

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS OF A MEETING OF THE BOARD HELD ON WEDNESDAY, 13 FEBRUARY 2008 AT 2.30 PM IN THE BOARD ROOM

1. PRESENT Mrs M E Donnell (Chairperson)

Mr P H Aiken	Councillor P P McAleer
Councillor P Brannigan	Mr A McCreesh
Mrs S R Brownlee	Councillor J McCrum
Mr M P Campbell	Rev Canon J McKegey
Mr B Doran	Councillor S McRoberts
Councillor J Feehan	Very Rev L M McVeigh
Mr P Gildea	Councillor R Mulligan
Councillor I E B Hanna	Professor P Murphy
Councillor J Hanna	Mr A G Sleator
Councillor R A Harkness	Rev D Somerville
Dr M Hollinger	Mr J K Twyble
Councillor Ms C Lockhart	Councillor Dr P A Weir
Mr W Mayne	Mrs E Wright

2. IN ATTENDANCE

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

3. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Rev J Byrne, Dr P Cunningham, Mr C Mackin, Mrs M M Magennis and Mrs C M McCaul.

4. APPOINTMENT OF OFFICERS

Mrs McClenaghan advised that no appointments in the report had been made through additional funding. It was proposed by Councillor Harkness, seconded by Councillor I E B Hanna, and agreed that the report** (B/2/08/2) prepared by the Head of Human Resources be adopted.

5. BOARD MEETING : MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 9 JANUARY 2008

Mr Aiken referred to the Board's reporting mechanism for recording visits of Ministers to the Board. Mrs McClenaghan advised that Ministers made their visits separate to the Board meetings. She confirmed that in future reference would be made to Ministerial visits under Chairperson's Business at the Board meeting and recorded in the minutes.

(Mr Doran and Very Rev Fr McVeigh entered the meeting at 2.35 pm.)

On the proposal of Councillor McCrum, seconded by Mrs Wright, the minutes* (B/1/08/3) of the meeting held on 9 January 2008 were approved as an accurate record, subject to the above amendment, and were signed by the Chairperson and the Chief Executive.

6. MATTER ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE AND PERSONNEL CONSULTATION MEETINGS : DRAFT BUDGET 2008 – 2011 (6.2)

Mr Aiken pointed out that the Youth Service provided subsidies for the formal and informal sides of education. He particularly drew attention to the subsidies provided through its Outdoor Education Centres and explained that concern existed within the Youth Service that if the Youth budget was reduced opportunities to work with young people to deliver programmes would be further curtailed. He advised that the Joint Youth Committee would be required to examine closely in the coming months the attribution of costs for its Outdoor Education Centres.

7. CHAIRPERSON'S BUSINESS

7.1 WELCOME

The Chairperson welcomed Councillor Ms Carla Lockhart from Craigavon Borough Council to her first meeting of the Board.

7.2 COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP : COUNCILLORS GILDERNEW AND MS LOCKHART

The Chairperson advised that Councillor Gildernew had expressed an interest in serving on the Membership Committee. It was proposed by Mr McCreesh, seconded by Dr Hollinger, and agreed that Councillor Gildernew would serve on the Membership Committee.

The Chairperson advised that Councillor Ms Lockhart wished to serve on the Joint Education Committee, the Joint Youth Committee and the Membership Committee. It was proposed by Councillor McCrum, seconded by Mr Aiken, and agreed that Councillor Ms Lockhart would serve on these Committees.

7.3 LIBRARY COMMITTEE : MEMBERSHIP

The Chairperson reminded the Board that the Library Committee was not at its full complement and urged Members, particularly Councillor Members, to consider serving on this Committee.

7.4 PUBLIC APPOINTMENT : MR A G SLEATOR

The Chairperson reported that she had received a copy letter from the Permanent Secretary of DE advising that Mr Sleator's term of office expired on 31 March 2008 and requesting his consideration of the extension of his term to 31 March 2009.

7.5 SCHOOL VISITS

The Chairperson stated that Mrs McClenaghan and she had visited Tandragee Nursery School; Bessbrook, Clare, Hamiltonsbawn and Mountnorris Primary Schools; and Newry High School on 22 January 2008.

7.6 CHAIRPERSONS' COMMITTEE - BUSINESS ARISING FROM MEETING HELD AT 1.45 PM ON 13 FEBRUARY 2008

The Chairperson requested all officers to withdraw from the meeting during discussion of this item. All officers withdrew at 2.45 pm and re-entered at 2.53 pm.

The Chairperson reported that discussion had taken place during which it had been proposed by Rev Canon McKegney, seconded by Mr Twyble, and unanimously agreed that Mrs McClenaghan's contract of employment should be extended until 31 March 2009 with flexibility of an extension if circumstances deemed this appropriate and necessary.

(Mr Gildea, Councillor J Hanna and Councillor Weir entered the meeting at 2.55 pm.)

Mr Campbell, on behalf of the Chairpersons' Committee, paid tribute to Mrs McClenaghan for her services to education. Rev Canon McKegney and Very Rev Fr McVeigh also paid tribute to Mrs McClenaghan.

8. 2008/09 BUDGET : LIMITED CONSIDERATION OF INFORMATION RECEIVED BY 13 FEBRUARY 2008

The Board noted the letter** (B/2/08/6) dated 12 February 2008 from DE advising of core resource allocations for SELB in 2008/09 and a press release** (B/2/08/6) from the Education Minister advising of £1.45b recurrent funding for Education and Library Boards for 2008/09.

Mr Heron presented a paper** (B/2/08/6) summarising the content of the DE letter of 12 February 2008 and the Education Minister's press release. He outlined the position for SELB schools including the per pupil increase of 3.17%, an increase of the primary AWPU increase from 1.02 to 1.04, the pressures facing schools and a reduced Extended Schools' budget. The Board noted the centre increase of 3.2%, the requirement for a further £5.2m efficiency savings across all Boards and the pressures on the centre budget as listed in the paper which included Rates, projected to be an additional 4%.

Mr Heron referred to those schools which were either amalgamating or closing in August 2008 and to the teachers in those schools who had volunteered for early retirement on the understanding that responsibility for the costs associated with the enhancement of teacher pensions would be met by DE as was the case in previous years. Mrs McClenaghan advised that a business case had been sent to DE to meet the cost of the added years for the teachers concerned in the four schools, ie Collone, Killyman, Minterburn and Tamnamore Primary Schools, as the new arrangements for the Teachers' Premature Retirement Scheme had been introduced after negotiations with the four schools concerned.

It was proposed by Professor Murphy, seconded by Mr Sleator, and agreed that the Board would make provision within its 2008/09 budget for the enhancement of pensions for the teachers concerned at Collone, Killyman, Minterburn and Tamnamore Primary Schools should the business case to DE not prove successful.

Rev Mr Somerville considered that the decision by DE to pass the costs of enhanced teacher pensions to employers was a retrograde step. He drew attention to the pressures facing teachers and considered that teacher sickness absence and teacher substitution costs would be exacerbated by this decision. He also pointed out that education benefited from younger teachers who were more recently trained in delivering curricular issues. Mr Doran considered that the inability of the Board to meet such costs from its centre budget in future would discourage future amalgamations.

It was proposed by Rev Mr Somerville, seconded by Councillor J Hanna, and agreed that the Board would write to the Permanent Secretary highlighting the Board's concerns relating to the change in arrangements for the Teachers' Premature Retirement Scheme and that a copy of the letter would also be sent to the Education Committee of the Assembly.

Mr Aiken drew attention to the significant pressures on the centre budget from job evaluation costs in the incoming financial year such as for Youth and Community workers. He advised that a special meeting of the Youth Committee might be required to discuss the budgetary position. Mr Heron confirmed that the Youth budget for 2008/09 was not yet known.

Mr Campbell, as Chairperson of the Extended Schools' Project Management Board, expressed disappointment and concern that the budget for Extended Schools would be reduced. He drew attention to the encouragement within the community for the initiative, the positive outcomes and stated that the reduced budget would have a negative impact on those planned programmes for the area.

Mr Heron advised that the consideration would be given by the Finance Committee at its meeting on 29 February 2008 to the proposed budget for 2008/09; thereafter the budget would be presented to the Board on 12 March 2008 prior to the RAP being submitted to DE by 14 March 2008.

9. JOINT YOUTH COMMITTEE : MINUTES

Mr Aiken referred to Stakeholder Forum and advised that presentations would be made by the young people's group on dates to be agreed. He also drew attention to the six volunteer events taking place across both SELB and WELB which was providing access to 7,000 volunteers involved in delivering youth services.

It was noted that Mr P McDonnell should read Councillor P McDonnell among those present at the meeting. Subject to this amendment, it was proposed by Mr Aiken, seconded by Mr Twyble, and agreed that the minutes* (Y/1/08/7) of the meeting held on 16 January 2008 be adopted.

10. LIBRARY COMMITTEE

To facilitate the attendance of the Chairperson of the Library Committee, items on the agenda were taken in the following order.

10.1 MINUTES

Mr Aiken stated that the Chief Librarian and he had attended a meeting of the DCAL Committee along with representatives from the other Boards to discuss budgets and difficulties experienced within the Library Service. He advised that developments were continuing with the new Library Authority and drew attention to concerns relating to the position of the Schools' Library staff. He pointed out that absence levels within SELB branch libraries continued to cause concern.

Mrs Ryan advised that the budget allocation was expected to be received from DCAL in time for consideration by the Library Committee at its meeting on 19 February 2008. She reported that a consultation document was also being

presented to the Committee on proposals for the organisational structure of NILA which would then receive the Board's attention at its March meeting.

Mr Aiken stated that the Budget Working Group had not been in a position to bring forward recommendations until firm information of the budget allocation had been received. He advised that the Committee might be required to be convened on 18 March 2008.

Councillor Mulligan stated that he had attended the Library Committee meeting although his name was not listed among those present. Mr Twyble advised that his designation in the minutes was incorrect. Subject to these amendments, it was proposed by Mr Aiken, seconded by Mr Mayne, and agreed that the minutes* (L/1/08/13.1) of the meeting held on 15 January 2008 be adopted.

10.2 LIBRARY SERVICE : FURTHER BUDGET SAVING

It was proposed by Mr Aiken, seconded by Mr Mayne, and agreed that discussion in relation to this matter would be held in committee.

It was proposed by Mr Aiken, seconded by Mr Mayne, and agreed to resume the meeting.

The Board noted that it had been proposed by Mr Campbell, seconded by Very Rev Fr McVeigh, and agreed that Miss M A Hamilton would be offered premature retirement on the grounds of voluntary redundancy with effect from 31 March 2008.

(Mr Aiken, Mrs Brownlee, Councillor Feehan and Councillor McAleer left the meeting at 3.50 pm.)

11. JOINT EDUCATION COMMITTEE : MINUTES

Mr Campbell advised that the issues relating to management points for Extended Schools' Co-ordinators had been clarified as detailed in the minutes. He referred to the proposal to have meetings of the Committee in two schools in future months and the recommendation to cancel the Committee meeting in March. He also referred to the establishment of sub-committees to provide draft responses to consultation documents and to the proposed visit by CCEA later in the year to give a presentation on Assessment arrangements. Mr Campbell drew attention to the additional PEAG places granted to the SELB and to the results of the evaluation of the implementation of the NI Revised Curriculum for the primary and post-primary sectors.

It was proposed by Mr Campbell, seconded by Very Rev Fr McVeigh, and agreed that the minutes* (E/1/08/8) of the meeting held on 24 January 2008 be adopted.

12. JOINT CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICES COMMITTEE

12.1 MINUTES

Dr Hollinger referred to the update given on the implementation of job evaluation for Classroom Assistants, the presentation on the Regional Criteria pilot project and the interventions in place across SELB and WELB for children and young people with specific learning difficulties. She also drew attention to the two new Autism Specific Classes in WELB and the work involved in establishing an Early Years project at Donard School, Banbridge.

It was proposed by Dr Hollinger, seconded by Mr McCreesh, and agreed that the minutes* (CYPS/1/08/9) of the meeting held on 24 January 2008 be adopted. The Board agreed that no meeting of the Committee would take place in March.

12.2 AUTHORISATION TO PROCESS STATEMENTS

It was proposed by Mr McCreesh, seconded by Councillor J Hanna, and agreed that officers would be authorised to process statements during March. All statements processed during this period would be reported to the Committee at its April meeting.

13. FINANCE COMMITTEE : MINUTES

Mr Sleator drew attention to the consultation exercise on the change to the AWPU weighting for primary school pupils and pointed out that the results of this exercise had been made known to the Board earlier in the meeting during discussion of the Budget for 2008/09. He referred to the amended school plans which had been considered in various categories depending on their surplus or deficit position over the 2006/07 to 2009/10 period. He also referred to the capital position at 31 December 2007 and pointed out that DE had been made aware of pressures which existed within the minor works budget. The Board noted that representation had been made to DE in relation to raising the £300k limit on minor works.

Mr Sleator outlined the forecasted recurrent position at year end, the availability of access to EYF monies over the following three years and the recommendation relating to spend of surplus centre monies prior to the end of the financial year.

It was proposed by Mr Sleator, seconded by Mrs Wright, and agreed that the minutes* (F/1/08/10) of the meeting held on 25 January 2008 be adopted. Mr Heron confirmed that a special meeting of the Committee would not be necessary; consideration of the centre spend would be facilitated at the Finance Committee meeting on 29 February 2008.

14. AUDIT COMMITTEE : MINUTES

Mr Sleator referred to the Library Service's stock inventory and database clean-up exercise, the disparity between the controlled and maintained sectors on teacher sickness absence and the ability of the Board to meet the RAP target in reducing teacher absence. He pointed out that the uptake by principals and governors in attending training sessions on raising awareness of attendance management was still low. Mr Sleator also referred to the presentation given on the Board's security of data and to the recommendation to provide training to schools on their responsibilities under the Data Protection Act. He stated that concern had been expressed to the DE official present at the meeting that initiatives promoted by DE, to develop expertise within schools, were withdrawn in subsequent years on account of funding issues.

It was proposed by Mr Sleator, seconded by Mrs Wright, and agreed that the minutes* (A/1/08/11) of the meeting held on 14 January 2008 be adopted.

15. SCHOOLS AND SERVICES COMMITTEE : MINUTES

Councillor McRoberts referred to the new membership of the Property Sub-Committee, its minutes of 14 January 2008 and also to the update provided on the Asset Management Project for which the SELB was lead Board.

The Chairperson referred to the comments attributed to her under the minutes of the Nursery & Primary Teachers' Consultative Committee and advised that they should be amended to read "She explained that they had received several requests for transformation of reception classes into nursery units but did not think transformation would be successful in all cases." Mr Campbell wished to clarify that Rev Canon McKegney, as Chairperson of the Advisory Sub-Committee for Controlled Schools, had also been given a copy of the report on School Federations.

Subject to these amendments, it was proposed by Councillor McRoberts, seconded by Councillor Harkness, and agreed that the minutes* (SS/1/08/12) of the meeting held on 17 January 2008 be adopted.

16. COMMITTEE FOR THE APPOINTMENT OF PERIPATETIC TEACHERS : MINUTES

The minutes* (PT/12/07/14.1) of the meeting held on 10 December 2007 and the minutes* (PT/1/08/14.2, 14.3 and 14.4) of the meetings held on 11, 21 and 30 January 2008 were noted. The Board noted that the heading in minute 5 in the minutes of 30 January 2008 should read "Teacher : EOTAS Service".

17. TEACHERS' STAFFING COMMITTEE : MINUTES

The minutes* (TSC/1/08/15) of the meeting held on 25 January 2008 were noted.

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

The minutes* (B/2/08/16.1) of a meeting held on 5 December 2007 and the minutes* (B/2/08/16.2) of a special meeting held on 15 January 2008 were noted.

The Board noted that the President of the ANIELB wished to visit all Boards to speak about arrangements for the annual conference in October 2008. Mrs McClenaghan undertook to invite Mr Reilly to the May meeting of the Board.

19. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

SPERRINVIEW SCHOOL

With the approval of the Chairperson, Mr McCreesh drew attention to a matter which had been raised at a meeting of the Board of Governors of Sperrinview School. Mrs McClenaghan undertook to respond to the Secretary of the Board of Governors, with a copy letter to Mr McCreesh, on the timetable for the capital build extension at Sperrinview.

The meeting ended at 4.30 pm.

CHAIRPERSON

* Paper circulated
15 February 2008

CHIEF EXECUTIVE

** Paper tabled
LMcC

DATE