

**Educational Research Centre  
MEETING OF THE BOARD  
29<sup>th</sup> November 2017**

A meeting of the Board of the Educational Research Centre ("ERC"), was held on November 29<sup>th</sup> 2017 at the offices of the organisation.

**Board Members Present:**

Pauric Travers (PT), Chairperson; Denise Burns (DB), Deputy Chairperson; Michael Martin (MM) (Via Skype Link), Jude Cosgrove (JC); Edward Murtagh (EM)

**In Attendance:**

Peter Archer (PA), Anne Comey (AC) who took the minutes

**Absent:** N/A

**Counsel Present:** N/A

**Call to Order**

PT called the meeting to order at 2.30 pm.

The Agenda was adopted (Appendix I).

**1. Minutes BMin 5 – 0917**

The minutes of the last meeting were adopted.

**2. Matters Arising from previous minutes**

No matters arising

**3. Report on developments since previous meeting (See Appendix II)**

As ever the list of development is not necessarily comprehensive as other items are covered elsewhere on the agenda and were not included in the list.

**4. Presentation of PIRLS 2016 results**

Eemer Eivers and Lorraine Gilleece gave a presentation which was followed by questions and discussions.

**5. Governance matters**

No updates on lease from DCU.

Board agreed for ERC to begin process of registering for Charity Status. ERC to do this once DES has agreed.

Our solicitor will request that DCU and St Lawrence O'Toole Trust confirm in writing that they have no objection to the transfer of the Richmond Road building to the ERC.

Tom Kellaghan left his art collection to the Centre in his will and the collection has been valued at €175K. Board thinks that, where possible, the art collection should be kept and lent to galleries until an agreement has been reached with DES in using proceeds of sale for a scholarship type funding to facilitate ERC's capacity building.

## **6. Accounting Policies (B6-17-1,2 and 3)**

All 3 policies approved by the board.

## **7. Protected Disclosure Policy (B6-17-4)**

Amendments to be suggested to policy to include more involvement of the board.  
Reviewed policy to be considered at next board meeting.

## **8. Board Self-Assessment (B6-17-5)**

Board to clarify any changes required to current form. If no changes requested by December 15<sup>th</sup>, Board members will return completed questionnaires by year end to AC.  
A review of questionnaire will be considered at the next ARC meeting and issues arising will be included in programme of work for 2018.  
AC to supply Board with digital copies of the forms.

## **9. I&E Q3 and budget status at year end (B6-17-6)**

Board reviewed 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter Income and Expenditure information issued to DES in October 2017.

## **10. Pensions - accounts 2016**

Following the confirmation from the DES that pension liabilities for ERC staff rests with ERC, even though their administration and payment remain the responsibility of DCU, the Board formally agreed to the inclusion of pension liabilities in the 2016 financial statements. The Board agreed that once the actuarial valuation has been carried out it will be included in the 2016 Financial Statement, in agreement with C&AG who will be consulted throughout the process. Once C&AG is satisfied that inclusion has been done appropriately, the Board will be asked to approve the revised accounts.

## **11. Statement of Internal Control**

Internal audits to support the statement of internal control have not taken place yet due to the short time the Board and ARC have been in place. The ARC reviewed the risk log initiated by the Centre for Q4 2017. The ARC will consider the risks highlighted as part of the issues to be looked at until a full risk assessment has been carried out.  
Board / ARC risk management training organised for 06/12/2017.

## **12. Staffing**

PA and AC met with DES for an emergency meeting in relation to its staff shortage and the difficulty this is causing at both research and administrative level. The DES recognises the shortage of staff and the problems caused by the current staffing structure of the ERC. A plan to address the staff structure is to be included in the strategic plan but the DES will try to address some of the issues in the short term.

## **13. Strategic plan (B6-17-7)**

The outline of the plan were deemed suitable and staff will continue to work towards a first draft.

Issue of the delay in the appointment of the CEO was raised again as it has an impact on the time frame for the Strategic Plan.

## **14. AOB**

No other business was raised

## **15. CEO recruitment**

Board reviewed quotation from recruitment consultants and raised a couple of queries. Once queries have been answered the Board will confirm selection to AC by email.

Once consultants are appointed PT and AC will organise to meet with them to discuss the process and finalise the job description. It is expected that the position will be advertised in early January.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Pauline Smith".

## Appendix 1

EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH CENTRE  
Board Meeting  
29<sup>th</sup> November 2017

### Agenda

1. Minutes of meeting of 26 September 2017 – BMin5-0917
2. Matters arising from the minutes
3. Report on developments since previous meeting
4. Presentation of PIRLS 2016 results
5. Governance matters
6. Accounting Policies (B6-17- 1, 2 and 3)
7. Protected Disclosure Policy (B6-17-4)
8. Board Self-Assessment (B6-17-5)
9. I&E Q3 and budget status at year end (B6-17-6)
10. Pensions - accounts 2016
11. Statement of Internal Control
12. Staffing
13. Strategic Plan (B6-17-7)
14. AOB
15. CEO Recruitment

1. A joint bid, with the School of Education in Trinity, to host the annual conference of the Association for Educational Assessment-Europe in 2020 was successful. Gerry and Damian Murchan of Trinity attended the 2107 conference in Prague and had meetings with the executive of the association.
2. I attended the General Assembly of the IEA (responsible for PIRLS, TIMSS and other studies) in Budapest in October. Prompted by presentations at the assembly, we have suggested to the DES that consideration be given to participation in ICCS (International Civic and Citizenship Education Study) in 2022. We participated in 2009 but not in 2016.
3. A lot of time has been spent on the working group reviewing resource allocation for children with additional care needs (currently met mostly by Special Needs Assistants). There have been several long meetings and, in between, we have been analysing data with a view to devising ways of 'front loading' resources.
4. The DES made a further €60,000 available for post primary schools to purchase our online reading and maths tests. As happened with an earlier tranche of such funding, there was a lot of interest and applications had to be closed soon after the initial announcement.
5. Susan and Lauren attended a consultative forum on DEIS on October 31. A planned meeting about alternative ways of identifying schools for inclusion in DEIS or its successor did not happen.
6. A report on the impact of Project Maths, commissioned by the NCCA, was published on November 14th. Written by Gerry and Cathy Kelleher, it drew on data from PISA and focus groups with teachers.
7. Gerry has attended meetings about aspects of the DES strategy for schools in the Gaeltacht.
8. I attended a meeting of the PISA Governing Board in Paris. Caroline also attended for part of the meeting and made a presentation about the need for training in log file analysis. ETS subsequently expressed interest in co-hosting a workshop.
9. Three follow-up reports from TIMSS are ready for publication. The first of these will appear shortly after the launch of the results of PIRLS 2016.
10. Gerry's book on assessment with Damian Murchan was launched by Minister Mitchell O'Connor on November 21.
11. Lorraine and I have been liaising with the Inspectorate about preparing a proposal for a joint project dealing with the use of contextual data in school inspections. There is reference to such a proposal in the Department's Action Plan for 2017.
12. The Resource Allocation Model for Special Education Teachers, about which Susan and David presented at a previous Board meeting, was the recipient of a Civil Service award for Excellence in Innovation.

