

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS OF A MEETING OF THE BOARD HELD ON WEDNESDAY, 14 JANUARY 2009 AT 2.30 PM IN THE BOARD ROOM

1. PRESENT Mrs M E Donnell (Chairperson)

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| Mr P H Aiken | Councillor P P McAleer |
| Councillor Brannigan | Mrs C M McCaul |
| Mrs S R Brownlee | Mr A McCreesh |
| Mr M P Campbell | Councillor S McRoberts |
| Councillor J Cavanagh | Very Rev L M McVeigh |
| Councillor C Casey | Councillor R Mulligan |
| Mr P Gildea | Mr A G Sleator |
| Councillor I E B Hanna | Rev D Somerville |
| Dr M Hollinger | Mr J K Twyble |
| Mr C Mackin | Councillor Dr P A Weir |
| Mr W Mayne | Mrs E Wright |

2. IN ATTENDANCE

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

3. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Rev J Byrne, Councillor R A Harkness, Councillor Ms C Lockhart, Councillor J McCrum, Rev Canon J McKegey, Councillor M Murphy and Professor P Murphy.

4. APPOINTMENT OF OFFICERS

Mrs McClenaghan drew attention to funding arrangements for posts contained within the report. It was proposed by Mr Sleator, seconded by Mrs Wright, and agreed that the report** (B/1/09/2) prepared by the Head of Human Resources be adopted.

It was noted that Ms Louise Ayling had been appointed Chief Finance Officer (temporary). Ms Ayling was invited to join the meeting and was congratulated on her appointment.

5. BOARD MEETING : MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 10 DECEMBER 2008

Mr Sleator referred to the Finance Committee minute and to the comment that no spend would be shown against the contingency fund of £1,101k. He requested that an additional sentence be added to the end of the paragraph: "Consequent to these costs being incurred in this financial year from job evaluations there would be a requirement for DE to fully fund any additional costs."

Mr Sleator also requested that the first paragraph relating to the Audit Committee minutes should read as follows "... to secure Board data. There was a review of earmarked funding currently being undertaken by DE. Also consideration was given to the Management Statement and the Financial Memorandum ..."

On the proposal of Mr Twyble, seconded by Mrs Wright, the minutes* (B/12/08/3) of the meeting held on 10 December 2008, subject to the above amendments, were approved as an accurate record and were signed by the Chairperson and the Chief Executive.

(Rev Mr Somerville entered the meeting at 2.37 pm.)

6. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

6.1 APOLOGIES (3)

The Chairperson referred to a letter of thanks received from Rev Canon McKegney following the Board's letter to him conveying its good wishes on a speedy recovery.

6.2 BOARD MEMBERSHIP (6.1)

The Chairperson reported that a letter had been received from DE advising that it had obtained the agreement of the Commissioner for Public Appointments to extend the term of office for Board Members whose term was due to expire before the establishment of ESA. The letter also stated that DE would be advising all Board Members of the position in the coming weeks.

The Chairperson stated that DE had also written to advise that it did not consider it prudent to run a public appointments competition at this time to fill Mr Doran's vacancy on the Board.

The Chairperson also reported that Councillor J Feehan had resigned from the Board's membership and that Newry and Mourne District Council had written to DE to submit the name of a replacement member.

6.3 EDUCATION AND SKILLS AUTHORITY (8)

6.3.1 RPA POLICY PAPER 20

The Chairperson referred to Policy Paper 20** entitled 'Publicly Owned Schools – Ownership and Representation'. Mrs McClenaghan stated that the Paper had been received only the previous Monday and was therefore tabled rather than being on the agenda. She stressed the importance of the Board responding to it as a consultee. She wished to encourage Boards of Governors to respond to it and, accordingly, a number of sessions for Principals and Governors had been organised to assist them in their understanding of the Paper and to enable them to offer responses to the questions it contained. Some points for consideration to encourage Governors to comment would be placed shortly on the Board's website together with details of the sessions.

(Very Rev Fr McVeigh entered the meeting at 2.43 pm.)

It was agreed that the Advisory Sub-Committee for Controlled Schools would meet in February to consider Policy Paper 20 and that a response, which would incorporate the views expressed by Governors, Members and other stakeholders, would be presented to the Board at its March meeting.

6.3.2 EDUCATION BILL

The Chairperson advised that the Education Bill had passed its Second Stage in the Assembly on 8 December 2008 and the Committee Stage of the Bill had now commenced. She stated that stakeholders were now being invited to submit written evidence to the Committee by Friday, 20 February 2009 on specific clauses of the Bill and its schedules.

It was agreed that the Chairpersons' Committee would be convened to consider the Bill to enable a response to be considered by the Board at its February meeting.

6.3.3 LETTER DATED 1 DECEMBER 2008 FROM MR J McGRATH

Mr Sleator queried whether the clarification, referred to in Mr McGrath's letter, on managing the transition to ESA in terms of service provision and accountability had been received to enable it to be considered by the Finance Committee. Mr Heron confirmed that no such clarification had yet been received.

6.4 BOARD HEADQUARTERS : STAFFING (9)

(The Chief Executive, the Senior Management Team and Ms Ayling withdrew from the meeting.)

Mr Keating advised that the shortlisting and interviewing panels would take place on 20 and 27 January 2009 with the expectation that the successful candidate would take up post on 1 April 2009. He stated that the Permanent Secretary or his representative would serve on the panels.

Mr Keating outlined the ratification process. Mr Mackin queried if those Members not serving on the appointment panel could be informed of the outcome as soon as possible. Mr Keating confirmed that all Members would be advised as soon as practicable after the successful applicant had been informed.

(Councillor Dr Weir entered the meeting at 3.02 pm.)

Discussion ensued in relation to the role of the independent assessor. Mr Keating noted the comments raised by Mrs McCaul.

(The Chief Executive and the Senior Management Team re-entered the meeting.)

6.5 AUDIT COMMITTEE : MINUTES – RECONSTITUTION OF BOARDS OF GOVERNORS (14)

The Chairperson referred to the appointment process for Board Members to Boards of Governors. Mrs McClenaghan advised that officers had prepared a timetable for the reconstitution of Boards of Governors and that she hoped to bring a paper to the February Board meeting on the redistribution of Transferor interests where schools had closed. She stated that the Membership Committee, at its April meeting, would start the process of appointing Board representatives to Boards of Governors.

Confirmation was provided that Members now being appointed to serve as Board representatives on Boards of Governors would continue until the next reconstitution in 2013 unless he or she resigned as a Governor. Mrs McClenaghan

drew attention to a changing environment for Governors following the implementation of ESA.

The Board noted the delays still being experienced with the checking arrangements provided by Access NI. It agreed that current vacancies for Board representatives on Boards of Governors of controlled and maintained schools would be left vacant until Boards of Governors were reconstituted. Mrs McClenaghan said that schools would be advised of this and the timetable for reconstitution.

6.6 SCHOOLS AND SERVICES COMMITTEE : MINUTES (15)

The Chairperson referred to the discussion which had taken place in relation to Brownlow Integrated College. She stated that, following a discussion with Mr Aiken, Mrs McClenaghan had suggested that an amplifying statement would be presented to the Board as follows: "Officers were aware of the accommodation requirements of Brownlow Integrated College and recognised that the needs of this school must be considered in their own right." It was agreed to record this statement in the minutes.

7. CHAIRPERSON'S BUSINESS

7.1 FINANCE COMMITTEE : VISIT OF MR G BOYD

The Chairperson reported that Mr Boyd would not be attending the January meeting of the Finance Committee.

7.2 PUBLICATION OF THE SUSTAINABLE SCHOOLS POLICY

Mrs McClenaghan reported that the Minister had announced the publication of 'A Policy for Sustainable Schools'. The sole amendment to the draft Policy, commonly known as the Bain Report for Sustainable Schools, to which the Board had responded during the period of consultation was the inclusion of the sentence in paragraph 6.5: "Enrolment is only one of the sustainability criteria and other considerations may also apply depending on individual circumstances." in the section headed 'Sustainability Criteria and Indicators'.

The DE press release** (B/1/09/5) setting out the link to the Policy document on DE's website (http://www.deni.gov.uk/index/85-schools/13-schools_estate_pg/14-schools_-_estate-newpage.htm) was noted.

7.3 LIBRARY SERVICE

The Chairperson invited all Members to a lunch on Wednesday, 11 March 2009 at 1.00 pm in the Board Room to mark the transfer of responsibilities for the Public Library Service from the Board to NILA and to thank the members of the Library Service Development Team for their contributions to the Service over the years.

7.4 BUILD AFRICA GALA BALL

The Chairperson reminded Members that tickets could be purchased from officers for the Gala Ball on Saturday, 28 February 2009.

7.5 APPRECIATION OF MR T HERON

Tributes to the character and outstanding work provided by Mr Heron to the Board were given by the Chairperson and various other Members. Their congratulations on his appointment as Director of Business Support to NILA and their best wishes in his new post were warmly conveyed.

8. RESPONSE TO THE ECONOMIC DOWNTURN AND DECEMBER MONITORING : ALLOCATIONS

The Board noted the letter* (B/1/09/6) from DE and expressed appreciation that it would receive an allocation of £0.465m for maintenance and £0.479m for the arrears due to part-time youth workers.

Mr Aiken referred to ongoing pressures on the Youth Service budget and asked if the Board could expect an increase in this budget in the following year. Mr Doran stated that the recent allocation would ensure that the service would be in a position to meet in-year commitments. He noted that previous forecasts had suggested that the service was to face a below inflationary allocation for the next financial year. Mr Aiken stated that the Board should continue to highlight to DE the pressures that the Youth Service would face in the coming year.

9. PROPOSED DATES OF BOARD AND COMMITTEE MEETINGS FOR 2009

The Board agreed to adopt the schedule of dates for 2009.

The meeting ended at 3.40 pm.

CHAIRPERSON

* Paper circulated
15 January 2009

CHIEF EXECUTIVE

** Paper tabled
LMcC

DATE