.

11. EDUCATION COMMITTEE: MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 5 APRIL 2005

In the absence of the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Education Committee Fr McVeigh presented the minutes. He drew the attention of members to four items. In relation to 5.2 he asked members to note the costs associated with the production by OFMDFM of the 'Making it R World 2' document.

Referring to minute 6.1 The Exception of Teachers from the Fair Employment and Treatment (NI) Order 1998 - Investigation by the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland he drew the attention of members to the recommendations arising from the Report.

In relation to minute 9 Development Proposal 197: Proposed Closure of the Preparatory Department of Portadown College he asked Mr Butler to provide members with an overview. Mr Butler informed members that the Proposal had been requested by the College in response to decreasing enrolments as highlighted in the background papers for the Development Proposal. Mr Butler informed members that he had spoken to the Board of Governors, Staff and to Parents who currently have children attending the Preparatory Department. All schools in the area had also been circulated with copies of the Proposal for comments.

Fr McVeigh informed members that the Education Committee had recommended that proposal iv. contained on page 60 of the minutes should be accepted. Mr Burke reported that due to the start of the new financial year officers had had to inform the schools of their allocation in line with the recommendation. Mrs McCaul said that schools had reported to her their concern at the small allocation that they had received. They had expressed particular concerns about this in the light of the requirements of PRSD.

Mr Burke, in response, pointed out that the Department of Education had allocated an additional five exceptional closure days including one day exceptional closure specifically related to PRSD.

On the proposal of Fr McVeigh, seconded by Mrs Donnell, the minutes* (E/4/05/9) of the meeting held on 5 April 2005 were adopted.

12. SPECIAL EDUCATION COMMITTEE : MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 24 MARCH 2005

On the proposal of Mrs McCaul, seconded by Fr Rice, the minutes* (SE/3/05/10) of the meeting held on 24 March 2005 were adopted. Mrs McCaul informed members that there were no issues arising from the minutes which required discussion.

13. TEACHING APPOINTMENTS COMMITTEE : MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 16 MARCH 2005

The minutes* (TAC/3/05/11) of the meeting held on 16 March 2005 were noted.

The meeting ended at 3.43 pm.

CHAIRMAN

CHIEF EXECUTIVE

DATE

- * Paper circulated
- ** Paper tabled

GPB
25 April 2005