

EDUCATION AUTHORITY

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS OF A BOARD MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY, 28 FEBRUARY 2019 AT 2.00 PM IN ANTRIM BOARD CENTRE

1. PRESENT Ms S O'Connor (Chair)

Rev A Adams	Rev R Herron
Ms Á Andrews	Mrs S Kelly
Mrs P Carville	Mr N McCausland
Mr G Doran	Dr A McMorrán
Dr M Dynan	Mr O McMullan
Mr E Jardine	Mr R Pollock
Mr G Lundy	Miss R Rainey

2. IN ATTENDANCE

Mr G Boyd, Mr J Collings, Ms S Long, Mrs C Duffield, Dr C Mangan, Mr D Hanna, Mr S Wade, Ms A Monaghan, Ms C Deane, Ms L McCall and for part of the meeting Mrs G Flavell.

Ms A Campbell attended in her role as Board Room Apprentice.

3. APOLOGIES

Apologies had been received from Mr D Cargo, Mr J Craig, Mrs M Culbert, Sir Gerry Loughran, Dr I McMorris and Ms N Toman.

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members were reminded of the requirement to declare interests where appropriate during the course of the meeting.

5. MINUTES OF BOARD MEETING HELD ON 24 JANUARY 2019

The minutes* (EAB/2/19/3) of the meeting held on 24 January 2019 were approved on the proposal of Dr Dynan and seconded by Miss Rainey.

6. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

6.1 TRANSFORMATION PROGRAMME BOARD MEMBERS' SUB-GROUP - MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 10 DECEMBER 2019 (6.3)

Mr Boyd said that the comments relating to unintended consequences of digitalisation had been forwarded to relevant officers.

6.2 AUDIT AND RISK ASSURANCE COMMITTEE MINUTES - PUBLIC INTEREST REPORT (12)

Mr Wade said that the Comptroller and Auditor General's report on EA's 2017/18 overspend position was in draft format. The report included DE and EA's comments on the rationale for the overspend. Mr Wade said that the public interest report, when finalised, would be presented to a subsequent meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee.

6.3 HOUSE STYLE FOR BOARD AND COMMITTEE MINUTES (13)

The Board noted that a new executive summary page, to accompany Board and Committee papers, was being developed and would be introduced shortly.

7. CHAIR'S BUSINESS

7.1 SENIOR STAFF APPOINTMENTS

The Chair extended the Board's congratulations to Mr D Hanna on his appointment as Acting Director of Operations and Estates, Mr S Wade on his appointment as Acting Director of Finance and ICT, and Mr M McConkey on his appointment as Acting Assistant Director of Education.

7.2 BOARD MEMBER WORKSHOPS

The Board noted dates for four Board Member workshops which were being convened to consider governance issues, EA's Strategic Plan, and the draft Organisational Development and Learning Strategy.

The Chair said that, following reconstitution of the EA Board on 1 April 2019, she would garner interest from Members on requirements for financial training. She invited Members to notify her of any other areas requiring Board Member development in order to inform future workshops.

7.3 EA BOARD RECONSTITUTION

The Board noted DE's letter* (EAB/2/19/5) dated 4 February 2019 on reconstitution of non-political Members.

7.4 COMMUNICATIONS - UPDATE

The Board noted the summary paper* (EAB/2/19/5) on proactive communications and issues raised in the media in the previous month.

7.5 BOARD ROOM APPRENTICE PROGRAMME

The Board agreed to remain a host Board for the programme in 2019/20.

7.6 TRANSFORMATION PROGRAMME BOARD MEMBERS SUB-GROUP - REPORT ON MEETING HELD ON 28 FEBRUARY 2019

Mrs Duffield said that the Sub-Group had received a report on the work of DE's Transformation Programme Board. She said that a Gateway '0' Review of DE's Transformation Programme had been carried out in December 2018 and the Sub-Group had noted the resulting action plan which detailed seven recommendations. The Sub-Group had also been provided with an overview of EA's transformation projects, including the actions which were being taken against a number of live projects.

Mrs Duffield said that, at the January meeting of the Transformation Programme Board, DE had advised that there was a projected £400k underspend in 2018/19 and had agreed to receive bids from EA for transformational activity which could be delivered in 2018/19. Mrs Duffield said that the Sub-Group had received a report on the bids that had been submitted to DE in early February by EA's Transformation Team. She said that, to date, verbal confirmation had been received from DE that the full amount requested by EA had been approved with the exception of costs relating to the principal secondments to EA's Transformation Team. The Chair congratulated the team for its prompt actions to avail of additional funding opportunities.

The note of the meeting of the Sub-Group held on 28 February 2019 would be presented to the Board for approval at its meeting on 28 March 2019.

7.7 STAFFING MATTER - NOTE OF A DISCUSSION IN COMMITTEE

On the proposal of Rev Adams, seconded by Miss Rainey, the Board agreed to discuss a matter in committee.

Mr J Collings, Ms S Long, Dr C Mangan, Mr D Hanna, Mr S Wade, Mrs G Flavell Ms A Monaghan, Ms C Deane, and Ms A Campbell withdrew from the meeting.

The Chair provided a brief report on a staffing matter.

On the proposal Mrs Carville, seconded by Rev Adams, the Board agreed to resume the meeting.

The Board noted the report on the staffing matter.

Mr J Collings, Ms S Long, Dr C Mangan, Mr D Hanna, Mr S Wade, Mrs G Flavell Ms A Monaghan, Ms C Deane, and Ms A Campbell re-entered the meeting.

8. BUDGET WORKSHOP 2019-20 - NOTE OF MEETING HELD ON 24 JANUARY 2019

Mr Boyd said that Members had considered EA's budget pressures for 2019/20 at the workshop. Assuming a cash flat budget, the 2019/20 pressures exercise had identified estimated emerging pressures of £170m and estimated savings of £21m which would leave an estimated funding gap of £149m. He said that Members had also noted that schools were experiencing enormous financial pressure and it was estimated that they would overspend their budget allocations by £66m in 2019/20.

Mr Boyd said that the Secretary of State had just announced the Budget for NI for 2019/20. He understood that the Education budget had received an uplift in cash terms on the previous year's initial allocation and that Health and Education could expect to receive additional in year allocations. Mr Boyd said that EA's allocation letter, including an analysis of the budget position, would be provided to the Board as soon as possible.

On the proposal of Miss Rainey, seconded by Mrs Kelly, the Board approved the note* (EAB/2/19/6.1) of the meeting of the budget workshop held on 24 January 2019.

9. ANNUAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTS 2017/18

Mr Wade presented the Annual Report and Accounts for 2017/18* (EAB/2/19/7) in its final format for approval. The Audit and Risk Assurance Committee (ARAC), at its meeting on 17 January 2019, had agreed to recommend that the Board should authorise the Chair and Chief Executive to sign the Financial Statements. While no changes had been made to the primary statements or to the previously reported outturn for 2017/18, it had been reported to ARAC that a number of minor presentation and disclosure changes were being considered. The document now contained all amendments agreed with the NI Audit Office.

Mr Wade said that the audit opinion was unqualified. Once EA's Annual Report and Accounts for 2017/18 had been certified, the Comptroller and Auditor General's audit certificate and public interest report would be incorporated into the document for laying before the NI Assembly.

The Chair paid tribute to all officers involved in the compilation of the Annual Report and Accounts which she considered was well presented and user friendly.

On the proposal of Miss Rainey, seconded by Mr Lundy, the Board approved the Annual Report and Accounts for 2017/18.

10. EXPULSION COMMITTEE - MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 25 JANUARY 2019

The minutes* (EAB/2/19/8) of the meeting held on 25 January 2019 were noted.

Members drew attention to the importance of officers supporting schools when schools were required to submit evidence for consideration by an Expulsion Committee. Members

also highlighted that schools should ensure they were attentive to procedures and that all available and appropriate evidence was forwarded for consideration.

Action: *Officers to ensure that appropriate support is provided to schools when submitting evidence for consideration by an Expulsion Committee.*

11. COMMUNITY USE OF SCHOOLS - MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 5 FEBRUARY 2019

In the absence of the Chair of the Committee, a Member presented the minutes. He drew attention to the results of a DE survey on the uptake of schools which facilitated community use of school premises, and the factors which had been identified as posing barriers to facilitating community use of school premises. He referred to the Committee's recommendation that a review should be undertaken in order to provide for consistency in supporting schools and to increase and improve community use of school facilities. He also referred to the recommendation that the Board should approve guidance to schools on the management and control of private school funds.

Attention was drawn to two projects: EA's partnership with the Greater Shankill Partnership and Belfast City Council on a joint community planning project, and the use of a sports pitch by a club at Springhill Primary School.

A Member queried EA's arrangements for leasing the sports pitch at Springhill Primary School. He raised concerns that the club might be able to block book the sports pitch. An outline of the arrangements provisionally agreed with the club was provided. Ms Long said that an explanation of the criteria for leasing school premises could be provided to the Committee.

The Chair of the Board said that the Committee had agreed to engage with the NI Audit Office on the proposed arrangements at the school and to keep the matter under review.

On the proposal of Mr Jardine, seconded by Dr Dynan, the Board approved the minutes* (EAB/2/19/10) of the meeting held on 5 February 2019.

Action: *Explanation of the criteria for leasing school premises to be provided to the Committee.*

12. FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE - MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 5 FEBRUARY 2019

The Acting Chair of the Committee said that EA continued to manage significant financial risk. The December MEMR had showed an overall estimated funding gap of £22.19m (excluding Earmarked and Youth) and an estimated block grant funding gap of £16.426m after estimated savings of £15.92m. He said that DE had indicated that £14.3m was being made available to EA through January monitoring and internal DE reallocations. This included £6.9m to be directly allocated to schools (£5.6m schools' contingency funding and £1.3m for advances to VG / GMI schools), and £7.4m to fund pressures in services directly supporting schools and children and young people. These allocations would be reflected in subsequent report once formal confirmation had been received from DE. Taking these additional allocations into account, as well as the LMS capital adjustment, the estimated funding gap of £22.19m would reduce to an estimated £4.92m.

The Acting Chair said that schools' financial planning continued. As at 5 February 2019, 951 (89%) of schools plans were in final format and 54 plans were in draft format. Based on

information contained in schools' financial plans, schools were expected to overspend their initial CFF allocations by £32m after savings and additional income of £10.7m (estimated). Schools' financial plans now showed a surplus drawdown requirement of £5.76m after the June monitoring allocation of £8m and total deficits of £7.3m (estimated) after contingency and stock. This figure would be impacted by the position on schools' stock, including schools choosing to count stock for the first time. He said that if current trends continued, school deficits could increase by an estimated £10.5m more than was profiled in schools' financial plans.

The Acting Chair said that an estimated £4.9m of savings had been delivered across the block grant. He drew attention to emerging risks (£13.501m estimated). This included the potential estimated increase in school deficits (total estimated £10.5m).

The Acting Chair drew attention to progress against spend within the capital report and to recommendations in respect of tenders and land and property transactions. He advised that a workshop would be held on 2 April 2019 to develop the draft Organisational Development and Learning Strategy. He said the Committee had noted the Article 55 Return on the composition of EA's workforce and employment practices for the period 1 January 2016 to 1 January 2018. The Committee had also noted the post consultation report on the Equality Action Plan 2019-22 and the Disability Action Plan 2019-22 and the enhancements made to the two Plans based on consultation feedback. He said that, in general, comments received had been positive and supportive of the broad action measures outlined in the Plans. He said that a Member had raised some concerns at the meeting on the way in which information had been presented for consultation in the Equality Action Plan. He advised that officers would be responding to the Member on a particular issue.

The Board discussed the significant risks associated with cash shortfalls for a number of Voluntary Grammar and Grant Maintained Integrated schools. Mr Boyd updated Members on EA's current actions to support these schools. He provided an overview of the number of schools involved, including the amount of funding required. He advised that a paper would be presented to the Finance and General Purposes Committee for consideration at its meeting on 5 March 2019 on terms and conditions of funding arrangements to these schools.

A Member referred to a point of accuracy in the minutes and it was agreed that this matter would be considered by the Committee at its next meeting.

On the proposal of Mr Doran, seconded by Rev Herron, the Board approved the minutes* (EAB/2/19/10) of the meeting held on 5 February 2019.

13. CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICES COMMITTEE - MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 7 FEBRUARY 2019

The Chair of the Committee said that a presentation had been received from young people on the Creative Arts and Digital Innovators (CADI) programme for young people who were aged between 16-18 years. She said that this programme was accredited and was accessed and delivered through the Youth Service.

The Chair of the Committee said that the draft CYPS area planning framework for special schools and specialist provisions attached to mainstream schools had been discussed in detail, with particular focus being given to participative engagement. She drew attention to the Committee's recommendation that the Board should approve the draft framework subject to a number of minor amendments.

The Chair of the Committee said that ETI had conducted an inspection of a part-time youth provision. As only full-time youth provisions should be inspected, she said that the Committee had agreed that officers would write to DE on this matter.

The Board noted that statements of special educational needs had been approved by the Committee.

A Member asked for an exercise to be carried out on the rationale for the increasing number of statements. Dr Mangan said that work had already commenced in this area. Officers were reviewing the method of reporting information around statements to the Committee. They were also undertaking a comparative exercise on special educational needs with other jurisdictions. Dr Mangan said that this matter would be discussed in detail by the Committee.

On the proposal of Mrs Carville, seconded by Dr McMorrán, the Board approved the minutes* (EAB/2/19/11) of the meeting held on 7 February 2019.

14. MEMBERSHIP AND TEACHING APPOINTMENTS COMMITTEE - MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 7 FEBRUARY 2019

The Chair of the Committee referred to consideration given to Governor appointments. She said that reconstitution panel meetings would again be convened to consider remaining EA representatives on Boards of Governors of controlled and maintained schools. She advised that correspondence had issued to schools on the role of co-opted Members. She also advised that the Committee would be giving consideration to pre-employment checking arrangements for Governors.

The Chair of the Committee said that due to the high demand by Governors to attend recruitment and selection training modules, further training sessions were being held across the region. This matter would be kept under review by the Committee.

The Board noted principal and teacher appointments.

The Board noted the minutes* (EAB/2/19/12) of the meeting held on 7 February 2019.

15. SHARED EDUCATION COMMITTEE - MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 14 FEBRUARY 2019

The Chair of the Committee said that the presentation on the long standing partnership between Ballycastle High School and Cross and Passion College had been very encouraging. She referred to plans for the new shared campus on the existing Ballycastle High School site, including the development of sports facilities on the existing Cross and Passion College site, and she advised that Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council had successfully applied for funding to the SEUPB PEACE IV Shared Spaces Programme to provide for a community sports hub element at the new campus. She said that the Committee had expressed concern at the time-bound nature of the SEUPB funding and had highlighted the importance of ensuring that the momentum continued to expedite all matters of business for the new campus. She referred to consideration which had been given to establishing a 'project champion' to act as a link between stakeholders to facilitate shared education projects.

A Member expressed concerns around the deliverability and reliability of Council funding and he queried whether officers could meet Council officers to discuss this matter. He also queried whether the new sports facilities could cater for disabled sports and he suggested that this could be further explored, in partnership with other relevant external agencies.

The Chair of the Committee said that officers had been tasked with reporting back to the Committee on the development of the community sports hub, including the funding element.

The Chair of the Committee drew attention to a report provided to the Committee on the DSC Shared Education Signature Project. This included plans to host, in conjunction with Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council, a community connections conference in order to support shared education partnerships. She also referred to reports which had been considered in respect of mainstreaming shared education, the PEACE IV CASE Shared Education project, and the Strule Shared Education Campus.

A Member referred to occasions when Board and Committee meetings were held at locations across the region. He said that EA should seek to promote this engagement with communities in the local press. The Chair of the Board encouraged Members to increase opportunities to participate in local events. This engagement could also be covered in the local press.

On the proposal of Rev Adams, seconded by Mr McMullan, the Board approved the minutes* (EAB/2/19/13) of the meeting held on 14 February 2019.

Action: *Communications Team to promote Board Members' engagement with communities in local press.*

16. EDUCATION COMMITTEE - MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 14 FEBRUARY 2019

The Chair of the Committee said that consideration had been given to the Education and Training Inspectorate Chief Inspector's Report 2016-18. The Committee had noted the impact of teacher industrial action on school inspections and an EA summary report on school inspection outcomes. The Committee had also noted reports on school improvement models of support illustrated through four case studies. He said that the Education Directorate's Strategy for School Improvement would be presented to the Committee at a future meeting.

Mr McMullan left the meeting temporarily at 3.24 pm.

The Chair of the Committee drew attention to recommendations relating to the approval of the Extended Schools' Annual Report for 2017/18, a number of Development Proposals, and the draft annual action plan for 2019/20 (year 3) of the Strategic Area Plan for School Provision 2017-20. He advised that the Committee had agreed that a letter would be sent to the Permanent Secretary setting out concerns around the Board's inability to deliver the previous Minister's objectives on account of constraints within the area planning process.

Mr McMullan re-entered the meeting at 3.26 pm.

On the proposal of Rev Herron, seconded by Miss Rainey, the Board approved the minutes* (EAB/2/19/14) of the meeting held on 14 February 2019.

17. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

17.1 COMMITTEE CHAIRS

The Chair reminded Members of Standing Order 10.3, including the criteria for appointing committee and sub-committee chairs, which had been agreed by the Board at its meeting on 22 February 2018. She said that the process of engaging with Members on appointing committee chairs for the year ahead in line with Standing Order 10.3 would shortly commence.

Action: *Circulate Standing Order 10.3 and the agreed criteria for appointing committee and sub-committee chairs to Members; commence process of engaging with Members on appointing committee chairs.*

17.2 RETIREMENT OF MR J COLLINGS

On behalf of the Board, the Chair expressed appreciation to Mr Collings for his contributions to the work of the Corporate Leadership Team and for his service to EA. She paid tribute to Mr Collings in particular for assisting EA in developing relationships with school leaders in recent years. She wished him a happy retirement.

18. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Board would be held on 28 March 2019.

The meeting ended at 3.32 pm.

Chair

*Paper issued with agenda

Chief Executive

** Papertabled

Date