

**MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS OF A MEETING OF THE TRANSITIONAL BOARD
HELD ON WEDNESDAY, 12 OCTOBER 2011 AT 2.00 PM IN THE BOARD ROOM**

1. PRESENT Mr M P Campbell (Chairperson)

Mrs R Brownlee
Councillor J Cavanagh
Councillor S Clarke
Mr C Mackin

Mrs C M McCaul
Councillor J McCrum
Mr R McVeigh
Professor P Murphy

2. IN ATTENDANCE

Mr A P Murphy, Ms L Ayling, Mr G P Butler, Mr J Curran, Ms H Duffy, Dr C Mangan and Mrs L McCall.

3. APOLOGIES

Apologies had been received from Rev Canon J McKegey, Councillor S McRoberts and Mr J Wilkinson.

4. APPOINTMENT OF OFFICERS

Mr Murphy drew attention to funding arrangements for the posts contained within the report. It was proposed by Mrs Brownlee, seconded by Councillor Clarke, and agreed that the report** (B/10/11/2) prepared by the Head of Human Resources be adopted.

5. MINUTES OF BOARD MEETING HELD ON 14 SEPTEMBER 2011

It was noted that minute 15.1 should have read "Mr Wilkinson expressed regret that a solution for the young people at Craigavon Senior High School would be delayed". On the proposal of Councillor McCrum, seconded by Mrs McCaul, the minutes* (B/9/11/3) of the meeting held on 14 September 2011, subject to the above amendment, were approved as an accurate record and were signed by the Chairperson and the Chief Executive.

6. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

6.1 MEDIA COVERAGE (13.5)

The Chairperson indicated that the Communications Officer would attend the November meeting of the Board to discuss the Board's communications strategy.

6.2 REVIEW OF SELB PROCUREMENT PRACTICE AND MANAGEMENT OF CONTRACTS (14.2)

Mr Mackin drew attention to concerns relating to response maintenance which had been raised by both primary and post-primary schools in the Newry area. He stated that delays in response times were concerning, particularly for those works which he believed were of a health and safety nature. He considered that the Board should issue a questionnaire to schools to seek views on contractor performance and the level of customer satisfaction. Mr Butler stated that the Board was required to remain within the contractual arrangements of the NEC3 Term Service Contract. He

outlined the process which allowed for fines to be imposed on any contractor not adhering to the specified terms of the contract and the escalation of this process which eventually could make the contract null and void. While a questionnaire inviting comments from schools was inadvisable as part of the NEC3 contract, Mr Butler said that a letter would issue to schools to outline the mechanism by which schools could inform the Board of their concerns. He confirmed that any issues already raised by schools would be investigated by the Board and actions taken as appropriate.

7. CHAIRPERSON'S BUSINESS

7.1 BOARD MEMBERSHIP

The Chairperson reported that DE interviews were taking place the following day for the two Councillor Member vacancies on the Board.

7.2 ASSOCIATION OF NORTHERN IRELAND EDUCATION AND LIBRARY BOARDS (ANIELB)

7.2.1 CONFERENCE

The Chairperson encouraged all Board Members to attend the ANIELB conference on 17 November 2011 in Stranmillis College. Early indications were that the conference would include an address by the Minister, a question time involving a panel of politicians and a number of resolutions which would allow for discussion of critical issues, eg raising standards for pupils, capital investment & procurement and governance & accountability.

7.2.2 EXECUTIVE COUNCIL : MEMBERSHIP

The Chairperson indicated that Councillor Cavanagh and Councillor McRoberts were already appointed by the Board to the Executive Council of the Association. The Board had been asked to nominate up to a further two Members. It was proposed by Mrs Brownlee, seconded by Mrs McCaul, and agreed to nominate Councillor J McCrum to the Executive Council of the ANIELB. This issue would again be discussed at the November meeting of the Board to enable absent Members to give consideration to serving on the Executive Council.

7.3 CHAIRPERSON'S EVENTS

The Chairperson reported that he had attended the 'Flashback' event in the Market Theatre on 15 September 2011 to showcase the work of the AMMA Centre. This event had been attended by the Minister for Culture, Arts and Leisure. On 23 September he had attended the 'Welcoming Schools' Project' at Oxford Island at which the Minister for Education had given an address. He also reported that Mr Butler and he had attended the briefing on the Minister's Statement on Putting Pupils First : Shaping our Future (The Next Steps for Education) on 26 September 2011 in Stormont.

8. VOLUNTARY SEVERANCE 2011/12

The Chairperson advised that letters inviting expressions of interest from staff for the next round of voluntary severance had been required to be submitted to the Board by 30 September 2011. The Senior Management Team would be considering these requests

in light of business need and would be drawing up Business Cases as appropriate. He stated that those members of staff who had expressed interest in Voluntary Severance but whose applications would not be approved and included in Business Case proposals would be informed at this stage.

The Board agreed to convene a workshop on 5 December 2011 to allow Members to examine in detail each Business Case prior to the December Board meeting on 14 December 2011. The Chairperson pointed out that Mr Murphy would also be meeting Trade Unions as part of the process.

Mrs McCaul stated that the impact of the efficiencies on service delivery should be assessed and evaluated from the previous year when giving consideration to the next round of Business Case proposals. Mr Murphy confirmed that the workshop on 5 December 2011 would provide the opportunity for Members to be fully acquainted with the rationale and contingencies of all the Business Cases being put forward prior to the final decision being taken at the December Board meeting.

The Chairperson referred to the Minister's request for Boards to develop and bring forward specific proposals for regionalisation in the absence of political agreement. He indicated that he had asked the Minister, at Accountability meetings, to appoint a facilitator to assist with this course of action.

9. AREA PLANNING : MINISTER OF EDUCATION'S STATEMENT

Mr Murphy referred to the Minister's Statement to the Assembly on 26 September 2011 "Putting Pupils First : Shaping Our Future – The Next Steps for Education". The Minister had put forward his plans, in the absence of ESA, to prevent further delays in strategically planning the education estate. Key criteria would be enrolments, educational standards and financial viability. Mr Murphy advised that the Minister had commissioned Boards to work in conjunction with CCMS to co-ordinate a strategic exercise based on each Board area to shape the future pattern of education delivery. This exercise would require close consultation with other education partners and would be fundamentally based on the Sustainable Schools' Policy. Mr Murphy reported that a meeting had been held the previous day involving the Permanent Secretary and officials from the five Boards and CCMS to discuss the viability audit announced by the Minister. This audit would identify those schools which were evidencing stress in remaining educationally viable. He advised that Mr Butler would play a lead role in compiling a fit for purpose database for this strategic exercise.

Mr Murphy stated that the first phase of the work was planned to be completed within 6 months of the formal commission from DE with a focus given to post-primary provision. Attention would also be given to capital investment. The Minister intended to set out clear criteria in the near future for access to capital investment.

Discussion ensued in relation to issues of a local nature. Mr Murphy said that the intention was to bring forward development and to find solutions for quality educational provision in situations where interventions were deemed necessary as a result of budgetary difficulties, falling enrolments or even to provide the means for a school to provide the necessary breadth of curriculum.

The Board expressed concern that the press might erroneously sensationalise information throughout the exercise which would have an adverse impact on some schools. Members pointed out the exercise required great sensitivity in the interests of schools and that the needs of the children and young people would take priority in any decision making. They

considered that the Minister's directive was helpful to assist all education partners to work together and to share information.

10. CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICES : FORMAL STATEMENTS

10.1 PROPOSED FORMAL STATEMENTS

It was proposed by Mrs McCaul, seconded by Councillor Cavanagh, and agreed that Statements of Special Educational Needs** should be made on pupils with code reference numbers SEN 2011 / 240 to SEN 2011 / 286 inclusive. It was noted that 27% of pupils requiring additional support had shared classroom assistance.

10.2 AMENDED FORMAL STATEMENTS

It was proposed by Mrs McCaul, seconded by Councillor Cavanagh, and agreed that Amended Statements of Special Educational Needs** should be made on pupils with code reference numbers SEN 2011 / 641A to SEN 2011 / 663A inclusive.

10.3 RESOURCING FOR PUPILS WHO LIVE IN OTHER ELBs BUT ATTENDING SELB SCHOOLS

It was proposed by Mrs McCaul, seconded by Councillor Cavanagh, and agreed that resourcing be made available for the pupils with Statements of Special Educational Needs** (code reference numbers SEN 2011 / 01 OB to SEN 2011 / 02 OB inclusive) attending SELB schools.

10.4 STATEMENTS TO BE CEASED

It was proposed by Mrs McCaul, seconded by Councillor Cavanagh, and agreed that Statements of Special Educational Needs** should cease to be made on the pupils with code reference number SEN 2011 / 16C to SEN 2011 / 17C inclusive.

11. JOINT EDUCATION COMMITTEE : MINUTES

Mrs McCaul drew attention to the two pilot projects which would focus on language development and social and emotional behaviour in Early Years and on the administration of testing for Special Educational Needs Co-ordinators. These pilot projects were now being implemented following a successful bid by the five Boards to DE. She drew attention to the new management arrangements within Teaching, Learning, Curriculum and Youth following the out-workings of the 2010/11 voluntary severance business cases. Particular note was taken that significant responsibilities would now fall to a reduced workforce of Advisers within CASS. Mrs McCaul pointed out that, because of the limitations on CASS resources, an Associate list was being drawn up with the intention that this particular pool of staff could provide immediate assistance to schools in key areas over a short period of time.

Mrs McCaul outlined discussion which had taken place with regard to the realignment of the Music Service across SELB and WELB. Attention had been given to the support available to schools in the Formal Intervention Process and through other support programmes. She pointed out that schools were identified for formal intervention through the ETI process. Boards were required to assist schools to raise their standards within a turnaround period of two years as part of the EGAGS "Schools' Improvement Policy".

She explained that Members had raised the issue of employment opportunities for newly qualified teachers and had agreed to recommend that SELB and WELB should be asking DE and the Assembly's Education Committee to review the findings in the Curran Report.

The Chairperson stated that he had served on this Inquiry into the terms and conditions of newly qualified teachers in 2003/04. Some of the recommendations coming forward in the Curran Report were:

- The introduction of a support scheme to assist unemployed newly qualified teachers in the first year after qualification to enable a guaranteed full-time teaching post; and
- Better management of the early retirement scheme for teachers in so far as a winding down scheme should be introduced.

The Chairperson pointed out that the Curran Report had also made such recommendations as:

- The amount of guaranteed preparation, planning and assessment time for a teacher should be set as a minimum of at least 10% of timetabled teaching time;
- Teachers with leadership and management responsibilities should be entitled to an allocation of time within the school day to support the discharge of their responsibilities; and
- Teaching principals, except in the rarest of circumstances, should have no more than 3 days per week of class contact.

The Chairperson stated that he had already raised the issue of revisiting the findings in the Curran Report with the Minister.

It was proposed by Mrs McCaul, seconded by Mr Campbell, and agreed to adopt the minutes* (JEC/9/11/9) of the meeting held on 21 September 2011.

12. FINANCE COMMITTEE : NOTE OF A MEETING HELD ON 30 SEPTEMBER 2011

Professor Murphy stated that the Committee had been inquorate; however, a note had been taken of Members' discussion. Members had given consideration to the budgetary position of Fivemiletown College and had noted that a letter of support would be written to the Chairperson of the Board of Governors offering the Board's services to undertake a review of particular funding streams within the school.

Professor Murphy highlighted that the out-workings of the new arrangements for access to schools' surpluses meant that surplus and deficit movements were now required to be monitored separately. The Board was therefore obliged to provide budgetary cover at centre for any increase in schools' deficits in year. Schools could not incur a deficit without first receiving prior approval of the Board. Mrs McCaul sought clarity on the practical implications of this arrangement on schools and on the Board. Ms Ayling confirmed that schools would observe no change to previous working practices; however, the Board would now be required to manage at centre the totality of the schools' deficits. She drew attention to this major budgetary risk in light of the limitations on the centre budget allocation. The Board was now facing a £2.3m pressure at centre as a result of the current projections in increases in school deficits. Ms Ayling pointed out that these projections had been signalled to DE.

Mr Murphy explained that, as a result of the Board's negotiations with Translink, savings in the amount of £500k had been secured across the five Boards. The Board's share of

these savings amounted to £122k. He pointed out that DE's prescribed savings for Transport in SELB was £1.2m; however, this level of savings was unrealistic.

Ms Ayling drew attention to the LMS paper* (F/9/11/3.1) listing 9 schools where the signed three year budgetary plans had changed from that presented to the Committee at its June meeting. She pointed out that the variations to the plans had meant that the approval category for 4 of the 9 schools had also changed. It was proposed by Professor Murphy, seconded by Mrs McCaul, and agreed to adopt the paper.

The Board noted the content of the note of the meeting* (F/9/11/10) held on 30 September 2011.

13. DEVELOPMENT, PLANNING AND SUPPORT SERVICES

13.1 PROPERTY SERVICES

13.1.1 LICENCE AGREEMENT - DRUMGOR PRIMARY SCHOOL

Mr Butler sought the Board's approval to the establishment of a Licence Agreement between the Board and Craigavon City Football Club for a period of 25 years. He advised that the Licence Agreement, alongside a Development Agreement, would allow the Club to construct a full size 3G synthetic pitch on the existing gravel all-weather pitch at Drumgor Primary School.

He explained that the Club would be responsible for all costs attributable to construction of the pitch. In return for a nominal rental fee for the use of the land, if requested, Drumgor Primary School and neighbouring schools would have free use of the pitch during school core hours. During the duration of the proposed Licence Agreement, the Club would also be responsible for the costs attributable to the maintenance and replacement of the pitch.

Mr Butler stated that, in the unforeseeable event that the status of the school should change, a Licence Agreement would not provide the Club with legal rights associated with exclusive possession. Consequently the Agreement could be terminated within a determinate period of notice. Alternatively the school site could be disposed in two separate lots, with the site facilitating the 3G synthetic pitch sold to the Council or to the Club.

It was proposed by Mrs Brownlee, seconded by Councillor Cavanagh, and agreed that the Board should enter into a Licence Agreement with Craigavon City Football Club for a period of 25 years to enable the construction of a 3G synthetic pitch at Drumgor Primary School.

13.1.2 AGGREGATES TAX LEVY

Mr Butler advised that from 1 April 2011 the aggregate tax levy had been withdrawn in connection with commercial materials. The Board was therefore obliged to amend its Schedule of Rates in respect of contract work to take account of the change in the aggregate tax levy. He stated that this additional cost would not be borne by the Board. It was recommended that the Schedule of Rates should align with the Schedule of Rates approved by DRD Roads Service.

It was proposed by Mr Mackin, seconded by Councillor Clarke, and agreed to resume the meeting.

The meeting ended at 4.10 pm.

CHAIRPERSON

* Paper circulated

CHIEF EXECUTIVE

** Paper tabled

DATE

13 October 2011 LMcC