

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS OF A MEETING OF THE BOARD HELD ON WEDNESDAY, 12 NOVEMBER 2008 AT 2.30 PM IN THE BOARD ROOM

1. PRESENT Rev J Byrne (Presiding Chairperson)

Mr P H Aiken	Mrs C M McCaul
Councillor P Brannigan	Councillor J McCrum
Mrs S R Brownlee	Rev Canon J McKegney
Mr M P Campbell	Councillor S McRoberts
Councillor J Cavanagh	Very Rev L M McVeigh
Councillor J Feehan	Councillor R Mulligan
Dr M Hollinger	Mr A G Sleator
Councillor Ms C Lockhart	Rev D Somerville
Mr C Mackin	Mr J K Twyble
Mr W Mayne	Mrs E Wright
Councillor P P McAleer	

2. IN ATTENDANCE

Mrs H M McClenaghan, Ms J Blair, Dr C Mangan, Messrs R Bullick, T Heron, P Mackey, R McGreevy, T Murphy, Mrs L McCall and for part of the meeting Mr G Doran.

3. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillor C Casey, Dr P Cunningham, Mrs M E Donnell, Mr P Gildea, Councillor R A Harkness, Councillor M Murphy, Professor P Murphy and Councillor Dr P A Weir.

4. APPOINTMENT OF OFFICERS

Mrs McClenaghan drew attention to funding arrangements for posts contained within the report. It was agreed that the report** (B/10/08/2) prepared by the Head of Human Resources be adopted.

5. BOARD MEETING : MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 8 OCTOBER 2008

On the proposal of Mrs Wright, seconded by Councillor McCrum, the minutes* (B/10/08/3) of the meeting held on 8 October 2008 were approved as an accurate record and were signed by the Presiding Chairperson and the Chief Executive.

6. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

6.1 PREPARATION FOR THE TRANSITION TO ESA (6.2)

Mrs McClenaghan advised that Mr G Boyd had indicated that he would be willing to address staff and Board Members on the operational aspects of ESA following the Board meeting on 10 December 2008. Members were pleased that staff could avail of this opportunity to meet Mr Boyd. They agreed that any questions to be raised with Mr Boyd would await the meeting involving staff.

6.2 JOB EVALUATION : EDUCATION WELFARE OFFICERS - UPDATE (8)

Mr McGreevy reported that the business case for Education Welfare Officers was submitted to DE on 26 September 2008. The industrial action planned by the Trade Unions had been suspended on the basis that an offer would be made by 27 October 2008. He confirmed that during this period he had been in communication with DE in relation to clarifying and improving the robustness of the business case which was subsequently submitted to DFP on 24 October 2008. While the need for urgent consideration had been pressed upon DE / DFP, approval was not received on 27 October 2008 to enable a formal offer to be made to the Trade Unions on behalf of the five Boards.

On 29 October 2008 DFP had raised two major concerns and some supplementary concerns. With the assistance of the Education and Library Boards' Legal Service a meeting had been arranged in the Bar Library in relation to the two major issues of concern. The legal advice had been positive regarding the business case and a summary of that advice was submitted on the same day to DE for DFP. On 3 November 2008 approval was received from DE / DFP to proceed with an offer on the business case to the Trade Unions and the offer was made to the Unions on the same day.

Mr McGreevy stated that the industrial action planned for 5 November 2008 had therefore been suspended and continued to be suspended. The Trade Unions were currently consulting their members on the offer and had submitted a letter seeking clarification on some aspects of the offer. Mr McGreevy advised that clarification had been issued to the Trade Unions on 11 November 2008 and Management Side was now awaiting a formal response to the offer.

6.3 SCHOOLS AND SERVICES COMMITTEE : MINUTES (16.1)

Mr Murphy stated that the Schools and Services Committee, at its meeting on 18 September 2008, had considered Development Proposal No 227 in relation to the establishment of a new Grant Maintained Integrated Primary School in the Clogher Valley area. He advised that current information indicated that 12 pupils were expected to enrol at this proposed school in September 2009.

Councillor Mulligan drew attention to the letter of objection* (B/11/08/4.3) from Carnall Primary School and stated that he was aware of a letter of objection from another school which had not been presented to the Board. Mr Murphy advised that comments or objections to Proposals were submitted to DE. Any letters which the Board received would be forwarded to DE

The Board agreed to sustain its previous position, ie that the enrolments of the existing schools in the Clogher Valley and the longer term planning figures of births would not justify a viable additional school in that area.

7. CHAIRPERSON'S BUSINESS

7.1 RESIGNATION OF MR B DORAN

The Presiding Chairperson reported that due to work commitments Mr Doran had submitted his resignation from membership of the Board. Mrs McClenaghan referred to the loss to the Board of a member who was so immediately connected with further education. She confirmed that she had written to DE to advise of his resignation and to put in place arrangements for a replacement member.

7.2 COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

The Presiding Chairperson advised that Councillor Cavanagh wished to serve on the Children & Young People's Services Committee. It was proposed by Mrs McCaul, seconded by Very Rev Fr McVeigh, and agreed that Councillor Cavanagh would serve on this Committee.

7.3 GALA CHARITY BALL FOR BUILD AFRICA

An invitation to attend the Gala Charity Ball on Saturday, 28 February 2009 in Armagh City Hotel was extended to Board Members.

7.4 SCHOOL VISITS ON 4 NOVEMBER 2008

The Presiding Chairperson reported that Mr Campbell had accompanied the Chief Executive, in the Chairperson's absence, on visits to Harrison Nursery School; Ceara School, Dickson, Hardy Memorial and Waringstown Primary Schools; and Craigavon Senior High School (Lurgan Campus).

Mr Campbell stated that he had welcomed the opportunity to discuss with staff various topics such as budgets, accommodation, the Revised Curriculum and parental involvement. He reported that Ceara School had received notification of an 'outstanding' Inspection Report and also highlighted the lack of nursery provision at Waringstown Primary School. He considered that the Board should revisit this provision.

Mr Campbell also referred to the limitations of the Lurgan Campus site of Craigavon Senior High School particularly with regard to its leisure facilities and its provision for examinations in the Assembly Hall. Rev Canon McKegney, as Chairperson of the Advisory Sub-Committee for Controlled Schools, advised that the Sub-Committee had received a delegation from the Campus earlier in the day, comprising the principal, the vice-principal, the chairperson of the Board of Governors and another Governor. The delegation had urged the Sub-Committee, and the Board, to make better provision for the Senior High School on account of its limitations in accommodation and in light of developments in the maintained sector and the proposed development of the new Lurgan College. He advised that deliberations would continue, via the Sub-Committee, to bring forward positive proposals for the young people in the Senior High School.

(Councillor Feehan left the meeting temporarily at 2.50 pm.)

7.5 REPORT BY THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

It was proposed by Councillor Mulligan, seconded by Councillor Cavanagh, and agreed that discussion in relation to a sensitive matter would be held in committee.

Councillor Mulligan declared a non-pecuniary interest in this matter.

(During the Chief Executive's report Councillor Feehan re-entered the meeting at 2.56 pm.)

It was proposed by Mr Campbell, seconded by Mrs Brownlee, and agreed to resume the meeting. It was noted that an update on the matter could be provided later in the meeting pending the arrival of the Board's solicitor at Board Headquarters.

8. DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS AS TO PRIMARY (INCLUDING NURSERY) AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

The Board noted the DE letters* (B/11/08/6.1 and 6.2) dated 21 October 2008 giving the Minister's approval to the establishment of Key Stage 2 Learning Support Centres at Primate Dixon Primary School, Coalisland and Christian Brothers' Primary School, Armagh. The effective date of both Proposals was 1 September 2009.

9. JOINT YOUTH COMMITTEE : MINUTES

Mr Aiken drew attention to the pressure on the budget as a result of the arrears to part-time youth workers, under the National Agreement, which would require to be met from 2005. He highlighted that should this require to be met in the current year, activities provided by the Service would be severely curtailed. He referred to the minutes of the Finance Committee, held on 31 October 2008, at which consideration had been given to this pressure and advised that a five Board bid had been submitted to DE for additional funding. Mrs McClenaghan stated that she had informed the Finance Committee that she would be raising this issue at her Accountability meeting involving the Minister and the Permanent Secretary. However she had since been advised that the Minister would be unable to attend that meeting. She stated that Mr Heron and she were meeting the Permanent Secretary the following day to discuss this matter along with other financial matters.

Mr Heron stated that the Youth Service budget was a small ringfenced budget which would have extreme difficulty in coping with in-year service delivery in addition to job evaluation arrears back to 2005 without having a significant impact on current services. A five Board bid for £1.6m had been lodged with DE and currently the business case was being considered by DFP.

Mr Doran stated that all youth budget areas were currently being examined. He pointed out that the budget had already met the cost of other major job evaluation programmes and, should assistance not be forthcoming from DE to meet the arrears to part-time youth workers, the Service would be required to make severe cuts in the current year and subsequent year.

It was proposed by Mr Aiken, seconded by Mr Twyble, and agreed that the minutes* (Y/10/08/7) of the meeting held on 25 October 2008 be adopted.

10. JOINT EDUCATION COMMITTEE : MINUTES

Mr Campbell drew attention to the very successful ANIELB annual conference and warmly praised Miss O'Hanlon for providing the administration for the event. He advised that the Sub-Committee to provide a response to the consultation on the Revised Literacy and Numeracy Strategy was due to have its final meeting on 27 October 2008 and also that DE was issuing Information Booklets on the Revised Curriculum to schools for parents. He drew attention to the SELB and WELB Extended Schools' Annual Reports which effectively highlighted examples of the positive impact of the activities provided for the children, families and communities and also to the excellent presentations given at the meeting in connection with enriching the work of schools through an International dimension.

Mr Campbell referred to the recommendation involving the Curriculum Reserve Fund which would facilitate the distribution of £112k to 11 schools and a further £45,600 to 5 schools which had submitted late applications but had met the Board's other criteria. He pointed out that the Committee had also recommended that the Finance Committee should give consideration to the allocation of the remaining £222,400 within the Fund to benefit front-line services in schools. Mr Mayne queried the length of time taken following the receipt of applications in May to the Committee's decision in November and stated that this delay did not assist schools in budget planning. Mrs McClenaghan undertook to ascertain the reason for the delay. Mrs McCaul stated that the Board had been very generous in its consideration of late applications and suggested that this criteria should be observed in future.

The Presiding Chairperson advised that the joint SELB / WELB response to the consultation on 'Every School A Good School' would be presented to the Joint Education Committee on 27 November 2008. Mrs McCaul stated that this document, as well as the consultation document on the Revised Literacy and Numeracy Strategy, had been issued to Boards of Governors for comment. She advised that training had been provided to Governors on the consultation document 'Every School A Good School'.

The Board agreed that the SELB / WELB response would be submitted to DE by the deadline of 28 November 2008 and that any changes made at the December Board meeting would be forwarded to DE following that meeting.

It was proposed by Mr Campbell, seconded by Very Rev Fr McVeigh, and agreed that the minutes* (E/10/08/8) of the meeting held on 23 October 2008 be adopted.

11. LIBRARY COMMITTEE : MINUTES

Mr Aiken advised that the new opening hours for flagship libraries would be operational from January 2009. He referred to the paper from the Association of Chief Librarians highlighting the work of the Public and Schools' Library Service in support of literacy and numeracy; the conference in Liverpool attended by Messrs Campbell and Butler; the success of the Summer Reading Challenge 2008; and the invitation which was being issued to the WELB Library Committee to visit the O'Fiaich, Robinson and the Irish & Local Studies Libraries.

It was proposed by Mr Aiken, seconded by Mrs Brownlee, and agreed that the minutes* (L/10/08/12) of the meeting held on 21 October 2008 be adopted.

(Councillor McAleer, Councillor McCrum, Very Rev Fr McVeigh and Councillor Mulligan left the meeting at 3.40 pm.)

12. REPORT BY THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE (Continued)

As further information had been received during the course of the meeting, it was proposed by Mr Mackin, seconded by Mrs McCaul, and agreed to resume discussion of this matter in committee.

It was proposed by Councillor Cavanagh, seconded by Mrs McCaul, and agreed to resume the meeting.

The Board agreed that, on the proposal of Mr Aiken, seconded by Rev Canon McKegney, it would support the course of action outlined by the Chief Executive during her report in committee.

(Councillor McRoberts left the meeting at 3.46 pm and Mr Aiken left at 3.47 pm.)

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

Mrs McCaul outlined the action being taken by WELB in relation to staffing issues within its Educational Psychology Service. She referred to the proposed Model of Delivery for the Regional Traveller Education Service, which would have responsibility for managing, delivering and supporting Traveller Education in a consistent and equitable manner across NI, and to the five Board Action Plan for 2008/09. She drew particular attention to the paper relating to Transport of Children with Statements of Special Education Need which had set out the Board's statutory duties, the legal advice received and the additional transport costs incurred by young people who did not attend their nearest suitable school. Mrs McCaul also referred to discussion relating to Middletown Autism Centre which had highlighted that key staff were now employed at the Centre and that research and training facilities had commenced.

It was proposed by Mrs McCaul, seconded by Mrs Wright, and agreed that the minutes* (CYPS/10/08/9) of the meeting held on 23 October 2008 be adopted.

14. FINANCE COMMITTEE

Mr Sleator stated that the lack of progress in relation to planning issues for the development at Newry Youth Club meant that the Youth capital budget might not be fully spent. He outlined discussion in relation to the impact on the Youth budget as a result of the arrears to be paid to part-time youth workers; the delay in the deadline to 12 December 2008 of the consultation with schools on potential changes to the LMS Common Funding Formula; and the deliberations involving the 2008/09 annual pay increase for non-teaching employees covered under the Joint Negotiating Council. He also pointed out that the expected value of receipts from the sale of assets had decreased significantly at year end, from £3m to £339k, as the receipts had been re-profiled to May / June 2009.

(Councillor Cavanagh left the meeting at 3.55 pm.)

Mr Sleator pointed out that since preparing their plans in March, schools had subsequently been allocated an additional £6,166k and significant funds still remained to be allocated. He referred to pressures that could arise to the Board in the current year as a result of outstanding job evaluations and pay and grading claims and to the pressure which had arisen within Special Education where costs relating to hours for Classroom Assistants in mainstream schools had risen by 20% on the previous year. If further pay and grading costs for various staff did not crystallise in the current year, or if DE provided funding for this pressure, he stated that the contingency fund would be used to cover any service overspends which were currently forecast at £1,834k.

It was proposed by Mr Sleator, seconded by Mrs Wright, and agreed that the minutes* (F/10/08/10) of the meeting held on 31 October 2008 be adopted.

15. AUDIT COMMITTEE : MINUTES

Mr Sleator advised that the five Board bid to improve lighting at the rear of Board buses had been unsuccessful. The Board had however met the costs of improving lighting and

markings to the rear of all its new buses. He referred to the actions being taken to improve data security as set out in the Remedial Action Plan, the outcome of the review on Internal Audit undertaken by the DFP Consultancy Unit and the inclusion of a standing item on the Audit Committee agenda on governance arrangements up to the date of implementation of ESA. Mr Sleator also referred to discussion on Corporate Risks Nos 15 and 16, the Report of the NIAO to those charged with Governance (Audit Results) and NIAO's recommendations in relation to the proper management of non-public school funds.

It was proposed by Mr Sleator, seconded by Mrs Wright, and agreed that the minutes* (A/10/08/11) of the meeting held on 27 October 2008 be adopted. Mr Sleator highlighted that the meeting had become inquorate and that the last items of business had been for noting.

16. ASSOCIATION OF NORTHERN IRELAND EDUCATION AND LIBRARY BOARDS : MINUTES

The minutes* of a meeting held on 3 September 2008 were noted.

The meeting ended at 4.07 pm.

CHAIRPERSON

CHIEF EXECUTIVE

DATE

* Paper circulated
13 November 2008

** Paper tabled
LMcC