

**MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS OF A BOARD MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY,
16 FEBRUARY 2006 AT 2.30 PM IN THE BOARD ROOM**

1. PRESENT Mrs M E Donnell Chairperson

Mr P H Aiken	Councillor P P McAleer
Mrs S R Brownlee	Mrs C M McCaul
Councillor P Brannigan	Councillor J McCrum
Rev J Byrne	Rev Canon J McKegey
Mr M P Campbell	Councillor S McRoberts
Councillor F Dawson	Councillor R Mulligan
Mr P Gildea	Professor P Murphy
Councillor I E B Hanna	Mr A G Sleator
Dr M Hollinger	Rev D Somerville
Councillor A B Lewis	Mr J K Twyble
Mr C Mackin	Councillor Dr P A Weir
Mrs M M Magennis	Mrs E Wright
Mr W Mayne	

2. IN ATTENDANCE

Mrs H M McClenaghan, Mr W Burke, Mr T M Heron, Mr A P Murphy, Mrs K Ryan, Mr B O'Hara, Mr G P Butler.

3. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Mr B Doran, Dr P Cunningham, Councillor J Hanna, Councillor R A Harkness, Mr A McCreesh, Councillor P Maginn, Councillor K McKeivitt, Very Rev L M McVeigh and Councillor B Monteith.

4. VISIT OF SUCCESSFUL PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATION OF HEADSHIP GRADUATES

The Chairperson welcomed 17 of the 26 teachers from the Board area who had successfully completed their Professional Qualification in Headship recently. She invited Mrs Ferguson, Principal of Aughnacloy Primary School, to say a few words about the course. Mrs Ferguson provided members with an overview of the selection, induction session and course that each of the graduates had undertaken. Following this input the graduates introduced themselves and explained what they had got out of the course. Mr Brian Doherty, Vice-Principal of Lismore Comprehensive School, gave a vote of thanks on behalf of the graduates.

The Chairperson thanked the graduates for their input to the meeting and congratulated them on their successful completion of their Professional Qualification in Headship.

(Mr Mackin entered the meeting at 2.54 p.m. at the conclusion of this item)

5. APPOINTMENT OF OFFICERS

Mrs McClenaghan outlined for members the sources of funding for each of the posts and explained the rationale for the two Senior Education Officers appointed as part of the arrangements for collaboration with the Western Education and Library Board. It was agreed that the two officers would take up their post on 1 March 2006. On the proposal of Mr Campbell seconded by Mr Twyble the report** (B/02/06/2) prepared by the Human Resources Manager was adopted.

6. MINUTES OF BOARD MEETING HELD ON 19 JANUARY 2006

On the proposal of Councillor I Hanna, seconded by Councillor McCrum the minutes* (B/01/06/03) of the meeting held on 19 January 2006 were approved as an accurate record and signed by the Chairperson and the Chief Executive.

7. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

7.1. STANDING ORDERS (8)

Mrs McClenaghan informed members that paragraph 21 in the current Standing Orders was now paragraph 29 in the new Standing Orders. She also informed members that the issue relating to the provision of clarification regarding the suspension of Standing Orders was a complex one which would take some time to resolve. She highlighted the fact that the document was designed to be a common five-board approach and informed members that several boards had already approved the document. She informed members that they could approve the current document and make amendments at a later stage.

On the proposal of Mr Sleator seconded by Mr Twyble it was agreed to approve the revised Standing Orders.

7.2. CORPORATE PLAN (7.4)

In response to a query from Mr Aiken, Mrs McClenaghan explained that an updated Corporate Plan for 2006/2007 would be brought to the Board in May.

8. CHAIRPERSON'S BUSINESS

8.1. CHAIRPERSON'S AND VICE-CHAIRPERSON'S MEETING WITH THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION

The Chairperson reported to members on a meeting between the Chairpersons and Vice-Chairpersons of the five Education and Library Boards and Mrs A Smith the Minister for Education on 24 January 2006. She thanked Mrs McClenaghan and Mr Heron for the notes they had prepared for the meeting which highlighted the issues of particular relevance to the Southern Education and Library Board. A note of the issues raised had been left with the Minister for consideration after the meeting.

Among the issues highlighted to the Minister were:

- The steps taken by the Board to consult on the budget proposals and the need, highlighted through those consultations, for additional finance to be provided;
- The current level of redundancies taking place in the Board;
- The development of collaborative arrangements with the Western Education and Library Board;
- The urgent need for the publication by the Department of Education of a 'Sustainable Schools Policy';
- The need for the maintenance of a network of sustainable rural schools in the Board area;
- The need for increased support for community involvement in an 'extended school day'.

In the meeting the Minister had informed those present about:

- The production in the near future of a draft of a document on 'Sustainable Schools' by the Department of Education. The Minister also emphasised the need to continue with the programme of rationalisation and spoke about the balance she had to achieve between the consideration of finance and educational factors in making any decision on rationalisation proposals;
- The level of financial settlement for the Education Service in the budget for 2006/2007 which she said had been achieved as a result of the inputs at the consultation events and efforts by all concerned with the education of children and young people;
- Her intentions to have ongoing meetings with the Chair and Vice Chairpersons.

Mr Aiken congratulated the Chairperson on what she had achieved at the meeting and asked that the Youth Service and School Library Service be highlighted in future meetings.

8.2. BANK MANDATE

Mrs McClenaghan sought and obtained approval for the Chairperson and Chief Executive to have authorisation to act on behalf of the Board in relation to changes to banking arrangements with Northern Bank, specifically in regards to the move to e-banking systems. Mrs McClenaghan informed members that if approval was given a bank mandate would be signed to give effect to the decision. Members approved the signing of the mandate and it was duly signed by the Chairperson and Chief Executive.

8.3. ALLOCATION FROM DCAL FOR THE PUBLIC LIBRARY SERVICE

Mrs Ryan informed members that the overall indicative allocation for the Library Service from the Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure reported at the January meeting of the Board had now been confirmed and that a full report would be provided to the Library Committee at its next meeting on 28 February 2006.

8.4. CHAIRPERSON'S VISIT TO SCHOOLS AND OTHER BOARD CENTRES ON 9 FEBRUARY 2006

The Chairperson spoke about her recent visits to schools and other board centres in the Cookstown and Dungannon area with Mrs McClenaghan. She highlighted the level of commitment to the education and development of children and young people as demonstrated by all the staff they had met. She also highlighted the quality of the displays of work in all the locations.

9. 2006/2007 BOARD RECURRENT EXPENDITURE (DE)

Mrs McClenaghan emphasised the importance of the budget letter from the Department of Education and welcomed the fact that 75% of the revised Assessment of Relative Needs funding had been included in the allocation. She informed members that the demographic downturn in the Board had been cushioned because of the greater decrease in populations in other Boards.

Mrs McClenaghan advised members that while the budget provided for some easement further cuts would be required but these would now be less severe than had been previously anticipated. She asked that members consider having a special meeting of the Board on 28 February 2006 to discuss the budget.

Mr Heron then took members through the budget letter section by section and highlighted the following areas:

- Paragraph 3: Emphasis on plan submitted by the Board and augmentation of allocations from repayments from two other Boards;
- Paragraph 5 : Total allocation of £180,970k in relation to the schools' delegated budgets;
- Paragraph 6: Inclusion in delegated funding of costs related to increases in the rates of employers' superannuation in relation to teachers' salaries and NILGOSC contributions for non-teaching staff employed by schools. In addition it includes provision for teachers' progression on the upper pay scale (UPS3);
- Paragraph 7: While the allocation is a 5.4% increase on the 2005/2006 position the real 'like for like' increase is 3.7%. Mr Heron expressed some concern that this may not be enough to cover rises in costs such as those arising from the pay settlement for teachers;
- Paragraph 10: Move towards full implementation of ARNE with 75% movement in the 2006/2007 allocation;
- Paragraph 11: Inclusion in the centre costs of provision for drugs education previously funded under an earmarked allocation. The sum of £84,408k which was being allocated to cover all centre costs including recognition of the increasing cost of classroom assistants and other SEN related provision;
- Overall the 'like for like' increase in the centre services for school budget is 5.3%. Mr Heron cautioned members that this had to cover increased costs in areas such as special education, transport and rates and he informed members that further savings would be required;
- Paragraph 13: The need to maintain the drive for efficiencies in order to release resources for front-line services. Areas highlighted in this paragraph were procurement, teacher absence, school transport and HQ administration costs;

- Paragraph 16: Re-emphasised the need for the Board to live within its financial allocation;
- Paragraph 17: The need to protect front-line services and the need to have a contingency fund. Mr Heron informed members that provision needed to be made to cover the deficits of small schools. This would cost approximately £250,000 in the 2006/2007 budget and between £600,000-£800,000 in future years.

In concluding his input Mr Heron emphasised the importance of submitting the Resource Allocation Plan by the specified deadline.

The Chairperson thanked Mrs McClenaghan and Mr Heron for their inputs.

Mr Aiken proposed and Councillor McCrum seconded a proposal that a special meeting of the Board be held on Tuesday, 28 February 2006 at 10.30 am to agree the budget for 2006/2007. This was agreed.

(Mr Mackin left the meeting at 3.17 pm and returned at 3.22 pm during discussion of this item)

10. CHAIRPERSON'S COMMITTEE: MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 17 JANUARY 2006

Mr Campbell proposed and Councillor Lewis seconded the adoption of the minutes (B/02/06/07) of the meeting held on 17 January 2006 and this was agreed.

Mr Campbell commented on the positive nature of the meeting and Mrs McClenaghan informed members that a letter of thanks had been received from Mr Haire.

(Councillor McAleer left the meeting at 3.35 pm after conclusion of this item)

11. ANNUAL REPORT 2003/2004

Mr Heron explained the changes in the format of the Annual Report and informed members that the Annual Report and Annual Accounts would in future be presented together to Parliament.

12. SCHEMES

Mrs McClenaghan explained the reason for the changes to each of the individual schemes as follows:

12.1. TEACHERS' STAFFING COMMITTEE

The former Policy Committee has now been replaced by the Chairpersons' Committee and this is covered in the membership section of the Scheme.

12.2. NURSERY AND PRIMARY TEACHERS' CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

This Scheme has been amended at paragraph 5 to allow the Board to appoint any Board member to chair the Committee.

12.3. SPECIAL AND SECONDARY TEACHERS' CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

This Scheme has also been amended at paragraph 5 to allow the Board to appoint any Board member to chair the Committee.

12.4. SUB-COMMITTEE ON CHILD PROTECTION

Two additional categories of member are included in this Scheme:

- One officer employed in the Library Service, and
- One officer employed in the Youth Service.

Mr Aiken asked that an amendment would be made to the Scheme to ensure advice was given to the Library Committee as well as the Education Committee.

Canon McKegney proposed and Mrs Wright seconded a proposal that the four schemes* (B/02/06/9.1, B/02/06/9.2, B/02/06/9.3, B/02/06/9.4) be adopted with an amendment to the Sub-Committee on Child Protection to provide for advice to be given to the Library Committee as well as the Education Committee. The proposal was agreed unanimously.

13. SPECIAL EDUCATION COMMITTEE : MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 19 JANUARY 2006

In presenting the minutes Mrs McCaul highlighted the financial report contained in minute 8 and drew the attention of members to the rise in teacher absences. She also pointed out that the budget was expected to be on target which she said in a large part was due to the efficiency savings made as a result of the service review carried out earlier in the year. She informed members that a similar review was being carried out this year.

On the proposal of Mrs McCaul, seconded by Mr Mackin, the minutes* (SE/01/06/10) of the meeting held on 19 January 2006 were adopted.

14. LIBRARY COMMITTEE: MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 24 JANUARY 2006

In presenting the minutes Mr Aiken highlighted the following items:

14.1. QUESTIONNAIRE: (5.1)

Mr Aiken informed members that the Working Group anticipated that the questionnaire would go out in March 2006.

14.2. MEETING WITH THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR NORTHERN IRELAND: (5.3)

Mr Aiken spoke about the meeting he had had with Mr David Hanson, the Minister of State for Northern Ireland, on 17 January 2006. He informed members that Mrs Ryan had also attended the meeting where the two main issues under discussion were the 'Framework for Change' and the 'Review of Public Administration'. Mr Aiken informed the members that the Library Committee had expressed the hope that a 'standalone library service' might present

opportunities to attract funding. Mr Aiken confirmed that the response from the Library Committee stated that the standalone model would be their preferred option.

On the proposal of Mr Aiken, seconded by Mr Mayne the minutes* (L/01/06/11) of the meeting held on 24 January 2006 were adopted.

15. SERVICES COMMITTEE: MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 26 JANUARY 2006

In presenting the minutes Councillor Brannigan drew attention to the matters arising from the minutes: School Meals: Laundry Allowance and Abatement (5.1), School Crossing Patrol Review (5.3) and Advertising in School Dining areas (5.4). He also referred to the introduction of Asset Management Plans and highlighted the lead role of the SELB in the building conditions surveys to inform these plans.

Mr Murphy informed members that a number of requests for review of the decisions about crossing patrols had been received and these were being fully investigated. Mr Murphy also informed members that the final stages of the overall review of individual crossing patrols was being completed and he advised members that this might lead to removal of patrols in a limited number of cases. He confirmed that 50 further sites were being reviewed during the final stage of the current process and he informed members that this stage of the process should be completed by the end of April 2006. In response to a number of queries regarding the communication that had taken place when the decision to remove the patrols had been made Mr Murphy explained in detail the processes adopted. He informed members that the letter to the Principals had been signed by him but that the bulletin had not since it was seen as that – a bulletin. He also explained that an extensive press statement had been released and that an officer of the Board had been available for press and television interviews.

In response to queries from members Mr Murphy provided details of individual reviews currently being undertaken.

In response to a question from Councillor Dawson regarding the offer from two business men to fund school crossing patrols at a school Mrs McClenaghan spoke about the ongoing discussions that were taking place. She explained that issues in relation to the entrance to the school site were also being investigated.

Mr Mayne raised the question of the large differentiation in quotes in the tendering process and asked if this was more common than had previously been the case. In response Mr Murphy confirmed that it was common for there to be large differentials between quotes which he said frequently arose from companies often not fully investigating the detail of the tender.

Councillor Lewis asked if tenders were reasonably close to the estimates prepared by the officers prior to publication of the tenders and whether these were always prepared by officers.

Mr Murphy explained that the estimates prepared were normally fairly accurate and he confirmed that these were often prepared by Board officers but sometimes by consultants from outside the Board.

On the proposal of Councillor Brannigan, seconded by Councillor Dawson the minutes* (S/01/06/12) of the meeting held on 26 January 2006 were adopted.

16. FINANCE COMMITTEE: MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 31 JANUARY 2006

Mr Sleator in proposing the minutes drew attention to the following matters:

16.1. ANNUAL ACCOUNTS 2004/2005 (6)

Mr Sleator reminded members that in adopting the minutes they were adopting the annual accounts. He pointed out the Northern Ireland Audit Office opinion that the accounts represented a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Board as at 31 March 2005.

He drew the attention of members to the internal control issues contained in pages 126-127 and to the notes on page 157 regarding contingent liabilities.

16.2. ANNUAL ACCOUNTS 2005/2006 (7)

Mr Sleator pointed out the changes in the deadline for the submission of annual accounts from the previous date of 30 June to 16 June. He also explained that in the following year the deadline would be end of May and then mid May.

16.3. RECURRENT EXPENDITURE AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2005 –YEAR END FORECAST (9.4)

Mr Sleator drew the attention of members to page 169 of the papers and pointed out that although the forecast was that the Board would live within its budget this year the surplus will fall from £7.6 m at the start of the year to £2 m at the end of the year.

On the proposal of Mr Sleator, seconded by Mrs Wright the minutes* (F/01/06/13) of the meeting held on 31 January 2006 were adopted.

17. EDUCATION COMMITTEE: MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 31 JANUARY 2006

Mr Campbell in presenting the minutes drew attention to the following items:

17.1. CHAIRMAN'S BUSINESS - CHAIR OF CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEES

Mr Campbell referred to the proposed changes in the arrangements for the charring of the two Consultative Committees.

17.2. ADVISORY SUB-COMMITTEE FOR CONTROLLED SCHOOLS

Mr Campbell spoke about the difficult task being undertaken in relation to small schools. He informed members about the input from the two delegations. Mrs McClenaghan drew the attention of members to a mistake in the minutes of the meeting and it was agreed that the final sentence in the first paragraph "The

Sub-Committee recommended ... should be postponed for one year” amended to read “The Sub-Committee recommended ... should proceed”.

Mr Campbell pointed out the four recommendations arising from the minutes:

- A decision on Moy Primary School should be delayed by one year;
- Consultations on the proposed closure of Tamnamore Primary School should proceed;
- Officers should engage in further consultations on the options for Clogher Regional Primary School; and
- Consultations on the revised Development Proposal for the closure of Tullymacarett Primary School should proceed.

17.3. NURSERY AND PRIMARY TEACHERS’ CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE; AND SPECIAL AND SECONDARY TEACHERS’ CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

Mr Campbell advised members that both Committees had sought further information on potential efficiencies in the Education Otherwise Than At School Service.

17.4. YOUTH SERVICE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Mr Campbell drew the attention of members to the decision to recommend the closure of Binnian Outdoor Education Centre which he said had served the Board well but was no longer viable.

17.5. LIQUOR LICENSING – THE WAY FORWARD – DRAFT RESPONSE

Members were advised of the Board’s draft response to the consultation on liquor licensing and to the concern highlighted in the response that the health and well-being of young people had not been sufficiently highlighted.

17.6. DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS

17.6.1 ALL SAINTS (BALLELA) PRIMARY SCHOOL

Development Proposal No 208 would be published in line with legislation and comments in line with the discussion at the meeting would be included with the submission to the Department of Education.

17.6.2 DRELINCOURT PRIMARY SCHOOL

Development Proposal No 207 would be published in line with legislation and comments from the discussion at the meeting would be included with the submission to the Department of Education.

It was agreed that the minutes of the meeting would be amended as follows:

“Mr Johnston advised the Committee that the Church had agreed to ... year” amended to read “Mr Johnston advised the Committee that the Trustees of The Drelincourt School had agreed to ... year”.

“Cllr McRoberts ... encouraging development. The following sentence to be added : “She noted that not all pupils from The Drelincourt Primary School transfer to The Armstrong Primary School”.

“The Committee ... a financial contribution from the Church ...” amended to read “The Committee ... a financial contribution from the Trustees ...”.

“On the proposal ... Proposal No 209 would be supported” amended to read “On the proposal ... Proposal No 207 would be supported”.

Canon McKegney in declaring an interest as a member of both the Board of Governors of Armstrong and Drelincourt Primary Schools asked that it be noted that ‘historically it is a fact that most pupils do transfer from Drelincourt to Armstrong Primary School’.

17.7. THE EDUCATION (NORTHERN IRELAND) ORDER 2006

Mr Campbell highlighted the fact it was proposed that the Education Committee prepare a draft response to the Education (Northern Ireland) Order 2006 and be granted authority to submit it to the Department of Education prior to the closing date for submissions with the understanding that it was submitted as a draft. If the March meeting of the Board wished to make amendments these would be made and submitted as the final response.

Mr Twyble in seconding the proposal expressed regret that members had not had the opportunity to make a wider response. Members agreed the proposal.

Mr Aiken expressed concern regarding the potential impact of the changes for the Dickson Plan schools.

On the proposal of Mr Campbell, seconded by Mr Twyble the minutes* (E/01/06/14) of the meeting held on 31 January 2006 were adopted.

18. AUDIT COMMITTEE: MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 26 JANUARY 2006

Mr Sleator in presenting the minutes drew attention to the following items:

18.1. AUDIT COMMITTEE HANDBOOK

It was agreed that risk management and some financial issues would be beneficial topics for future training and it was agreed that training should be a major aspect of the next meeting.

18.2. FRAUD FORUM: BEST PRACTICE GUIDANCE

Members were advised that a best practice guidance document on Purchasing/Payment of Invoices had been issued to the Accounting Officer.

18.3. INTERNAL AUDIT PROGRESS REPORT

Members were advised of current audits that had been completed and the issues arising from them as highlighted in the minutes.

On the proposal of Mr Sleator, seconded by Professor Murphy the minutes* (A/01/06/15) of the meeting held on 26 January 2006 were adopted.

(Councillor McRoberts left the meeting at 4.45 pm after discussion of this item)

19. MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE : MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 19 JANUARY 2006

The minutes* (M/01/06/16) of the meeting held on 19 January 2006 were noted.

20. TEACHERS' STAFFING COMMITTEE: MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 25 JANUARY 2006

The minutes* (TS/01/06/17) of the meeting held on 25 January 2006 were noted.

Mr Mackin commented that it might be more appropriate if the realignment of Board staff took place at the end of the academic year rather than at the end of the financial year.

Mr Gildea agreed highlighting the impact on schools of the loss of officers at this time.

Mr Aiken asked if it were possible for the Board to give consideration to the employment of officers who were about to be made redundant on a part-time basis after the end of the financial year.

Mrs McClenaghan in response thanked the members for their comments about the officers but pointed out that the Board had approved the redundancies. She also pointed out that the Board had given a very clear signal to schools in the past about the employment of staff who had been made redundant and for the Board to go against their own guidance could be regarded as a bad example.

21. TEACHING APPOINTMENTS COMMITTEE

21.1. MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 24 JANUARY 2006

The minutes* (TAC/01/06/18.1) of the meeting held on 24 January 2006 were noted.

21.2. MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 30 JANUARY 2006

The minutes* (TAC/01/06/18.2) of the meeting held on 30 January 2006 were noted.

22. PREMATURE RETIREMENTS

On the proposal of Mr Mayne, seconded by Mrs McCaul, it was agreed to discuss this item in Committee.

On the proposal of Mr Mayne, seconded by Mr Campbell, it was agreed to come out of Committee.

On the proposal of Mrs Wright, seconded by Mr Mackin, it was agreed to accept that premature retirement on the grounds of the efficient discharge of the Board's functions

be granted to Mrs D E Scott, Executive Officer, Student Support, and that voluntary redundancy be granted to Mrs M Rainey, Classroom Assistant (SEN), Ballyoran Primary School.

23. ASSOCIATION OF NORTHERN IRELAND EDUCATION AND LIBRARY BOARDS

23.1. MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 7 DECEMBER 2005

The minutes* (B/01/06/20.1) of the meeting held on 7 December 2005 were noted.

23.2. RESIGNATION OF COUNCILLOR F DAWSON

Cllr Dawson confirmed that he has resigned. Mrs McClenaghan said that in accordance with the decision taken by the Board on 20 October 2005 the Chairperson would henceforward attend meetings of the Executive Council.

23.3. 2006 ANNUAL CONFERENCE 12 AND 13 OCTOBER 2006

The dates for the conference were noted by members.

23.4. MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 1 FEBRUARY 2006 (B/02/06/20.4)

The minutes of the meeting held on 1 February 2006 which had been tabled were noted.

The meeting ended at 4.59 pm.

CHAIRPERSON

CHIEF EXECUTIVE

DATE

* Paper circulated

** Paper tabled