

**MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS OF A MEETING OF THE BOARD HELD ON  
WEDNESDAY, 25 JULY 2007 AT 2.30 PM IN THE BOARD ROOM**

**1. PRESENT**

Mr P H Aiken	Mr C Mackin
Mrs S R Brownlee	Mr W Mayne
Rev J Byrne	Mrs C M McCaul
Mr M P Campbell	Mr A McCreesh
Dr P Cunningham	Councillor J McCrum
Councillor F Dawson	Rev Canon J McKegey
Mrs M E Donnell	Councillor S McRoberts
Councillor J Feehan	Very Rev L M McVeigh
Councillor J Hanna	Professor P Murphy
Councillor R A Harkness	Mr J K Twyble
Dr M Hollinger	Councillor Dr P A Weir

**2. IN ATTENDANCE**

Mrs H M McClenaghan, Dr C Mangan, Mrs K Ryan, Messrs R Bullick, G Butler, T Heron, P Mackey and Mrs L McCall and for part of the meeting Mr G Doran.

**3. LENGTH OF TERM OF OFFICE OF CHAIRPERSON AND VICE-CHAIRPERSON**

Mrs McClenaghan drew attention to a letter\*\* (B/7/07/8.1) dated 19 July 2007 from the Minister for Education outlining a delay to the timescale for the implementation of the new Education and Skills Authority. She also drew attention to a letter\*\* (B/7/07/8.2) dated 20 July 2007 from the Director of Culture, DCAL, advising that plans were on course for the Library Authority to be operational by 1 April 2008.

It was proposed by Mr Twyble, seconded by Councillor McRoberts, and agreed that the length of term of office of the Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson would be until 30 June 2009 or such earlier date as determined by the Department of Education.

*(Mr McCreesh left the meeting temporarily at 2.35 pm.)*

**4. ELECTION OF CHAIRPERSON**

It was proposed by Councillor McRoberts, seconded by Councillor Hanna, and agreed that Mrs M E Donnell be elected Chairperson. Mrs Donnell took the chair and expressed appreciation to the Members for her re-election.

**5. ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRPERSON**

It was proposed by Councillor Hanna, seconded by Councillor McRoberts, that Very Rev L M McVeigh be elected Vice-Chairperson. Very Rev Fr McVeigh thanked Members but explained that he would be unable to resume the office on account of other commitments.

It was proposed by Very Rev Fr McVeigh, seconded by Mr Campbell, and agreed that Rev J Byrne be elected Vice-Chairperson. Rev Fr Byrne thanked Members for his election to office.

The Chairperson expressed appreciation to Very Rev Fr McVeigh for his previous contributions as Vice-Chairperson to the Board.

Mrs McClenaghan stated that a revised schedule of Board and Committee meetings to take account of meetings from April to July 2008 would be presented for consideration by the Board at its September meeting. She also outlined her discussion with the Chief Executive of the WELB in relation to the succession of chairpersons of the SELB / WELB joint Committees which would take place at the Committee meetings in September 2007. The Board agreed that the current arrangements for the succession of chairpersons would continue until July / September 2008 at which time both the SELB and the WELB would review the arrangements in light of advice from DE on the establishment of the new Education and Skills Authority.

*(Mr McCreesh re-entered the meeting at 2.42 pm.)*

Mr Aiken pointed out that a Library Committee was no longer required following the establishment of the Library Authority; however, some consideration should be given to overseeing the Schools' Library Service. Mrs McClenaghan advised that the Chief Executives of the five Boards were meeting in early August and would be seeking a meeting with officials to discuss Education and Library Board responsibilities in relation to the Schools' Library Service.

*(Mrs Brownlee left the meeting temporarily at 2.43 pm and re-entered at 2.45 pm.)*

Mrs McCaul emphasised the importance of the continuation of developmental work to services up until the establishment of ESA. She drew attention to the motivation of staff during this time, concerns regarding staffing levels and legislative goals to ensure service delivery. Mrs McClenaghan referred to misleading press coverage in relation to the Vacancy Control Policy. She advised that this process facilitated officers within the RPA affected organisations to apply for posts on a seconded basis.

## **6. APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from Councillor P Brannigan, Mr P Gildea, Mrs M M Magennis, Councillor B Monteith, Mr A G Sleator, Rev D Somerville and Mrs E Wright.

## **7. APPOINTMENT OF OFFICERS**

Mrs McClenaghan drew attention to funding arrangements for posts contained within the report. It was agreed that the report\*\* (B/7/07/5) prepared by the Head of Human Resources be adopted.

## **8. BOARD MEETING : MINUTES**

On the proposal of Councillor McRoberts, seconded by Mr Twyble, the minutes\* (B/6/07/6) of the meeting held on 13 June 2007 were approved as an accurate record and were signed by the Chairperson and the Chief Executive.

## **9. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

### **9.1 INVITATIONS TO MINISTERS FOR CULTURE ARTS & LEISURE AND EMPLOYMENT & LEARNING AND THE RESPECTIVE CHAIRS OF COMMITTEES (6)**

Mrs McClenaghan stated that Mr Poots had been unavailable to visit the Board at the present meeting but planned to meet with Members on Thursday, 20 September 2007 at 12.00 noon. She also stated that Councillor Barry McElduff, Chair of the DCAL Committee, was unavailable on that date due to another commitment.

Mrs McClenaghan advised that a response was awaited on Sir Reg Empey's availability to attend the September Board meeting. She pointed out that Ms Sue Ramsay was unable to come on that date as she had another commitment.

### **9.2 TEACHING APPOINTMENTS COMMITTEE : MINUTES (16)**

Mrs McClenaghan referred to the query in relation to the marking scheme used by the Teaching Appointments Committee. She stated that the allocation of numbers within bands had been identified by the Staff Commission for five Board use and that the scheme would be rolled out to Boards of Governors in the controlled sector following training. Mr Keating advised that such training was planned for September / October 2007.

Some Members identified a preference for greater variation within the banding. Mr Keating indicated that he could consult the Staff Commission on the possibility of including such a variation within the scheme.

Mr Twyble considered the new system an improvement on the previous system. It was proposed by Mr Twyble, seconded by Councillor McRoberts, that the new scheme be given further time for Committee use prior to seeking the possibility of its amendment. Councillor Hanna requested that the other Boards be consulted to ascertain their views on the provision of a continuous scale for marking.

It was agreed that the matter would receive further attention by officers particularly in light of the planned training for Boards of Governors on the new scheme in September 2007. Mrs McClenaghan undertook to report back to the Board at its September meeting on this matter.

Mr Aiken requested that such matters should be brought to the attention of the Board prior to their agreement on an inter-Board level.

## **10. CHAIRPERSON'S BUSINESS**

### **10.1 LETTERS FROM THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION AND THE DEPARTMENT OF CULTURE, ARTS AND LEISURE**

The Board noted the letter\*\* dated 19 July 2007 from the Minister for Education and the letter\*\* dated 20 July 2007 from Mr C Jack, Director of Culture, DCAL, which had been considered previously in the meeting.

### **10.2 SCHOOL VISITS**

The Chairperson stated that Mrs McClenaghan and she had visited schools in the Newry, Warrenpoint and Rostrevor areas in June.

## **11. RESIGNATION OF COUNCILLOR P MCGINN FROM THE BOARD**

Mrs McClenaghan reported that Newry and Mourne District Council had informed the Department of Education of Councillor McGinn's resignation and had nominated Councillor M Murphy as his replacement. She advised that once the completed application form had been scrutinised and deemed to be in order the Minister would be asked to approve the appointment.

## **12. JOINT YOUTH COMMITTEE : MINUTES**

Mr Aiken drew attention to the next meetings of the Stakeholder Forum, the difficulties in recruiting staff on account of the Vacancy Control Policy and the difficulties in retaining staff in short term funded posts.

Mr Aiken referred to the EQIA paper on the registration and grant-aid processes across ELBs and advised that members of the Joint Youth Committee had attended an information session the previous evening to assist in the process of consultation and to provide a response. He also referred to the consultation exercise on the paper "Let's Talk, Let's Listen" focusing on how public services consulted young people. He requested the Board's approval that authority be given to the officers to submit responses to both these items.

It was proposed by Mr Aiken, seconded by Mr Twyble, and agreed that the minutes\* (Y/6/07/10) of the meeting held on 20 June 2007 be adopted and that the two responses to the items detailed above be submitted on the Board's behalf.

*(Mr Mackin left the meeting at 3.30 pm.)*

## **13. JOINT EDUCATION COMMITTEE : MINUTES**

Mr Campbell highlighted that five of the eleven winners of the NI Teaching Awards 2007 were from WELB and SELB schools and also that the second pilot of Specialist Schools had resulted in five of the thirteen schools from WELB and SELB being successful. He pointed out that Dr Robson Davison had responded to the Committee's concerns in relation to Literacy and Numeracy (Circular 2007/11) and he referred to the additional pre-school places allocated to WELB and SELB which meant that both Boards now had sufficient places to meet demand. He drew attention to the proposals for allocating additional resources to schools and to the presentations given in relation to the Professional Development and Support Programme for primary schools in 2006/07 and 2007/08.

Mrs McClenaghan reported that she had sent the Board's congratulations to the SELB recipients of the NI Teaching Awards. She had been most encouraged with the schools which had entered the competition this year for the first time and she praised the team efforts within the winning schools.

Very Rev Fr McVeigh indicated that his apology had not been recorded in the minutes. Subject to this amendment, it was proposed by Mr Campbell, seconded by Mr Mayne, and agreed that the minutes\* (E/6/07/11) of the meeting held on 28 June 2007 be adopted.

#### 14. JOINT CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICES COMMITTEE : MINUTES

Mrs McCaul referred to the presentation given on the work of the Critical Incident Response Teams within SELB and WELB, the response to the DHSSPS consultation document "Care Matters in Northern Ireland – a Bridge to a Better Future" and to the healthy financial position within both Boards. She drew attention to the minutes of the Child Protection Committee which had highlighted the number of schools within SELB which had not at least one governor trained in child protection issues. It was noted that these schools would be targeted in September 2007 to ensure nomination of governor representation on child protection training sessions.

Councillor Feehan queried whether members of Boards of Governors who were also Councillors were required to undertake SELB child protection training whenever they had received such training by their own Councils. Dr Mangan stated that no mandate existed in relation to child protection training for Board members; however attendance by Board Members at such training would be supportive. Mrs McClenaghan pointed out a Board member's training on child protection issues would assist the Board of Governors on which he or she was also a member. It was agreed that the Designated Training Officer for Child Protection would be asked to organise a training session for Board Members with careful consideration given to the timing of the event. Mr Campbell considered that many small schools held a Board of Governors' meeting late into the first term and suggested that principals and chairpersons be advised to convene an early meeting to ensure nomination of governor representation.

Councillor Dr Weir referred to the quarterly report for the Departmental Targets and Individual Service Targets and queried why the Board could not meet its target in relation to the completion of statutory assessment cases within the required 18 week timescale.

Mrs McClenaghan stated that the Board did not complete its statements until all professional advices had been received. Dr Mangan stated that officers were working with health colleagues to find a more expedient way of obtaining this information within the prescribed timeframe. She advised that priorities with Community Paediatricians were to deal with requests from GPs and not those sent for statutory assessment. She pointed out that Special Education administration was not seen as a front line service. Timely completion of statements did impact on the provisions that children with special needs received in schools. Mrs McCaul stated that this issue had been raised with an officer of the NI Audit Office at a meeting of the Audit Committee and the NIAO officer had undertaken to pursue it on a five Board basis.

*(Councillor Feehan left the meeting at 3.55 pm.)*

Mr Aiken considered that a Service Level Agreement with external agencies would be beneficial. Dr Mangan stated that the matter was to receive consideration at the next inter-departmental meeting involving DE and DHSSPS.

Mr Mayne emphasised the importance of communicating with parents during the statementing process. Mr McCreech referred to the unsatisfactory position for a parent of a child with special needs awaiting the outcome of the statementing process even within the 18 week period and believed that the difficulty would continue until priorities between education and health were aligned.

Dr Mangan reported that SELB and SHSSB officers met on a regular basis to identify areas of potential tension. She advised that Board officers had provided training for its

health colleagues in the previous year to assist in their understanding of the statutory assessment process.

Mrs Brownlee suggested that Dr Hollinger, Dr Mangan and she should meet to consider approaches to progressing the matter collaboratively between health and education.

Very Rev Fr McVeigh indicated that his apology had not been recorded in the minutes. Subject to this amendment, it was proposed by Mrs McCaul, seconded by Dr Hollinger, and agreed that the minutes\* (CYPS/6/07/12) of the meeting held on 28 June 2007 be adopted.

Mrs McClenaghan drew attention to the joint working arrangements between SELB and WELB and paid tribute to the Chairpersons for their energy and commitment to the Committees and the services under their responsibility.

*(Councillor Hanna left the meeting at 4.04 pm.)*

## **15. SCHOOLS AND SERVICES COMMITTEE : MINUTES**

Councillor McRoberts referred to the consultation on Suspensions and Expulsions of Pupils, the charges in school meals remaining at the same levels as in 2006/07, the flood damage at two schools, the Business Continuity Plan which had been drawn up in the event of a human influenza pandemic and £2m additional monies received in June. She also drew attention to discussion on the Premature Retirement Scheme and the Discretionary Compensation Scheme and the recommendation in relation to seat belt policy for Home to School Transport.

*(Councillor Dr Weir left the meeting temporarily at 4.07 pm.)*

Mr Aiken queried the timeframe for a review of the reference form which Mr Keating had undertaken to carry out and also queried whether guidelines were issued to principals in relation to the content of the references they submitted. He stated that some Governors had expressed concern that no procedure existed to assist them in this matter.

*(Councillor Dr Weir re-entered the meeting at 4.12 pm.)*

Mr Keating stated that reference forms in relation to posts for principal teachers did not request information on attendance. He confirmed that arrangements were being facilitated to ensure that application forms for all teaching and non-teaching posts would seek information from referees on the attendance of the applicant. However, he pointed out that in some cases referees might not be in a position to provide such information.

It was proposed by Councillor McRoberts, seconded by Councillor Dawson, and agreed that the minutes\* (SS/6/07/14) of the meeting held on 21 June 2007 be adopted.

## **16. LIBRARY COMMITTEE**

### **16.1 MINUTES**

Mr Aiken drew attention to the improved usage at Moneymore Library and advised that a report on this item was being presented to the Committee at its October meeting. He stated that the Chairpersons of ELB Library Committees had been invited to meet with the Chief Executive Designate of the new Library Authority at the end of September. He also pointed out that the Vice-Chairperson

and he would be visiting the WELB Library Service following which he would report back on his visit to Members. He referred to the Library Service's Annual Report and congratulated all Library staff for their hard work in providing services to the community.

It was proposed by Mr Aiken, seconded by Mr Mayne, and agreed that the minutes\* (L/6/07/15.1) of the meeting held on 26 June 2007 be adopted.

Consideration was given to the planned visit by the Minister for Culture, Arts and Leisure to the Board on 20 September 2007 and to the items for discussion which had been identified by the Library Committee and detailed in the minutes.

*(Councillor McCrum left the meeting at 4.14 pm.)*

## **16.2 LIBRARIES BILL 2007 – SUBMISSION OF WRITTEN EVIDENCE FROM THE BOARD**

Mrs Ryan advised that the Board had previously been consulted on the draft legislation prior to reinstatement of the NI Assembly and the Board had submitted a response at that time. She stated that some changes had been made since then to the draft legislation which enabled further consultation and to which the Board's submission of written evidence\* (L/7/07/15.2) now referred. She highlighted the Library Committee's concerns to the draft legislation, as set out in the paper, relating to the possible payment of charges for library services with the Department's approval, the need to recruit Board members with relevant experience and representing the geographical spread of communities within NI and issues relating to savings to be achieved in 2009/10 and 2010/11 as set out in the Explanatory and Financial Memorandum and its effect on the service.

It was proposed by Mr Aiken, seconded by Mr Mayne, and agreed that the written evidence to the Libraries Bill 2007 be adopted.

## **17. FINANCE COMMITTEE : MINUTES**

Mrs McCaul drew attention to the receipt of additional earmarked monies, teacher absenteeism and substitution costs and the update provided on job evaluation costs for classroom assistants. She referred to the overview given on the work of the Budgetary Development & Technical Support Section and to the capital and recurrent expenditure reports, highlighting in particular the recommendation that £600k be set aside from the Board's opening surplus to cover pressures amounting to £450k and bids totalling £150k.

Mr Campbell referred to the discussion relating to teacher absenteeism and substitution costs and advised that CCMS had already recommended that one of the targets of PRSD should be the management of absence. Subject to this amendment, it was proposed by Mrs McCaul, seconded by Mr Campbell, and agreed that the minutes\* (F/6/07/13) of the meeting held on 22 June 2007 be adopted.

## **18. TEACHING APPOINTMENTS COMMITTEE : MINUTES**

The minutes\* (TAC/6/07/16.1, 16.2 and 16.3) of meetings held on 15, 20 and 29 June 2007 and the minutes\*\* (TAC/7/07/16.4) of a meeting held on 3 July 2007 were noted.

**19. COMMITTEE FOR THE APPOINTMENT OF PERIPATETIC TEACHERS : MINUTES**

The minutes\* (PT/5/07/17.1) of a meeting held on 25 May 2007 and the minutes\* (PT/6/07/17.2, 17.3 and 17.4) of meetings held on 6, 15 and 26 June 2007 were noted.

**20. PREMATURE RETIREMENTS ON THE GROUNDS OF VOLUNTARY REDUNDANCY**

It was proposed by Mr Campbell, seconded by Councillor Harkness, and agreed that discussion in relation to premature retirements on the grounds of voluntary redundancy would be held in committee.

It was proposed by Councillor Dr Weir, seconded by Councillor Harkness, and agreed to resume the meeting.

The Board noted that it had been proposed by Councillor McRoberts, seconded by Mrs Brownlee, and agreed that the following officers would be offered premature retirement on the grounds of voluntary redundancy with effect from 31 August 2007:

<i>Name</i>	<i>Post / School</i>	<i>Reason</i>
Mrs M C Gibson	Building Supervisor Tullymacarette Primary School	Closure of school on 31 August 2007.
Mrs A J McAuley	Clerical Support & Catering Assistant St James' Primary School, Tandragee	St Joseph's Primary School, Poyntzpass and St James' Primary School, Tandragee to amalgamate on 1 September 2007 resulting in the need to reduce the number of clerical officers by one and the number of catering assistants by one.
Mrs Richardson	Clerical Support Eglish Primary School	Closure of school on 31 August 2007.
Mrs K Hagan	Senior Technican Drumcree College	Budgetary considerations and falling enrolment at school.

The meeting ended at 4.32 pm.

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**CHAIRPERSON**

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**CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**DATE**

\* Paper circulated

\*\* Paper tabled

26 July 2007  
LMcC