



MINUTES OF LIMERICK AND CLARE EDUCATION AND TRAINING BOARD

COVID-19 - LCETB BOARD MEETING WAS CONDUCTED VIA ZOOM AND WAS  
NOT A FACE TO FACE MEETING

on Tuesday, 20<sup>th</sup> April, 2021, at 4 p.m.

**Present:** Cllr. Kieran O'Hanlon, Chairperson  
Mr. Michael Cregan  
Cllr. Michael Donegan  
Ms. Elaina Fitzgerald  
Cllr. Liam Galvin  
Mr. Michael Guilfoyle  
Ms. Catherine Hehir  
Cllr. Gabriel Keating  
Cllr. Sarah Kiely  
Cllr. Joe Killeen  
Mr. Sean McMahon  
Cllr. Paul Murphy  
Cllr. Ann Norton  
Mr. Mark O'Dea  
Mr. Donal ÓhAiniféin  
Ms. Marian Petty  
Cllr. Elena Secas  
Cllr. John Sheahan  
Cllr. Brigid Teefy

**In attendance:** Mr. George O'Callaghan, Chief Executive  
Ms. Shelagh Graham, Director of Organisation Support and Development  
Mr. Paul Patton, Director of Further Education and Training  
Mr. Donncha O'Treasaigh, Director of Schools  
Mr. Denis O'Brien, Head of Corporate Services and ICT  
Ms. Joanne O'Brien, Recording Secretary, Corporate Services

**1. For Consideration; Apologies/Condolences**

**Apologies:** Ms. Clare Colleran Molloy  
Ms. Sheila Hickey

## Condolences:

A Vote of Sympathy was passed to the following:

- Mr. Jim Twohig (Retired Principal, St John Bosco Community College, Hospital) on the death of his wife, Breeda.
- Ms. Kate Twohig (Gaelcholáiste Luimnigh) on the death of her mother, Mrs. Breeda Twohig.
- Mr. Liam O'Sullivan (Retired LCFE) on the death of his sister, Ms. Ann O'Sullivan.
- Ms. Geraldine McGrath (Castletroy College) on the death of her father, Mr. Charlie McGrath.

## 2. Declaration of Conflict of Interests

All Board Members confirmed no conflict of interest with any Agenda item.

## 3. For Adoption;

Minutes of Meeting of Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board, held on 23<sup>rd</sup> March, 2021, were adopted on the proposal of Cllr. Gabriel Keating, seconded by Cllr. Michael Donegan.

## 4. For Consideration; Matters arising from the Minutes

Cllr. Elena Secas requested amendment re attendance at last meeting.

## 5. Governance:

- a. Business Continuity Plan incorporating COVID-19 Update

The Chief Executive briefed Member on the measures and supports to date within the organisation.

Members noted that all students had returned after the Easter Break and there was a very smooth transition. The CE advised that there was no evidence of outbreaks to-date. The Board also noted that students in the FET area were on a limited return i.e. programmes that are assessment time bound or certain apprenticeships. Members noted that a full normal return for FET students was not likely to be imminent. The CE advised that only programmes with critical assessments are now back in class with significant reduced capacity i.e. 5% of cohort at any time.

The Board noted the tremendous efforts of staff during the pandemic and paid tribute to all involved. Members were pleased to note also that special classes were operating successfully since their return.

It was noted by the Board that the long term affects from Covid in relation to wellbeing would more than likely be seen for some time to come.

## 6. Correspondence

### Department Correspondence

CL 0021/2021

1<sup>st</sup> April, 2021

Re: Coronavirus (COVID-19): Arrangements for Teachers and Special Needs Assistants employed in recognised Primary and Post Primary schools.

CL 0022/2021

15<sup>th</sup> April 2021

Re: Breastfeeding Breaks for All Staff Other than Persons Employed as Teachers and Special Needs Assistants in Education and Training Boards.

## 7. For Consideration; Chief Executive's Report Incorporating;

### Schools and Youth Work

#### Community National Schools

Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board is supporting its two Community National Schools continues - Mol an Óige CNS, Ennistymon, and Raheen Wood CNS, Scariff and Glenroe CNS a satellite class of Mol an Oige Community National School, Ennistymon, with enrolments for the new academic year 2021/2022 now.

Weekly meetings with the principals are held via Zoom to support the schools with reopening since 1 March. All classes have returned since 15 March 2021.

#### Post Primary Schools

##### Leaving Certificate Oral & Practical Examinations 2021

Schools worked very diligently prior to and during the Easter break to ensure that students in Leaving Certificate could attend oral and practical examinations in a very well organised and safe manner. Students were extremely grateful to their schools for accommodating them.

##### Covid-19 Level 5 Restrictions - Return to Educational Facilities for all students

Students in all years have returned to school since 12 April 2021. Prior to returning, all students and staff were required to complete an on-line version of the **Return to Educational Facility Parental Declaration** forms which Schools Division designed in Google Forms and Microsoft Forms. This was convenient for parents/guardians, staff and school management in overseeing this important work.

All schools were supported in the reopening process for 12 April 2021 which included a review and updating of:

1. The Public Health Advice related to reopening of schools provided by the HPSC;

2. The COVID-19 Response Plans for Primary and Special Schools and Post Primary Schools, in line with the Return to Work Safely Protocol, to be implemented in advance of schools re-opening.
3. The Measures to be implemented in Schools to
  - a. minimise the risk of introduction of infection in our schools
  - b. managing risk of spread if introduced through:
    - i. Regular and good hand hygiene;
    - ii. Good respiratory hygiene and cough etiquette;
    - iii. Enhanced cleaning regimes; and
    - iv. Maintaining physical distancing in the classroom and within schools;
4. The suite of Additional Supports available to schools to implement their Covid19 Response Plan;
5. The arrangements to Get Children Safely to our Schools;
6. How the Mental Health and Wellbeing of Students and Staff will be supported throughout the re-opening process,
7. Guidance on Learning and School Programmes in 2020/21;
8. How schools can support those staff and students who cannot attend school for health reasons related to COVID-19 and in the event of a school closure in the future;
9. The Communication Arrangements in place to ensure schools, school communities and all stakeholders have clear, relevant and timely information to support the reopening and continued operation of schools; and
10. A summary on what schools will be like when they reopen.

### **Covid-19 Response Plan**

All schools were required to update and implement the Covid-19 Response Plan to make every effort to prevent the introduction and spread of Covid-19 in the school environment.

### **Enhanced Cleaning Regimes in our Schools**

In line with the Public Health Advice, more regular and enhanced cleaning regimes will need to be implemented in each school to manage the risk of introduction and spread of COVID-19.

### **Principals and Deputy Principals Meetings**

Regular contact with school principals and deputy principals has been on-going to ensure that schools are supported as effectively as possible.

Principals and Deputy Principals have continued to attend regular online meetings regarding the management of the reopening of schools and the Leaving Certificate Calculated Grades process.

A weekly online meeting for Principals and Deputy Principals takes place each Thursday morning between 10.00 am and 11.00 am.

### **Staffing Allocation & Appeal**

The initial Staffing Allocation for schools was received prior to Easter. Individual meetings with each principal took place over the two weeks of Easter. An appeal for additional teaching resources for Post-Primary Provision for 2021/2022 in accordance with Circular 0007/2021 will be submitted to the Department of Education.

## Training and Supports for post-primary schools

Support seminars and training are planned for post-primary personnel in the following areas;

- Student Support Team Coordinators on-line meeting
- Online meeting of Special Education Needs Advisory Group
- Online meeting of Risk Register and Safeguarding Advisory Group
- Leading Inclusive Learning, Teaching and Assessment (LILTA) online meeting
- Transition Year Coordinators

The supports and resources made available by the Department of Education have been made available to our schools on a central hub on the Schools Division Support site - [www.lcetbdrive.ie](http://www.lcetbdrive.ie).

## Youth Work Team

Please refer to the latest newsletter "Highlights of 2020" which was emailed with the meeting documentation. We were very pleased to receive positive feedback from the Youth Work Summer Programme 2020.

### List of Activities for April 2021

Healthy Ireland events in Kilrush Library

Wednesday, 14th April 2021

Five ways to wellbeing during tough times. A Healthy Ireland at your Library Event.

Online event at 1pm

The aim of this 1-hour webinar, which will be delivered by Claire Flynn, Development Officer with Mental Health Ireland, is to provide participants with a brief introduction to the concepts of mental health & wellbeing. It will give people an improved understanding of how they can look after their wellbeing during Covid-19 and how to incorporate the five ways to wellbeing, as a healthy coping strategy, into their lives. Free event for adults throughout Co Clare, booking essential. In order to take part, participants will require remote access to Zoom. Please book your place by calling Kilrush Library on 065 9051504 during branch opening hours or alternatively by [emailingkilrush@clarelibrary.ie](mailto:emailingkilrush@clarelibrary.ie)

Friday, 16th April 2021

Boost your immune system with food. A Healthy Ireland at your Library event.

Online event at 1pm

During this presentation consultant dietitian Gillian McConnell B.Sc. (Hons) Dietetics, MINDI from Inside Out Nutrition will explore ways that you can boost your immune system. You will get plenty of evidence based practical top tips on how to incorporate healthy eating into your life. Free event for people throughout Co Clare aged 18+. Booking is essential. In order to take part, participants will require remote access to Zoom. Please book your place by emailing [kilrush@clarelibrary.ie](mailto:kilrush@clarelibrary.ie) or by calling Kilrush Library on 065 9051504 during branch opening hours.

Monday 19th April, 2021 & Monday 26th April 2021

Fitness4Fun Exercise session. A Healthy Ireland at Your Library Event.

Online event @ 11am

Join John Conroy for a Fitness4fun online chair yoga to improve flexibility, increase muscle tone and improve your overall health. Regular exercise is important to the physical and mental health of older adults and in this Fitness4Fun session John will show new ways for participants to remain physically active, no matter what their age. Free event for adults throughout Co Clare, limited numbers, booking essential. In order to take part, participants will require remote access to Zoom. Please book your place by calling Kilrush Library on 065 9051504 during branch opening hours or alternatively by emailing [kilrush@clarelibrary.ie](mailto:kilrush@clarelibrary.ie)

### Local Creative Youth Partnership

Creative Youth, National Conference

The Creative Youth conference, which takes place across 3 virtual, lunchtime events in April and May, will examine the impact of the Creative Youth Plan since its publication in 2017 and shape discussion around its future direction.

The main event "Creativity – the connection to our future, now" takes place on Thursday 13 May, will be opened by Taoiseach Micheál Martin and will include addresses from the Minister for Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media as well as from the Minister for Education and the Minister for Children, Equality, Disability, Integration & Youth. As well as international perspectives from the OECD and the Lego Foundation, this event will also feature contributions from a diverse range of speakers including Michelle Cullen of Accenture, Arlene Forster of the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment, Helene Hugel of Helium Arts and author Roddy Doyle,

Creative Youth in the Education System (Tuesday 13 April) will focus on learnings that have emerged from education-based creative initiatives and how these might influence future plans for the project. Creative Youth in the Community (Thursday 15 April) will look at how well creative projects are connecting with young people, the positive outcomes for young people and how can we ensure equality of access to creativity.

### Invitation To Take Part In a Digital Creativity Needs Analysis For Your County Youth Services

Creative Ireland is launching a new Creative Technologies programme, managed by Camara, that will see 12 pilot youth projects established nationally. The LCETB Youth Team and the Local Creative Youth Partnership are helping the roll out of this new programme and are assisting Creative Ireland and Camara to disseminate information on the different stages of programme development.

We are now asking our youth service colleagues to complete the online Digital Creativity Needs Analysis below as a first step in informing the national agencies around future needs in Limerick and Clare. Camara will be available for an online group consultation as part of the process. Further information is available from [monica.spencer@lcetb.ie](mailto:monica.spencer@lcetb.ie) or by calling 086 4120440.

Below is the link to the Creative Ireland online form:

[https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScZGgO4UJukUve-FNgveW77t-C\\_stdnXupEWhNbCE9InsaXKg/viewform](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScZGgO4UJukUve-FNgveW77t-C_stdnXupEWhNbCE9InsaXKg/viewform)

## Further Education and Training Report

Full-Time Provision - PLC, VTOS; Apprenticeship; Youth Education & Training

### PLC

College of FET, Croom Campus: Congratulations to the Horsemanship learners, who passed their BHS Lunging and Road Safety Certification. Well done to the teaching team. End of year exams will take place online this year. The College is still undergoing refurbishment and looking great with plans to include part-time courses next year when refurbishment is complete.

Limerick College of Further Education: has been busy working with learners to complete their chosen course and all its requirements. Practical classes have resumed (adhering to Covid restrictions). A number of learners, in tandem with their studies, are working as frontline workers particularly in Healthcare and Retail settings.

For the January 2021 season LCFE Night School enrolled 447 learners that are part of 45 courses running successfully online mainly QQI accredited courses with an additional 30 learners enrolled on Part-time courses in the Cappamore Campus.

New LCFE Night School Online courses in Supply Chain Management and Self Build are successfully running. A new course 'Strength & Conditioning' has commenced online for Cappamore Campus.

LCFE is scheduled to host a Live Information Morning on Tuesday 20th April from 11am to 12noon. This event is a follow-up from the LCFE Virtual Open Day which took place in January. This event will provide prospective learners with another opportunity to engage with staff in LCFE and acquire information on various courses.

Staff at LCFE continue to engage in professional development focused on upskilling their ICT skills in order to be able to deliver professional and effective classes e.g., Show & TEL workshops, DigiLearn etc. Guidance Counselling Service in LCFE completed CAO workshops with all class groups over a number of months.

LIT Progression Agreement 2021 Application has been rolled out to all learners. LCFE is currently working on introducing Pathways to Hairdressing and the New Apprenticeship in Hairdressing for September 2021.

### VTOS

FET Centre Kilmallock Road Campus: Online provision continued throughout March and original timetables have been maintained, for the most part. All learners have access to digital devices to support their participation. Practical subjects and time-critical provision has recommenced. Two new courses commenced: Helpdesk Operator for the Environmental Services and a fourth Healthcare group. Both of these are delivered fully online. VTOS learner training allowances are currently being transferred from LCETB Core to PLSS. This has required an

updating of all VTOS learner data on PLSS and a review of our PLSS local business processes, which differ from programme to programme.

## Apprenticeships/Traineeships

Shannon Campus: A new foundation level course, Robotic Process Automation Developer, is now developed and scheduled to start in May. This is an entry level course to the new Software Process Automation Developer.

Approval was granted to recruit three fixed-term Electricians for new workshops proposed in the College of FET, Ennis Campus. The recruitment process is now underway.

Raheen Campus: All time-critical Apprenticeship classes are back in training. New Technical Employability Skills Course (Floor & Wall Tiling) started in the FET Centre, Moyross Youth Academy Campus. Recruitment is ongoing for the new Robotic Process Automation course scheduled to commence May 5th 2021.

## Youthreach

Mental Health First Aid Ireland provided a two-day training programme in the delivery of the Youth Mental Health First Aid (Youth MHFA) to LCETB Youthreach and other Youth Provision staff within the region. The training dates were March 31st and April 1st. The feedback from this training was extremely positive and participants highly recommended content from this training as a support tool for all staff working to provide interventive support to young FET Learners in their Mental Wellbeing journeys.

FET Centre, Kilmallock Road Campus: The return to on-site learning for LCA 2 and more recently LCA 1 has been a positive and welcome development for staff and learners.

From this Centre:

8/8 learners have made a return in LCA 2 = 100% returned.

8/9 learners have made a return in LCA 1 = 89% returned.

Learning consists of mainly onsite and remote working with the focus clearly on the completion of LCA Tasks and related Key Assignments.

With the re-opening of the post-primary sector, the Centre is preparing and liaising with parents and learners in the Junior Cycle for their return, subject to Public Health advice, on the 12th of April 2021.

FET Centre, Hospital Campus: The Lexia programme is being piloted. Lexia is a computer-based approach to improving reading being a resource for learners to 'catch-up' and improve their present literacy levels. The programme is scalable, focuses on individual learner needs and



encourages independent learning with minimal teacher support. In the coming weeks, the plan is to use the programme daily and to evaluate it before the Summer break.

College of FET, Ennis Campus: All learners are working from home at present with classes going online. Level 3 learners are engaging with QQI Modules with NALA courses. Both Level 4 groups are participating online with tutors in order to complete their modules. Amber Flag – Tutors & Learners are participating in the Amber Flag Initiative 'Arrival of Spring'.

Music Generation Clare: Music Generation Clare has put forward a proposal for a new Music Appreciation/Music Production course that would lead to a Music Level 5 QQI qualification. If approved, the programme will provide learners with the opportunity to acquire the knowledge, skill and competence to work as a practitioner in the music industry and/or to progress further.

The Irish Concertina Orchestra learners attended a weekend of rehearsals and recording in Glór on 13th/14th March in preparation for their inaugural performance on 10th April at this year's Consairtín Festival.

Music Generation Clare ran a six week "Keep Well Singing" programme over Zoom in partnership with Community Education and Training and Clare County Council. It proved very popular so additional six week blocks have been agreed.

## Part-Time Provision – Core Skills

A number of portfolios have been put forward for QQI authentication in March, carried out remotely through Level 5 restrictions. Alternative arrangements have been made to certify the Cambridge qualifications classes through the support of Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF).

Annual Report for 2020 has been completed showcasing the huge effort made by staff to support vulnerable language and literacy learners. At a recent online meeting the collated information relating to Family Learning work across LCETB was discussed, with priorities established for the coming year. This supports the Implementation of the SOLAS/NALA/ETBI Guidelines for Family Literacy work in ETBs.

## Support Services

### Active Inclusion Support Service (AISS)

- Cambridge Certification Examinations have been arranged in April for 43 learners studying English language under the Asylum Migrant Integration Funded project "Realising Potential". These exams were deferred from 2020 due to Covid and present learners with an opportunity to gain internationally recognised English language qualifications.
- 5 Learning hub staff completed a Needs Assessment training course with AHEAD at the end of March 2021. This means that all 8 hubs are now able to provide needs assessments for learners with disabilities accessing FET programmes.
- Staff from the AISS participated in a number of review meetings as part of the QQI Inaugural Review of Quality Assurance.

## Quality Assurance

The Inaugural Review of Quality Assurance in Ireland's 16 Education and Training Boards commenced last week, with the first external review panel visit undertaken at Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board. The inaugural review is an historic event – both for Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) and ETBs – as it is the first review process of its kind to be conducted within the sector. Each ETB will be reviewed as a standalone corporate entity and an individual review report will be produced in respect of each ETB. It seeks to further encourage the development of the quality culture within ETBs and improve public confidence in the quality of Further Education and Training provision by promoting transparency and public awareness.

During the week of 22nd March, the external review panel met online with over 200 people over the course of 31 individual meetings, including the Chief Executive, Director of FET, Managers, Learning Practitioners, Learners (past and present), Industry and Community Stakeholders, Higher Education Partners, Second Providers, etc., asking 335 questions over the course of the visit. While the final report of the review visit will not be available for a number of months, Glen McMahon, Review Team Chair, communicated some key highlights at the final session on Friday:

- The panel agreed that Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board is a learning organisation, with a culture of openness and transparency;
- Senior management's commitment to the mission statement and values of the organisation;
- Evidence of pro-active collaboration with other ETBs and stakeholders;
- Commendation of the establishment of the ETB's QA Support Service and the evidence of this QA support throughout from learners, co-ordinators, second providers etc.
- Active Inclusion Support highly recognised by the panel;
- A learner-centred approach, a commitment from staff focused on the learner's journey

Commenting following completion of the virtual visit, Paul Patton, Director of Further Education and Training, said: "We look forward to the detailed report and working with QQI to implement the recommendations and to continuously evolve and improve our Quality Assurance system to achieve our Core Purpose – to provide relevant and innovative Further Education and Training opportunities that address the needs and aspirations of our learners, local communities and employers. My sincerest thanks again to all the staff who participated in the planning, development, and implementation of this very important process."

The CE and Board paid tribute to everyone involved.

## Information, Recruitment & Guidance

- Enterprise Engagement's guidance support is ongoing for all Skills to Advance programmes. Additionally, Enterprise Engagement continues to engage with Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board Post-Primary Schools through Industry briefings.

- IRGSS continues to respond to all queries resulting from marketing campaigns running through learningandskills.ie.
- Work is underway to amalgamate all NCGE databases and to ensure alignment in tracking relevant information in the database.

## Enterprise Engagement

- Skills to Advance provided the level 6 Project Management and Conflict Management courses to employees in the Hospitality and Retail Sector in partnership with College of FET, Ennis Campus. Under Skills to Advance, Route 3, three programmes have been developed nationally in collaboration with industry partners, offering upskilling opportunities to those in team leadership and supervisory management roles.
- As part of a response to the tourism and aviation sector and working with our colleagues in the FET Centre, Kilmallock Town Campus, Enterprise Engagement collaborated with the Shannon Group plc and delivered training in a number of areas.
- Skills to Advance launched the second iteration of the QQI level 6 Industrial Pneumatic Systems course on Wednesday, 24th March. This initiative included participants from Johnson & Johnson, El Electronics, Zimmer Biomet, Analog Devices and Regeneron.
- Coding Careers for Women was launched on 12th April. This is a joint initiative between Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board and the Mid-West Regional Skills Forum. This pilot initiative offers women a pathway into a career in the tech industry. It combines a 52-week online Diploma in Software Development with a 3-month work-placement, in partnership with the local tech industry.

## 8. For Adoption;

### a. Finance Report

Adopted on the proposal of Cllr. Gabriel Keating, seconded by Cllr. Paul Murphy.

## 9. AOB

The Board was pleased to note that progress has been made in relation to enrolment matter in Ennis. In this regard Cllr. Ann Norton thanked the CE and the Director of Schools for their work in relation to the placement of students and facilitating a process to allow placement of all students. Cllr. Norton stated that there was a lot of work ongoing and looked forward to the positive outcome this work would deliver in the future and the transition of primary school children to secondary are at the core of the work.

Cllr. Joe Killeen queried progress re amalgamation in Ennistymon. The CE advised that the Steering Committee had been reactivated under Dr. Joe O'Connell and this work would be commencing shortly and that the Sub Group including the three patron bodies, Ceist, ERST, and Limerick and Clare ETB. The Director of Schools advised that the three Principals were working closely together with Dr. O'Connell. The CE advised that the new school would be a designated Community School and that an Interim Board of Management would be constituted closer to the date of opening. Ms. Catherine Hehir queried re Deed of Trust and CE advised that this will be progressed but that there are existing templates for same.

Next Meeting: Tuesday, 15<sup>th</sup> June, 2021, at 4 p.m.

George O'Callaghan  
Chief Executive.

Signed:

  
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Chairperson of Meeting held on 15<sup>th</sup> June, 2021.