

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS OF A MEETING OF THE BOARD HELD ON WEDNESDAY, 9 APRIL 2008 AT 2.30 PM IN THE BOARD ROOM

1. PRESENT Mrs M E Donnell (Chairperson)

Mr P H Aiken	Mrs C M McCaul
Councillor P Brannigan	Councillor J McCrum
Mr M P Campbell	Rev Canon J McKegney
Dr P Cunningham	Very Rev L M McVeigh
Councillor I E B Hanna	Councillor R Mulligan
Councillor R A Harkness	Councillor M Murphy
Councillor Ms C Lockhart	Professor P Murphy
Mr C Mackin	Mr A G Sleator
Mr W Mayne	Mr J K Twyble
Councillor P P McAleer	Councillor Dr P Weir

2. IN ATTENDANCE

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

3. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Mrs S R Brownlee, Rev J Byrne, Mr B Doran, Councillor J Feehan, Mr P Gildea, Dr M Hollinger, Mr A McCreesh, Councillor S McRoberts, Rev D Somerville and Mrs E Wright.

4. APPOINTMENT OF OFFICERS

Mrs McClenaghan drew attention to funding arrangements for posts contained within the report. It was proposed by, seconded by, and agreed that the report** (B/4/ 08/2) prepared by the Head of Human Resources be adopted.

5. BOARD MEETING : MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 12 MARCH 2008

On the proposal of Councillor McCrum, seconded by Councillor Mulligan, the minutes* (B/3/08/3) of the meeting held on 12 March 2008 were approved as an accurate record and were signed by the Chairperson and the Chief Executive. (Mr Sleator entered at a later point in the meeting and raised an amendment under minute 6.2 "Area-Based Planning".)

6. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

6.1 DISCOVERY OF BOARD DOCUMENTS (7.3)

The Chairperson stated that the Minister had asked her to provide a statement on the storage and disposal of the Board's confidential documents. She confirmed that she had issued such a statement to the Minister. Mrs McClenaghan outlined the enhanced security arrangements which had been facilitated at Board Headquarters and Out-Centres and referred to advice being provided to officers regarding the transporting of confidential files in the course of their work.

(Mr Sleator entered the meeting at 2.38 pm.)

6.2 AREA-BASED PLANNING : MINISTER'S SPEECH (12)

A letter* dated 2 April 2008 from the Minister inviting nominations to participate in Area-Based Planning Groups was noted. It was noted that Mr G Butler had already been nominated by the Board at its March meeting to serve on the Southern Area Group. It was proposed by Mr Campbell, seconded by Mr Twyble, and agreed that Mrs E Ross would be nominated as the Board's second nominee. It was also agreed that the Board would put forward the proposal that it would provide the secretary to the southern area group. Mrs McClenaghan advised that consideration would be given by the Association of Chief Executives the following Monday as to its representative to serve on the central group.

Mr Sleator referred to the proposal to write to the Minister requesting that a representative from Scotland should serve on the central group. He understood that the Board had also agreed that the support of the other Boards would be sought to this proposal. This was agreed. Mrs McClenaghan said that she had referred the Board's opinion to the Minister.

6.3 FINANCE COMMITTEE : MINUTES (17)

Mrs McClenaghan confirmed that the Energy and Efficiency Officer had responded to Councillor Hanna's query on grant funding for energy efficiency schemes.

7. CHAIRPERSON'S BUSINESS

CORPORATE FUND RAISING FOR A CHARITY

The Chairperson stated that some officers had put forward proposals to commemorate the life of the Board in its final year of operation by fund raising for a charity which provided school buildings for schools in Kenya. Mrs McClenaghan drew attention to the Board's previous fund raising activities for individual charities and advised that fund raising for this project would be sustained over the next 8 months. She reported that a risk assessment had been carried out on the proposal and she had spoken to the Permanent Secretary and the NI Audit Office regarding governance arrangements. A steering group would be established, to include Mr Heron, which would provide regular reports to the SMT and the Audit Committee, if this was acceptable. Time spent on the project by officers would be outside core hours.

It was proposed by Professor Murphy, seconded by Mr Aiken, and agreed that the Board should proceed to fund raise for a school in Kenya under the aegis of 'Build Africa'.

(Councillor Dr Weir entered the meeting at 2.55 pm.)

BOARD MEMBERSHIP : RESIGNATION OF COUNCILLOR B CURRAN

The Chairperson reported that Councillor Curran had resigned from the Board and that arrangements were in hand for the appointment by the Minister of a replacement member.

REVIEW OF POLICY ON LOCATION OF PUBLIC SECTOR JOBS

A letter** dated 8 April 2008 from Professor Sir George Bain, Chair of the Independent Review of Policy on the Location of Public Sector Jobs, was noted. The letter provided details of public meetings in April and May throughout the Province. Mrs McClenaghan pointed out that all meetings were being convened during office hours which did not encourage attendance of those in employment. It was proposed by Rev Canon McKegney, seconded by Councillor Hanna, and agreed that Mrs McClenaghan should write to DFP to request a meeting in Armagh outside office hours.

PQH GRADUATES

The Chairperson drew attention to the normal practice of the Board to invite PQH Graduates to meet Members. She advised that 33 Graduates had been invited to the May Board meeting.

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

8.1 DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL NO 224 : ARMAGH CHRISTIAN BROTHERS' PRIMARY SCHOOL

The Chairperson welcomed Mr K Devlin, Principal of St Patrick's Primary School, Armagh, and Mrs E Cullen, SENCO representative at the school. Copies of letters dated 16 November 2007 from Mr Devlin to CCMS outlining the school's position to the Development Proposal and a response dated 7 January 2008 from CCMS were made available for Members.

In his presentation Mr Devlin stated that St Patrick's Primary School strongly opposed the Development Proposal to establish a Key Stage 2 Learning Support Centre (LSC) in Christian Brothers' Primary School. He cited the following reasons:

- St Patrick's PS already had a purpose-built LSC to serve pupils in the Armagh area; therefore provision at another school in the Armagh area was a duplication of resources and wasteful;
- St Patrick's PS KS2 LSC currently had 12 pupils enrolled in P5 – P7 (4 with Autism and 2 with Asperger Syndrome); however 8 of these pupils would be leaving the LSC in June 2008. Given the level of accommodation and the spare capacity in September 2008 the school would question the need to provide another facility in Armagh which would cause displacement of St Patrick's PS pupils;
- The viability of two LSCs in Armagh considering that the current trend was for parents to opt for mainstream education rather than LSCs. In addition rationalisation of primary school provision was currently underway;
- The expertise developed by the teaching and non-teaching staff in the LSC of St Patrick's PS; and
- The benefits to be gained in re-opening a KS1 Unit in St Patrick's PS.

Mr Aiken queried if the school had made it known that it was unable to provide an Autistic Unit at the school on account of accommodation needs at the time when expressions of interest were being sought for this provision in the Armagh area.

The representatives advised that they were unaware whether or not this concern had been put in writing. Dr Cunningham referred to the future role of LSCs in ensuring social and curricular integration. He considered that the school's case would have been made stronger if it had stated that it had excellent provision but could not accommodate an Autistic Unit at that time on account of circumstances outside its control. Very Rev Fr McVeigh received clarification that the LSC at St Patrick's PS expected to have 11 children in the next academic year.

The Chairperson thanked Mr Devlin and Mrs Cullen for their attendance and the two representatives withdrew from the meeting.

The Board noted a response* from St Patrick's Primary School, Dungannon to the Proposal.

Mrs McCaul referred to decisions taken by the Board in previous years in relation to LSC and Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) provision in its area. She stated that all Trustees of maintained schools had been approached to ascertain interest in ASD provision; the only response in the Armagh area had been from Christian Brothers' PS. She referred to St Patrick's PS's view that it should also house an Autistic Unit on its premises and considered that principals needed clarity on the differential functions of KS2 LSC and ASD provisions.

Dr Mangan stated that Development Proposals published by WELB relating to the establishment of an ASD LSC also referenced a KS2 LSC provision opening at a later date.

Dr Mangan confirmed that St Patrick's PS hoped to have 11 children in its LSC class in the next academic year and advised that the maximum number of these children in any LSC class was 12. Consequently, this provision would not have any spare capacity. Furthermore, she pointed out that CCMS had the primary consultation role with maintained schools during consideration of these matters.

Mrs McCaul referred to the importance of children on the Autistic spectrum of having continuity of provision within the same school. Mr Campbell also referred to the complex needs of these children requiring security and continuity of provision. Mr Mackin supported Mrs McCaul's request for clarity to be provided to principals on KS1 LSCs / ASD LSCs and KS2 LSCs.

The Board noted that it was obliged to publish Development Proposal No 224* (B/4/08/6.1). It agreed that those comments raised by Members would be submitted to the Department of Education.

8.2 DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL NO 222 : COLÁISTE SPEIRÍN

The Board noted responses* from Gaelscoil Ui Neill; Holy Trinity College; The Royal School, Dungannon; Bush and Moneymore Primary Schools. Mrs McClenaghan drew attention to the consideration given by the Board regarding the previous Development Proposal for this school which had referenced a satellite school in Cookstown funded by the parent school in Belfast. She advised that the Board had not been engaged in discussions relating to the funding mechanism for this Proposal. She drew attention to the table in the Development Proposal detailing the number of pupils which was based on the 2007/08 enrolment figures in Irish Medium schools in the school's catchment area. The Board noted that the

school had 7 pupils currently enrolled and that the baseline number for grant funding was 50.

Mr Mayne stated that the use of Loughry College to provide Irish Medium education was being strongly opposed by local residents. He considered that this Proposal would contribute to the number of empty places in existing schools.

Professor Murphy drew attention to the number of Irish Medium primary schools and the need to provide progression for these children in the post-primary sector. While he supported the Proposal in principle he considered that locations for post-primary Irish Medium provision should be strategically examined throughout the Province.

Mrs McClenaghan confirmed that currently Colaiste Speirin was not publicly funded. If the Proposal was accepted by the Minister the school would in due course be grant aided provided it met the baseline enrolment number.

Councillor Dr Weir stated that the Proposal referenced the challenges facing schools as a result of the Bain and Costello reports and highlighted that no mention had been made of the key elements of strategic review being conducted. He drew attention to the increasing number of Integrated and Irish Medium schools at a time of falling enrolment numbers which contributed to the number of small schools and impacted on the overall allocation distributed to schools. He highlighted the impact particularly of this Proposal on Holy Trinity College.

Councillor McAleer drew attention to the need for post-primary Irish Medium provision in the Cookstown area. He pointed out that Colaiste Speirin was an ideal location for the 7 feeder schools and advised that more young people were leaving Cookstown to be educated elsewhere than any other area.

Mr Mackin endorsed the need for such provision but requested that the comments put forward by Holy Trinity College in its response to the Proposal be taken on board.

The Board noted that it was obliged to publish Development Proposal No 222* (B/4/08/6.2). It agreed that the comments raised by Members would be submitted to the Department of Education.

8.3 DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL NO 223 : PRIMATE DIXON PRIMARY SCHOOL, COALISLAND

The Board noted that it was obliged to publish Development Proposal No 223* (B/4/08/6.3) relating to the establishment of a KS2 LSC at Primate Dixon Primary School. The Board noted responses* from Gaeilscoil Ui Neill; Bush and Moneymore Primary Schools; St Patrick's Primary School, Dungannon; and The Royal School, Dungannon. Mrs McCaul expressed her support to the Proposal. She stated that her earlier comments regarding the importance of providing clarity to principals on ASD and LSC Units at KS1 and KS2 levels could be considered at the Children & Young People's Services Committee.

8.4 DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL NO 225 : BUNSCOIL UÍ CHLÉIRIGH

The Board noted that it was obliged to publish Development Proposal No 225* (B/4/08/6.4) relating to the establishment of a new grant-aided Irish Medium primary school in Dungannon. The Board noted responses* from Gaeilscoil Ui

Neill; Blessed Patrick O'Loughran Primary School; Bush Primary School; and The Royal School, Dungannon.

Councillor Dr Weir expressed concern that the establishment of this school would impact on the enrolment numbers and the viability of other local schools.

9. LIBRARY COMMITTEE : MINUTES

Mr Aiken stated that the Board's response to the NILA consultation document on the proposal for the organisational structure had been submitted by the due date of 28 March 2008. He referred to minutes of a meeting of the DCAL Committee which had asked Boards to indicate in which areas they would wish to spend additional monies. The Boards' response had been to allocate these monies to redundancies and the Department had therefore complied with this request. He drew attention to concerns that monies were not being spent on services but with providing assistance for the establishment of NILA. He queried the process for such information to be supplied to the sponsoring departments and requested that future opportunities should be reported to the Library Committee for its consideration.

Mr Heron outlined the process for submitting five Board bids. He stated that the Finance Committee, comprising the chairpersons of the main committees of the Board, would give consideration to Board pressures on a regular basis. When opportunities arose to avail of additional monies from the sponsoring departments he advised that Board officers would be in communication with Department officers regarding the likelihood of a successful bid. He stated that this process had a tight timescale.

Mr Campbell referred to the targets in the 2008/09 Service Development Plan which related to the continued promotion of libraries in local communities. He requested that Councillor J Hanna's previous remarks at the March Board meeting relating to the development of a library provision within Gilford Community Centre be explored by the Library Committee prior to the establishment of NILA. Mr Aiken undertook, as part of the Service Development Plan, to ensure that consideration would be given to this matter by the Committee.

Mr Aiken stated that the Committee had welcomed to the meeting Mr Butler as the new Head of Library Services and that the date for consideration by the Board of the NILA consultation document should read 9 April. Subject to these amendments, it was proposed by Mr Aiken, seconded by Mr Mayne, and agreed that the minutes* (L/3/08/7) of the meeting held on 18 March 2008 be adopted.

(Dr Cunningham, Mr Mackin and Councillor McAleer left the meeting at 4.15 pm.)

10. REVIEW OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION : REQUEST FOR SPEAKING RIGHTS FROM THE NORTHERN IRELAND PUBLIC SERVICE ALLIANCE

The Chairperson welcomed Ms A Millar to the meeting.

Ms Millar thanked the Board for granting speaking rights to NIPSA. She outlined NIPSA's current issues and concerns in relation to the impact of RPA on Education and Library Boards, particularly focusing on issues relating the staff, Youth and Library Services, the Change Management Strategy, the Estates Sub-Group and Area Planning. She believed the Boards and NIPSA could work together to achieve a satisfactory outcome on how staff would be treated in the transfer to ESA and NILA.

Mr Aiken drew attention to the positive attitudes relating to the new Library Authority and to the good working relationship between the Board and NIPSA particularly during discussions on new opening hours of branch libraries. He stated however that the issue of school library staff still remained a concern. He requested the Board's consideration that RPA be placed as a standing item on the Board agenda.

Mr Twyble thanked Ms Millar for her comments and asked if the Board could receive her speaking notes. Ms Millar undertook to forward them to the Board.

The Chairperson expressed appreciation to Ms Millar for addressing the Board. Ms Millar withdrew from the meeting.

11. JOINT YOUTH COMMITTEE : MINUTES

It was noted that the recommendations relating to the Budget Proposals for 2008/09 and the Response to the EQIA Screening of Policy Paper 9 (Youth Work) within the Joint Youth Committee minutes of 10 March had been adopted by the Board at its meeting on 12 March. It was proposed by Mr Aiken, seconded by Mr Twyble, and agreed that the minutes* (Y/3/08/9) of the meeting held on 10 March 2008 be adopted.

12. FINANCE COMMITTEE : MINUTES

Mr Sleator drew attention to notification of the Board's provisional capital allocation of £10m for 2008/09; the planning pack issued to schools to assist with the completion of their 3 year budget plan; and the capital spend as at 29 February 2008. He referred to the recommendations relating to the spend of £550k recurrent monies prior to year end; the letter to be issued to DE relating to the Extended Schools' Programme; and the impact on school budgets to provide for an ongoing annual increase of approximately 20% in the cost of cleaners as a result of the Independent Appeal on 10 March 2008. He also referred to the notification from DE on 21 March 2008 that the Board would be allocated £2,984k additional Centre EYF from 2006/07 and £429k earmarked EYF which meant that the Board would not be required to top-slice its 2008/09 allocation to cover the then forecast Centre deficit arising from the cleaners' job evaluation.

Mr Campbell highlighted the operational difficulties schools were experiencing in delivering their planned programmes as a result of budgetary information not being made available by DE for the Extended Schools' Programme. Schools in the Programme, required to submit their planned programmes by the end of March, had now been advised that the date for submission was the end of May. He stated that further postponement would impact on the ability of schools to have planned programmes in place to employ staff to deliver services. Mrs McClenaghan stated that the Permanent Secretary had been unable to provide an update on the budgetary position at the meeting following the Finance Committee. She undertook to represent the Board's concerns to DE on the impact of this delay on schools.

It was proposed by Mr Sleator, seconded by Mr Twyble, and agreed that the minutes* (F/3/08/10) of the meeting held on 28 March 2008 be adopted.

13. AUDIT COMMITTEE : MINUTES

Mr Sleator referred to the external review of Internal Audit commissioned by DCAL; the discussion regarding the discovery of documents at Camlough; the assurances designed

for the Committee in the form of a Self-Assessment Checklist; the findings from the Assessment of Best Practice in Schools; the submission of a 30 day action plan to DE in relation to securing data; the draft 2006/07 Governance Report; and the draft NIAO Audit Strategy which identified the date for receipt of the final version of the Financial Statements (unsigned) as 16 May 2008.

It was proposed by Mr Sleator, seconded by Professor Murphy, and agreed that the minutes* (A/3/08/11) of the meeting held on 13 March 2008 be adopted.

14. TEACHING APPOINTMENTS COMMITTEE : MINUTES

The minutes* (TAC/3/08/12) of the meeting held on 13 March 2008 were noted.

15. COMMITTEE FOR THE APPOINTMENT OF PERIPATETIC TEACHERS : MINUTES

The minutes* (PT/3/08/13) of the meeting held on 4 March 2008 were noted.

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

The minutes* (B/4/08/14) of a meeting held on 6 February 2008 were noted. The Chairperson advised that the May meeting of the Executive Committee would be held in the offices of the Southern Board.

The meeting ended at 4.45 pm.

CHAIRPERSON

* Paper circulated
11 April 2008

CHIEF EXECUTIVE

** Paper tabled
LMcC

DATE