



**msletb**

Bord Oideachais agus Oiliúna  
Mhaigh Eo, Shligigh agus Liatroma  
*Mayo, Sligo and Leitrim*  
*Education and Training Board*

# Annual Report 2023

OPPORTUNITIES FOR  
LIFE AND LIVING

**DOCUMENT CONTROL SHEET**

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## Foreword

I am privileged to introduce the Mayo, Sligo and Leitrim Education and Training Board's (MSLETB) Annual Report 2023. The report provides an opportunity to highlight the comprehensive range of activities undertaken by MSLETB schools, centres, and services during the past year. The report also outlines the related financial and corporate governance aspect of work carried out in MSLETB in 2023.

I wish to commend the work carried out on this Annual Report and I thank all the members of the Board of MSLETB together with the Executive Management Team and staff throughout the organisation, who continue to give generously of their time in support of building an education and training sector in this region throughout 2023. I have no doubt in light of the commitment shown by all those involved over the past year, MSLETB will continue to meet any new changes and or challenges that may arise in pursuit of providing high quality, inclusive, responsive and innovative education and training services for our community.

**John Caulfield, Chairperson**

Mayo, Sligo and Leitrim Education and Training Board (MSLETB) is pleased to bring to you the 2023 Annual Report. During 2023, MSLETB continued to grow and improve. I wish to acknowledge and thank everyone in the entire MSLETB community for their support throughout the year. The efforts and commitment of staff to MSLETB ensured that our services and programs thrived and developed during the year, bringing continued success to our learners and students throughout 2023.

This report provides the opportunity to reflect on all we have achieved in 2023 as we lead in the provision of education and training in the region through cooperation and collaboration with local industry and enterprise, communities and our many stakeholders.

Public awareness of MSLETB in the region has significantly developed during the year and our core values as an organisation of Pro-activeness, Professionalism, Collaboration, Inclusivity and Quality continue to be central to our learner centred service provision.

I wish to acknowledge the support of all our funders, our Board and all our stakeholders and I look forward to 2024 and beyond and the continued development of MSLETB

**Tom Grady, Chief Executive**

## **1. The Board of Mayo, Sligo and Leitrim Education and Training Board**

The Board of Mayo, Sligo and Leitrim Education and Training Board ('the Board') was established under the *Education and Training Boards Act, 2013* ('the 2013 Act') and is responsible and accountable for the proper direction and control of its functions in the Mayo, Sligo, and Leitrim local authority areas.

MSLETB complies with the *Code of Practice for Governance of Education and Training Boards, Department of Education and Skills Circular 0002/2019* ('the Code of Practice'). The purpose of the code is to ensure that the principles of good governance and management are applied by MSLETB.

### **1.1 Functions of the ETB Board:**

Decisions taken by the Board are reserved functions and are set out in Section 12 (2) of the 2013 Act and in the Code of Practice. A full schedule of those functions is set out in Appendix A of the Code of Practice. Decisions not specified in the Code of Practice are deemed to be executive functions of the Chief Executive. The Board is satisfied that the Chief Executive delegates functions where appropriate and in accordance with the 2013 Act.

### **1.2 Responsibilities of the Board:**

The Board is responsible for keeping proper books of account which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the Board, and which enable it to ensure that the Financial Statements comply with Section 51 of the 2013 Act. The Board is also responsible for safeguarding its assets and for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities. The Board considers that the Annual Financial Statements properly present the income and expenditure of the Board and the state of affairs of the Board.

In preparing those accounts, the Board is required to:

- (a) apply the standard accounting policies for the preparation of ETB financial statements
- (b) make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent
- (c) disclose and explain any material departures from the standard accounting policies

During 2023 the Board approved the following documentation:

- Adoption of Strategy of Statement 2023 to 2027
- Adoption of the Annual Report,
- Financial Statements,
- Adoption of the Service Plan,
- Authorised attendance of members at conferences,
- Approved the acquisition, holding and disposal of land or interest in accordance with government regulations,
- Ensured accurate records were kept of meetings and decisions.

## Board Meetings:

MSLETB met on eight occasions in 2023, in accordance with Section 4.3 of the Code of Practice. A list of the Main Board together with the record of attendance of each Board Member is set out below:

Committee Members Name	Nominating Body	Date of Meeting 21.02.23	Date of Meeting 28.03.23	Date of Meeting 23.05.23	Date of Meeting 20.06.23	Date of Meeting 11.09.23	Date of Meeting 19.09.23	Date of Meeting 14.11.23	Date of Meeting 12.12.23	Total No. of Meetings Attended
<b>Cllr. John Caulfield Chairperson ( from Sep 2023)</b>	Mayo Co. Co.	X		X	X		X		X	<b>5/8</b>
<b>Cllr Rosaleen O’Grady</b>	Sligo Co. Co.		X	X		X	X	X	X	<b>6/8</b>
<b>Cllr. Mary Bohan Chairperson (up to Sep 2023)</b>	Leitrim Co. Co.		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	<b>7/8</b>
<b>Cllr. Seán Carey (Deputy Chairperson up to Sep 2023)</b>	Mayo Co. Co.	X		X	X		X	X		<b>5/8</b>
<b>Cllr. Tom Connolly</b>	Mayo Co. Co	X		X	X		X			<b>4/8</b>
<b>Cllr. Christy Hyland</b>	Mayo Co. Co.	X		X	X			X		<b>4/8</b>
<b>Cllr. Donna Sheridan</b>	Mayo Co. Co.	X	X		X	X			X	<b>5/8</b>
<b>Cllr. Richard Finn</b>	Mayo Co. Co.	X		X	X		X	X	X	<b>6/8</b>
<b>Cllr. Arthur Gibbons</b>	Sligo Co. Co.				X		X	X		<b>3/8</b>
<b>Cllr. Marie Casserly</b>	Sligo Co. Co.				X	X				<b>2/8</b>
<b>Cllr. Paddy O’Rourke</b>	Leitrim Co. Co	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	<b>8/8</b>

Register of Attendance & Frequency of Meetings of the Main Board										
Committee Members Name	Nominating Body	Date of Meeting 21.02.23	Date of Meeting 22.03.23	Date of Meeting 23.05.23	Date of Meeting 20.06.23	Date of Meeting 11.09.23	Date of Meeting 19.09.23	Date of Meeting 14.11.23	Date of Meeting 12.12.23	Total No. of Meetings Attended
<b>Cllr. Enda Stenson</b>	Leitrim Co. Co.	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	<b>7/8</b>
<b>Ms. Nicole McGowan.</b>	MSLETB Staff Rep.		X	X		X	X	X	X	<b>6/8</b>
<b>Mr. Pat Coffey.</b>	MSLETB Staff Rep.	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	<b>7/8</b>
<b>Ms. Anne Marie McDaniel (From March 2023)</b>	National Parents' Association for ETB Schools.		X	X		X	X		X	<b>5/8</b>
<b>Mr. John Moran (from Sep '22)</b>	National Parents' Association for ETB Schools.	X	X			X		X		<b>4/8</b>
<b>Dr. Jennifer Van Aswegen</b>	Disability Federation of Ireland in conjunction with AHEAD					X	X	X	X	<b>4/8</b>
<b>Mr. Pat Forde</b>	Youth Work Ireland	X		X	X	X		X	X	<b>6/8</b>
<b>Mr. Malachy Molloy.</b>	Association of Community and Comprehensive Schools	X	X	X	X			X	X	<b>6/8</b>
<b>Mr. Seamus Kilgannon Deputy Chairperson ( from Sep 2023)</b>	Technical Higher Education Association	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	<b>8/8</b>
<b>Ms. Pamela Ní Thaidhg</b>	Údarás ns Gaeltachta	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		<b>8/8</b>

## The Finance Committee

In accordance with Section 4.11 of the Code of Practice 2019 the Finance Committee met on four occasions in 2023. The list of the Finance Committee together with the record of attendance of each Board Member is set out below:

<b>Register of Attendance &amp; Frequency of Meetings of the Finance Committee</b>						
<b>Committee Members Name</b>	<b>Internal or External Member</b>	<b>Date of Meeting DATE 14/02/2023</b>	<b>Date of Meeting DATE 27/03/2023</b>	<b>Date of Meeting DATE 24/10/2023</b>	<b>Date of Meeting DATE 07/12/2023</b>	<b>Total No. of Meetings Attended in 2023</b>
<b>Cllr. Paddy Bourke (Chairperson)</b>	Internal	X	X	X	X	<b>4/4</b>
<b>Sean Duffy</b>	External	X	X	X	X	<b>4/4</b>
<b>Cllr. Mary Bohan</b>	Internal		X		X	<b>2/4</b>
<b>Cllr. Tom Connolly</b>	Internal	X				<b>1/4</b>
<b>Mr. John O'Malley</b>	External	X	X	X	X	<b>4/4</b>

## The Audit & Risk Committee

In accordance with Section 7.18 of the Code of Practice 2019 the Audit & Risk Committee met on four occasions during 2023. The list of the Audit & Risk Committee together with the record of attendance of each Board Member is set out below:

<b>Register of Attendance &amp; Frequency of Meetings of the Audit &amp; Risk Committee</b>						
<b>Committee Members Name</b>	<b>Internal or External Member</b>	<b>Date of Meeting DATE 22/03/2023</b>	<b>Date of Meeting DATE 19/09/2023</b>	<b>Date of Meeting DATE 18/10/2023</b>	<b>Date of Meeting DATE 05/12/2023</b>	<b>Total No. of Meetings Attended in 2023</b>
<b>Mr. Des Mahon (Chairperson)</b>	External	X	X	X	X	<b>4/4</b>
<b>Mr. Pearce O'Malley</b>	External	X	X	X	X	<b>4/4</b>
<b>Mr. Lauri Quinn</b>	External	X	X	X	X	<b>4/4</b>
<b>Mr. Seamus Kilgannon</b>	Internal	X	X	X	X	<b>4/4</b>
<b>Cllr. Christy Hyland</b>	Internal	X		X	X	<b>3/4</b>
<b>Mr. Malachy Molloy</b>	Internal		X	X	X	<b>3/4</b>



## **2. Risk Management:**

The Board maintains active oversight of risk management and confirms that it has carried out an assessment of the principal risks, associated mitigation measures and reviewed the effectiveness of these measures in 2023. The Board manages risk for the organisation through a structured risk management programme. The Board is assisted in its risk management function by the Audit and Risk Committee. The Board also relies on the Internal Audit Unit (IAU) and its reports, on the Office of the Comptroller and Auditor General's (C&AG) annual Audit and any external Audit such as an European Social Fund ('ESF') Audit and/or Revenue Audit. In addition, there is a review of Internal Controls performed on an annual basis.

Risk Management is a standing item at all Board meetings and consideration includes:

- Risk reports from senior management including the Chief Risk Officer (CRO),
- Reports of the Audit and Risk Committee,
- Changes in risk ratings,
- Audit Register.

Details of the principal risks and associated mitigation measures or strategies have been included in the Statement of Internal Controls ('SIC') as part of the audited financial statements which will be published within one month of receipt from the C&AG and as an appendix to the Chairpersons Comprehensive Report.

### **2.1 System of Internal Control (SIC):**

The Board confirms that there has been a review of the effectiveness of the SIC and that the SIC, which is subject to change until the external audit is completed, has been included in the Annual Financial Statements for the year ended the 31st of December 2023 which will be published within one month of receipt from the C&AG and as an appendix to the Chairpersons Comprehensive Report that has been submitted to the Minister.

### **2.2 Procurement Policy and Procedures:**

The Board confirms that the organisation is adhering to the relevant aspects of the Public Spending Code and the implementation of the Corporate Procurement Plan.

### **2.3 Taxation:**

The Board confirms that the ETB has complied with its obligations under tax law.

### **2.4 Financial Statements 2023:**

The Annual Financial Statement for the year ended on 31<sup>st</sup> December 2023 is subject to audit by the C&AG at the time of publication of the Annual Report 2023. MSLETB will publish the audited financial statements as soon as practicable after they have been signed off on by the C&AG.

Financial data in relation to the following are included in the Annual Financial Statement:

- Details of non-salary related fees paid in respect of Board Members analysed by category of fees.
- Aggregate details of compensation of key management analysed by the following categories including management compensation in total.
  - Salaries and short-term employee benefits
  - Post-employment benefits
  - Termination benefits.
- Key management compensation if any:
- Details of the number of employees whose total employee benefits (excluding employer pension cost) for the reporting period fell between €0 and €59,999 and within each pay band of €10,000 and €60,000 upwards and an overall figure for total employer pension contributions.

### 3. Organisational Structure



## 4. Statement of Services

The Organisation Support & Development (OSD) Directorate played a pivotal role in facilitating and managing a wide array of activities within the organisation in 2023. As a central pillar responsible for overseeing various operational and service-related functions, OSD spearheaded initiatives aimed at optimising efficiency, enhancing service delivery, and ensuring seamless operations across different departments and units.

In the Finance Department, OSD actively contributed to the transition of the organisation's SAP system to Purchase to Pay (P2P) and SUN Financials, facilitating consolidated procurement and financial reporting. Additionally, the Finance unit initiated and supervised the project to transition Travel & Subsistence processes to ESBS Shared Services, streamlining expense management processes for staff and non-employees.

Under the umbrella of our Corporate Services Department, we provided essential support for governance-related activities, including board meetings and statutory returns. Furthermore, OSD played a crucial role in ensuring compliance with data protection regulations, overseeing procurement processes, managing estate-related matters, and promoting health & safety initiatives across the organisation.

In the area of Human Resources, we spearheaded recruitment efforts, facilitated employee contract management processes, and managed various administrative tasks critical for the smooth functioning of the organisation. Additionally, HR actively participated in audits, conducted training sessions, and collaborated with different units to ensure compliance with regulatory requirements and organisational policies.

MSLETB's Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Department support initiatives focused on bolstering cybersecurity measures, upgrading infrastructure, deploying devices, and ensuring seamless collaboration with building projects. By enhancing cybersecurity awareness, optimising network infrastructure, and deploying modern communication systems, OSD played a pivotal role in safeguarding organisational data and promoting technological advancement.

Finally, OSD oversaw a multitude of building projects, ranging from additional accommodation to emergency works and infrastructure upgrades across various schools and FET centres. By coordinating these projects and ensuring compliance with regulatory standards, OSD contributed significantly to enhancing the learning environment and infrastructure for students and staff alike.

In summary, OSD's activities in 2023 spanned across finance, corporate services, human resources, ICT support, and building management domains. Through its proactive approach, diligent efforts, and effective collaboration with different units, OSD played a crucial role in driving organisational growth, ensuring regulatory compliance, and fostering a conducive environment for learning and development. Moving forward, OSD remains committed to upholding operational excellence and delivering high-quality services in line with the organisation's mission and objectives.

## 4.1 Organisation Support and Development

The functions within each Department are as follows:

- |                            |   |
|----------------------------|---|
| <b>Finance:</b>            | <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Creditors</li><li>2. Learner Allowances</li><li>3. Travel &amp; Subsistence</li><li>4. Treasury Management</li><li>5. Budgeting &amp; Forecasting</li><li>6. Financial Reporting</li></ol>   |
| <b>Corporate Services:</b> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Chief Executive / Board of Management Support</li><li>2. Governance and Compliance</li><li>3. Health and Safety Administration</li><li>4. Insurance and Legal</li><li>5. Risk Management</li><li>6. Procurement</li><li>7. Buildings and Estate Management</li><li>8. Data Protection and Freedom of Information.</li></ol>  |
| <b>Human Resources:</b>    | <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Contracts / Leave / Absences / Core HR (October 2021)</li><li>2. Recruitment</li><li>3. Staff Training and Development</li><li>4. Pensions</li><li>5. Employee Relations</li><li>6. HR Reporting / Compliance</li><li>7. Garda Vetting</li><li>8. Teacher Allocation</li></ol>   |
| <b>IT Support</b>          | <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Network, Server and System Administration</li><li>2. Virtualization</li><li>3. Cloud Infrastructure Management</li><li>4. Mobile device Management</li><li>5. Database Management</li><li>6. Help Desk/technical Support</li><li>7. Software Development</li><li>8. Shared Services</li><li>9. ICT Project Management</li><li>10. ICT Infrastructure Management</li><li>11. ICT Procurement and Vendor Management</li><li>12. Business Intelligence and analytics</li><li>13. ICT governance and Compliance</li><li>14. ICT Security</li></ol> |

Some of the key projects carried out in each of the departments are outlined below.

## **4.2 Finance**

In addition to the normal day-to-day activities carried out in the finance department, work is ongoing on the following key projects:

### **4.2.1 Annual Financial Statements**

The MSLETB 2023 Financial Statements were submitted to the Office of the C&AG before 1st April 2024.

### **4.2.2 Shared Services**

The development of a national shared services framework for ETBs covering the payroll and finance functions continues.

### **4.2.3 Shared Services Projects**

Following on from the significant transition to SUN Financials incorporating a Purchase to Pay (P2P) system on 1<sup>st</sup> July 2022 several other projects commenced and were successfully delivered during 2023. These included the Conversion of Manser pay codes to SUN Financial pay codes (Sept 2023), the transition of the existing SAP reporting system in the Training Centres to P2P and SUN Financials including Contracted Training (Nov 2023) and the transition to Shared Services Travel and Subsistence (Jan 2024) for all T&S claimants. Each of these projects was led and successfully managed by a Project Transition Lead from the MSLETB Finance Team who collaborated with colleagues from Education Shared Business Service Unit, Ernst Young Accounting Firm ('EY'), DCS and Core Financials as required in addition to various colleagues across MSLETB to deliver these projects successfully and on-time.

### **4.2.4 Finance Shared Services**

During 2022 the Shared Services Unit and the sector commenced planning and process design work to provide a single technology platform for ETB Finance in the coming years which aims to standardise, centralise and optimise ETB Financial and Accounting processes through a Shared Services model with continuous improvement thereafter. This aims to establish a single governance structure to reduce the risk in delivering Finance & Accounting processes and to provide quality financial and management accounting reports for regulatory compliance, business analytics & management decision making. Two Education and Training Boards transitioned to Finance Shared Services in 2023. MSLETB has expressed a preference to transition in mid- 2025.

## **4.3 Corporate Services**

The year 2023 proved to be a busy and successful year across every facet of Corporate Services. Within MSLETB, Corporate Services offers support to the Chief Executive and the MSLETB Board, overseeing Governance and Compliance, Procurement, Capital Projects, Buildings Works and Estate Management, Health & Safety Administration, Insurance and Motor Fleet, as well as managing Data Protection and Freedom of Information administration.



#### **4.3.1 Chief Executive and Board Support, and Governance**

Corporate Services assisted in facilitating the eight MSLETB Board meetings in 2023 across the three counties and supported the Chief Executive in his role. Corporate Services administered the ETBs legislative requirements as outlined under Circular *Code of Practice for Governance of the Education and Training Boards*, including departmental returns such as the Department Oversight Agreement and Quarterly Returns, MSLETBs Service Plan 2023, MSLETB Annual Report 2022, and the Charities Act Annual Return.

Corporate Services also prepared the Customer Services Action Plan and Customer Charter. The department also administered and collated the Risk Registers and Code of Ethics Annual Returns. Throughout the year, Corporate Services prepared and submitted the requested reports to the IAU and Controller and Auditor General.

#### **4.3.2. MSLETB Strategy Statement 2023-2027**

In this year, MSLETB launched its Strategy Statement 2023-2027, crafted through an extensive consultation process and informed by key policy, strategy, and legislation at local, national, and European levels. The statement introduces a set of core values—Quality, Professionalism, Collaboration, Proactivity, and Inclusivity—designed to support stakeholders across the region while accommodating their diverse needs. It delineates strategic objectives within five principal areas: Teaching and Learning, Development and Innovation, Learning Environment and Digital Enablement, Communication and Engagement, and Culture and Organisation. Speaking at the launch, MSLETB Chairperson Cllr Mary Bohan remarked, *"This Strategy Statement builds upon our longstanding tradition of innovation and responsiveness to the educational needs of learners and communities in Mayo, Sligo, and Leitrim. I am confident that this strategy will steer our organization as we continue to deliver innovative and high-quality education and training services."*

#### **4.3.3 Official Languages Act**

In 2023, MSLETB began collating information to support our obligation under section 10A of the *Official Languages Amendment Act 2021*. Under this section, at least 20% of all advertising must be in the Irish Language and 5% of MSLETBs advertising budget shall be in the Irish language media. The first return of this information will be made in Q1 2024 in line with our obligations.

#### **4.3.4 Data Protection and Freedom of information**

2023 was a busy and productive year for the Data Protection Unit.

The unit processed, administered and/or resolved nine Data Subject Access Requests, six Data Breaches and twenty-six Data Protection Impact Assessments. Several Data Processing Agreements and Data Sharing Agreements were completed during 2023.

The Data Protection Officer visited several Schools and Centres, provided support and guidance to staff in relation to General Data Protection Regulation ('GDPR') compliance, whilst also identifying and addressing potential data protection risks. The Data Protection Unit managed a considerable number of general data protection queries during 2023 and hosted a number of drop-in training sessions for staff.

Considerable progress was made during 2023 in reducing and eliminating risks identified in the Data Protection Gap Analysis which was carried out in 2022. During 2023 work continued in the area of policy review and Records of Processing Activity (ROPA's).

The Freedom of Information unit processed and completed 17 Freedom of Information requests on behalf of the organisation.

#### **4.3.5 Procurement**

In 2023, Procurement saw a remarkably busy year, including the delivery of centrally procured projects such as School Meals (DEIS), Equipment for both schools and FET, Cold Room, Instrumentation, Catering Equipment, Training Rigs, Stock Taking Services, Cleaning Supplies, Hazardous Waste, furniture, and Workplace investigations Services.

In 2023 we continued a proactive contract management system, to build and improve supplier relationships in the form of regular reviews. These clear communication channels ensure the correct delivery and quality of products and services to all corners of MSLETB.

As our strengthened IT systems are bedding in and building on services already procured, 2023 saw further services put in place for supporting the MSLETB IT Team. This included services like ICT Systems Management and Technical Support, ICT Digital Partner, and a cloud / VOIP / MS Teams telecommunications provider, IT devices, Email security, Broadband services, Cyber Awareness Training Services, Mobile Phones, Virus Guard, Interactive Panel, and continued support for Special Education and Student Education supports.

MSLETB also undertook the transition from SAP to SUN Financials and its associated P2P Module. This was another notable change for MSLETB training centres and required an investment in resources, particularly from Finance and Procurement. This transition further consolidates the number of legacy finance systems resulting in a somewhat streamlined access to procurement reporting and spend review information.

The Tender Contract Management (TCM) was introduced by ESBS in 2023, and whilst much work has been completed, and the system is live, there are some developmental changes required to finalise the project.

In summer 2023, the Office of Government Procurement introduced a new eTendering system. Much time and resources nationally have been taken up with the introduction of the system, and training is ongoing.

Most importantly, the procurement unit has increased its training drop-in sessions and email communication to MSLETB staff post P2P, to increase awareness, responsibility and therefore increase compliance. Further in-house development of the catalogues available to staff using P2P also supports this.

The Contracts Register continues to be managed by the Procurement unit and published in various forms for both staff and the public on the MSLETB (public) website and SCORE (staff) websites. To enable strategic planning for future national procurement solutions in the sector, MSLETB completed and submitted the Multi Annual Procurement Plan (MAPP) for 2023 in accordance with our updated Corporate Procurement Plan.



### **4.3.6 Capital Projects, Building Works and Estate Management**

#### **Buildings and Capital Unit**

The Buildings Unit procures, manages, and completes the administration of all building projects across the organisation. 2023 was an extremely busy year, with a huge volume of School and Further Education & Training projects being administered through the Unit.

#### **School Accommodation Capital & Minor Work Projects**

Additional school accommodation projects are progressing in Ballinode College, Grange Post Primary, Moyne College, Carrigallen Vocational School, Drumshanbo Vocational School, Ballinode Community College, St Tiernan's College, St Brendan's College, St Joseph's Community College, Davitt College, Coola Post Primary, Coláiste Pobail Acla, Coláiste Iascaigh and Mohill Community College. The additional school accommodation project for Davitt College is being delivered under the Department of Education's SEN reconfiguration and Modular Accommodation Programme and is expected to be complete by the end of May 2024.

Further temporary additional accommodation projects have been granted for Carrigallen Vocational School and Lough Allen College. Drumshanbo Vocational School temporary accommodation project has been delivered.

Applications for temporary accommodation have been submitted for Grange Post Primary School, Colaiste Iascaigh, St. Joseph's Community College, Ballinode College, Colaiste Chomain, Rossport and Corran College to meet the increased enrolments and enrollments with special educational needs.

Summer Works Scheme projects are progressing in Colaiste Iascaigh and St. Patrick's College. Emergency Works projects were also progressed, with applications made and approved for Davitt College, Mohill Community School, Coola Post Primary, Coláiste Pobail Acla, St Patrick's College, Grange Post Primary, Moyne College, and Carrigallen Vocational School. Further applications for Emergency Works Scheme have been submitted for St. Brendan's, Colaiste Pobail Acla, Corran College and St Joseph's Community College

#### **Further Education & Training (FET) Accommodation Capital & Minor Works Projects**

FET Additional Accommodation projects included the purchase and installation of a modular accommodation project for Sligo College of Further Education, this project was successfully delivered in August 2023 in advance of the re-commencement of the 2023/24 academic year.

A Strategic Assessment Report for the Mayo FET College of the Future was submitted to Solas/ Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science ('DFHERIS') in 2022, this submission served as the first stage in the application process to the FET College of the Future Major Projects Fund. Solas and DFHERIS assessed our Strategic Assessment Report ('SAR') proposal for a Mayo FET College of the Future in Castlebar and invited us to submit a Preliminary Business Case for the Mayo College of the Future in accordance with the requirements of the Public Spending Code, the PBC was a rigorous interrogation of the factors required to move through Decision Gate 1 in the Public Spending Code project lifecycle. The PBC was submitted to Solas/DFHERis by the deadline of the 12<sup>th</sup> of January 2024.

Two Strategic Infrastructure Upgrade Fund projects were approved by Solas/DFHERIS for Leitrim Further Education and Training Centre Mohill Campus and Sligo Further Education and Training Centre, Quay Street Building Sligo. The Mohill Campus project comprises of the redevelopment of the Old Vocational School in Mohill, and the Sligo project contains the refurbishment of the existing Quay Street building.

Under Solas' Capital Works Grant Scheme 2022, MSLETB received the approval to complete refurbishment works to provide a NZEB Training Centre of Excellence and 2nr Electrical Training Workshops at Collooney, Co Sligo.

Minor building works and emergency works projects are undergoing across the FET Building Stock, include Achill Outdoor Education and Training Centre, Sligo and Ballina Training Centres, Kiltimagh FET Centre, Ballina FET Centre.

### **Estate Management Roles & Responsibilities**

In terms of estate management, work continues in establishing and renewing Leases and Licence Agreements. The Buildings Unit keeps the Property Register updated and submits regular updates to the Department on MSLETBs estate.

### **Delivery of capital works projects to non-ETB Schools**

MSLETB is also tasked with the delivery of works and capital projects for schools outside of its remit. MSLETB is currently overseeing the delivery of new school accommodation projects for Gaelscoil Chluainin, Manorhamilton, and Holy Trinity National School, Westport, Mayo. MSLETB manage the full delivery of these projects.

### **Climate Action - 2023 Progress**

In 2023, MSLETB demonstrated significant advancements in its climate action initiatives, aligning with strategic objectives to enhance sustainability and reduce carbon emissions across operations.

**Buildings and Energy Efficiency:** MSLETB completed ten SI 426 Energy Audits, targeting buildings with the highest carbon emissions. Following these audits, applications for funding were submitted to upgrade these facilities, and work plans were considered to ensure readiness for future funding opportunities. Additionally, all current and recent building renovations incorporated sustainable heating systems. MSLETB also expressed interest in the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland's (SEAI) Pathfinder programme, focusing on retrofits and renewable heating solutions.

**Procurement:** Green procurement practices were prioritised, emphasising waste reduction in school meal programs, improving waste management education, and minimising packaging and carbon emissions in deliveries. These initiatives reflect MSLETB's commitment to environmentally responsible procurement processes.

**ICT Initiatives:** MSLETB implemented several ICT measures to reduce energy consumption and enhance efficiency. Power-saving settings were introduced across all devices, and a single-device strategy was adopted for administrative staff. The deployment of a Managed Print Service reduced the number of devices and energy usage. Transitioning to serverless

sites and a cloud-first digital strategy further lowered energy consumption, demonstrating MSLETB's dedication to leveraging technology for sustainability.

**Educational Campaigns:** The expansion of the Green Schools initiative was a key focus, promoting environmental consciousness among students and staff. Educational campaigns were launched to increase awareness of energy conservation, renewable energy, and carbon footprint reduction. These efforts aim to foster a culture of sustainability within the educational community.

**Leadership and Governance:** Clear emission reduction targets were established, supported by rigorous measurement, and reporting systems. A Buildings Improvements and Energy Officer was appointed to oversee energy efficiency efforts, reflecting MSLETB's commitment to accountable and transparent governance. The formation of Green Teams across the organisation further promotes climate action initiatives at the local level, encouraging grassroots participation in sustainability efforts.

**Operational Improvements:** MSLETB continued to promote the bike-to-work scheme, installing electric vehicle (EV) charging stations at training centres, reinforcing the organisation's commitment to reducing transportation-related emissions.

In summary, MSLETB's 2023 initiatives reflect a comprehensive approach to sustainability, encompassing energy efficiency, green procurement, technological advancements, educational campaigns, and operational improvements. These efforts underscore the organisation's dedication to achieving its climate action goals in collaboration with funding partners and stakeholders.

#### **4.3.7 Health & Safety Administration**

In July 2023, MSLETB employed a full-time Health and Safety Officer, introducing a new role to the organisation. They are initially focusing on all workplace premises and ensuring compliance with health and safety legislation. To this effect their focus has been on the relevant and appropriate safety documentation that is required along with the necessary safety training that is appropriate to the task.

The organisation will continue to strive to reduce accidents and incidents with continued full investigations and the implementation of determined and effective control measures.

Statutory bodies namely the Health and Safety Authority and the Roads Safety Authority continue to inspect our workplaces and issue their reports, and the organisation takes the appropriate remedial actions, as required, in each case.

#### **4.3.8 Insurance and Motor Fleet**

Corporate Services continued to provide advice to all staff throughout the ETB in respect of insurance requirements and any legal issues arising. Our insurance unit also works with Irish Engineering Services in facilitating the statutory inspection of schools.

## **4.4 Human Resources**

The Human Resources ('HR') Department provides a full range of services for staff of MSLETB and to support Managers in Colleges / Centres. Services also include, but are not limited to the following:

- Recruitment (Management, Teaching, Instruction, Special Needs Assistant, Administrative, Maintenance and other posts) for all posts within the organisation.
- Management of contracts for all categories of staff, terms and conditions of appointment, roll-out and implementation of national agreements etc.
- Retirement and superannuation calculations for all employees, provision of estimates, processing of ill-health retirement applications, administration of pension scheme requirements.
- Teacher Allocation for the scheme.
- Employee relations matters including maintaining productive working relationships with the main trade unions in the sector, advising and supporting managers and employees in dealing with workplace relations issues.

2023 saw a high level of activity in the HR Department, which included the following:

### **4.4.1 Recruitment**

In 2023 there was significant recruitment across the three pillars of Schools, FET and OSD. MSLETB held over 350 recruitment competitions in 2023, in total over 1,900 job applications were processed by the HR Department. The HR Department has been successful in delivering all recruitment remotely using the Microsoft Teams platform.

### **4.4.2 Back to Education Initiative ('BTEI')**

The BTEI conversion project is now coming to a close, work continued on Phase III of this project in 2023. This project arose following a national agreement reached between the Department of Education and the Teachers Union of Ireland (TUI), which enables the conversion of tutors in the BTEI, programme in all ETBs nationally, in accordance with set criteria.

### **4.4.3 Garda Vetting**

HR processed a total of 2,100 Garda Vetting applications in 2023. This was an increase of over 15% on 2022. This includes vetting disclosures received from the Teaching Council. The Vetting Team also continued with the re-vetting project for current staff.

### **4.4.4 Pension**

In 2023 the Pensions Section completed a project in conjunction with ESBS which has verified all Single Public Service Pension Scheme (SPSPS) contributions accruals from 2013 to date and confirmed their correct Scheme membership. This involved the reviewing and signing off on over 176,000 calculations. The completion of this project means that MSLETB will become fully compliant with its statutory obligation to issue SPSPS Annual Benefit Statements to members by the end of June 2024.

The Pensions Section also completed MSLETB's first ever Pensions Liability Project, which is a statutory obligation. The project commenced in July 2023 and concluded in December 2023, culminating in the production of an FRS102 Report.

There were 26 retirements in 2023, (a number were part of the Spouses & Children Scheme) which involved calculating individual pensions and lump sum payments. A significant number of requests also were received for pension estimates in 2023. HR Staff attended pension training arranged in 2023.

#### **4.4.5 ESBS Core/HR Project**

Under the Department of Education (DE) Shared Services Plan for 2017 – 2020, Education Shared Business Services (ESBS) was set up to implement the establishment of an operational Payroll Shared Services for the delivery of Payroll and Travel and Subsistence for all sixteen ETBs.

This process is now live and throughout 2023 further training took place for management and staff in leave management / travel - subsistence.

#### **4.4.6 Training & Development**

- Online Training took place for Dignity in the Workplace.
- Staff attended a Cybersecurity Training Awareness Day.
- Training took place for Managers and Staff on Core HR Administration & Leave Applications.
- Staff attended Disability Equality Awareness Training.
- The Pensions Team had the opportunity to attend online Single Pension Scheme Webinar.
- Staff had the opportunity to complete a Mentorship Practice Programme.
- There was an Information Seminar on Public Bodies and the Official Languages Act.

#### **4.5 ICT Support**

Building on the previous year's advancements, MSLETB has continued to enhance its ICT security in 2023 through significant investments and strategic initiatives. Key accomplishments include:

- Enhanced Cybersecurity Systems: Implementation of advanced cybersecurity solutions to strengthen detection and response capabilities against cyber threats.
- Account Security Review: Comprehensive review and streamlining of user accounts to reduce potential vulnerabilities.
- Automated Security Measures: Deployment of automated encryption and backup solutions for all devices to safeguard data integrity.
- Email Security Improvements: Adoption of enhanced email security protocols to protect against spoofing and phishing.
- Staff Account Management: Development of a system to streamline account management and oversight, ensuring alignment with current staffing.

- **Network Security Testing:** Completion of initial network penetration testing and subsequent implementation of recommended measures.
- **Business Continuity and Incident Response Planning:** Formulation of plans to ensure continued ICT operations during disruptions and to effectively manage cybersecurity incidents.
- **Disaster Recovery Solutions:** Development of strategies to protect against major physical and cyber threats.

#### **4.5.1 Infrastructure Projects 2023**

In 2023, MSLETB undertook extensive infrastructure upgrades to modernise its ICT capabilities across educational facilities and administrative offices. These upgrades included:

- **Network Enhancements:** Upgrades and extensions to the network infrastructure at various campuses and centres, utilising advanced technology for improved efficiency and security.
- **High-Speed Broadband:** Extension of high-speed fibre broadband connections to remote sites to support the cloud-first digital strategy.
- **School Connectivity Upgrades:** Enhanced broadband connections for several schools to improve access to digital resources.

#### **4.5.2 Migration of Servers to the Cloud 2023**

MSLETB has successfully migrated key file servers to cloud-based solutions, enhancing accessibility, security, and reducing operational costs. This move aligns with the organisation's broader digital strategy to minimise reliance on onsite physical servers.

#### **4.5.3 Web Consolidation Initiative 2023**

The consolidation of MSLETB's websites under a single hosting and development provider aims to streamline operations, reduce costs, and enhance security and management practices.

#### **4.5.4 Deployment of Laptops to Secondary School Teachers**

In 2023, MSLETB distributed 200 laptops to secondary school teachers, replacing outdated devices. This initiative supports advanced teaching methodologies, improves communication and administrative efficiency, and enhances student engagement through digital tools.

#### **4.5.5 Deployment of the New MS Teams Phone System Across MSLETB**

The implementation of the MS Teams phone system represents a significant step in unifying communication platforms across MSLETB, supporting remote work, and reducing costs.

#### **4.5.6 ICT Training and CPD 2023**

Comprehensive ICT training sessions were conducted across all sections, focusing on key areas such as security, remote working, proficiency in Microsoft Cloud Platform, and data management. A robust plan for ongoing training and development ensures continuous improvement and adaptation to evolving technologies.

### **5. Financial Summary**

MSLETB is funded primarily by the Department of Education for the delivery of second level teaching and by the Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science through SOLAS the Further Education and Training Authority in the delivery of further education and training programmes.

In 2023, funding for other projects was provided by other Government Departments and Agencies including:

Department of Social Protection,  
Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth,  
Department of Health.

Funds are also raised through charges for services such as tuition fees, room rental and activities at local level.

MSLETB is audited annually by the Comptroller and Auditor General (C&AG) who presents a report on the Board's financial stewardship to the Oireachtas. MSLETB are responsible for the keeping of accounts and MSLETB is fully compliant with its obligations under revenue legislation.

### **6. Key Relationships**

MSLETB values the links that have been made with major stakeholders in the public and private sector. This involves MSLETB consulting, engaging and collaborating with a wide range of public bodies and providers of education and training. MSLETB works closely with the three local authorities in its functional area and has entered into partnership arrangements on a number of initiatives such as Music Generation and Sligo Sport and Recreation Partnership.

MSLETB also collaborates closely with the Local Community Development Committees, Local Partnership Committees, Sligo LEADER Partnership, Leitrim Integrated Development Company, Mayo North East Partnership Company, South West Mayo Development Company, Regional Skills Forum, FIT (FastTrack to Information Technology) and Local Enterprise Offices.

During the year, MSLETB co-operated with a large number of organisations and institutions through the provision of teaching hours or financial assistance. Such organisations include Youth Services, Community Training Workshops, and the National Learning Network.



MSLETB values and continues to develop links with industry across the region to ensure that the provision of Further Education and Training services are appropriate to the needs of the various industrial sectors and to ensure that our students are in a position to attain relevant and meaningful employment.

## **7. MSLETB Schools**

In 2023 MSLETB course offerings continued to target both post-primary and post leaving certificate students. During the year 5,144 learners undertook courses in the 6-national certificate programmes which includes the following: Junior Certificate Programme, Junior Certificate Schools Programme, Transition Year Programme, Leaving Certificate Program, Leaving Certificate Vocational Programmes and Leaving Certificate Applied Programs. The variety of Post Leaving Certificate (PLC) courses for the year 2023 also enjoyed full participation, 1,245 learners, details of which can be found on the MSLETB website [www.msletb.ie](http://www.msletb.ie) (Further Education and Training – Search Courses). MSLETB schools continue to provide a quality, inclusive, holistic education that enables each individual to reach his/her full potential.

### **7.1. ETB Celebrating 10 years.**

Education & Training Boards celebrated 10 years since their establishment. To mark this event and showcase the services Education and Training Boards provide to learners, a number of initiatives took place in MSLETB schools during ETB week 27th Feb to 3rd March 2023. There was an ETB excellence awards day which took place in Croke Park and MSLETB was the winner of The ETB Hero Award.

### **7.2 Ukrainian Response**

The REALT Co-ordinator has led the Ukrainian response in MSLETB. MSLETB had 700 Ukrainian post primary students enrolled in its schools in 2023. During 2023, The REALT Coordinator participated in numerous interagency forums. The response to the crisis has been a team effort between local stakeholders. This format of intensive cooperation has created pathways to allow MSLETB to reach further into this vulnerable community and keep abreast of ongoing developments.

The integration of Ukrainian students into MSLETB schools has been very successful. Schools have been very creative in meeting the challenges they are being presented with. They have assessed the needs of the Ukrainian pupils and created bespoke programmes to address those needs. School Transport and the continuous movement/relocations of families have proved challenging.

### **7.3 Implementation of the ETBI Patrons' Framework on Ethos in 2023**

The ETBI Patrons' Framework Implementation Plan for Ethos continued throughout 2023 in all seventeen MSLETB Post-Primary Schools. The theme of raising awareness and embedding ETB Ethos and Core Values was promoted and lived out through activities in all school communities. All seventeen schools have established an Ethos Leadership Team within individual schools. An MSLETB Professional Learning Network for Ethos has been established, with one representative from each ELT attending network meetings. Six PLN Meetings took



place in 2023. Sharing good practice took place together with discussions about additional resources, supports required and plans for future activities.

In February 2023, ETBI provided Ethos Training for Principals and ELT Leads. ETBI supported all schools in celebrating ETB Week. The Identity, Multi-Belief and Values Education Short Course designed by ETBI for Junior Cycle is being piloted in one school in MSLETB.

MSLETB Principals and Deputy Principals were updated by the Ethos Co-Ordinator on the progress of the Implementation of the Patrons' Framework on Ethos. The Ethos Co-Ordinator also gave presentations on the implementation process to staff in MSLETB schools. ETBI has created four Podcasts – Let's Talk Ethos, where various stakeholders discuss the dissemination and embedding of ethos in ETB schools.

#### **7.4 Provision Mapping**

MSLETB schools are participating in the National Provision Mapping Programme lead by ETBI. Provision mapping is a process that allows schools to identify, list and evaluate the evidence-informed provisions and supports in place for students across the Continuum of Support in one summary document, which is called a Provision Map. MSLETB appointed an Inclusion Coordinator to support this initiative. The Inclusion Coordinator has been seconded for one day a week to support schools.

A National roll out day took place on 19<sup>th</sup> September 2023 in 4 regional clusters. MSLETB's regional cluster is the North West region. This was very successful with over 100 attendees at the event. The Provision Mapping initiative will continue in 2024 and all MSLETB schools will be invited to participate.

#### **7.5 Professional Development**

**MSLETB provided additional Professional Development in:**

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Inspections
- DLP and DDLP Refresher Training
- LGBTQ Training
- Induction for new Teachers
- Induction for new Leaders
- Risk Management Training
- Data Protection Training
- Training sessions for Boards of Management

#### **7.6 Gaeltacht Recognition Scheme**

Three second level schools within Bord Oideachais agus Oiliúna Mhaigh Eo, Shligigh agus Liatroma, Gaelcholáiste Chomáin are currently actively participating in the Scéim Aitheantais mar Scoil Ghaeltachta. These schools are Gaelcholáiste Chomáin Ros Dumhach, Coláiste Bhreandáin Béal an Mhuirthead and Coláiste Pobail Acla.

#### **7.7 ETBI Summer School for Middle Leaders**

MSLETB participated in the ETBI Summer School for Middle Leaders which took place in University of Limerick from June 21st to 24th. The theme was '*Nurturing Leadership for a changing world*'.

## 7.8 Inspections Reports

Inspections were also conducted in MSLETB Schools by the Department of Education -see table 1 below. The resulting reports found the quality of teaching and learning very good and school management were commended on their commitment to students' care and wellbeing. The Inspectors commented that overall quality of leadership and management was good with highly effective leadership and management practices evident in areas such as leading teaching and learning and developing leadership capacity. For more details on these reports see link to Reports below.

Date	Location	Subject
16/10/2023	Moyne College	English
15/09/2023	Mohill Community College	Irish
13/06/2023	St Tiernan's College	Geography
15/05/2023	Colaiste Pobail Acla	Irish

Links to Reports Inspection reports or links to the reports of the schools:

<https://www.gov.ie/en/school-reports/>

MSLETB schools have remained at the heart of the community, striving for academic excellence and ensuring the care of our student's wellbeing. In our schools we have seen growth in student numbers, increased attendance rates and increased retention rates. Highlighted below are examples of some of the activities / events that occurred during the year. If you would like to see more on the below highlights you can visit the individual school's websites, see Appendix 1.

<b>ANNUAL VARIETY CONCERT</b> CARRIGALLEN V.S CO LEITRIM	Over 100 students volunteered to participate in the Carrigallen Vocational School Annual Christmas Concert taking place over three nights in December 2023.  The first half was an extract from the musical 'Mamma Mia' (CVS style) and the second half was a succession of variety acts from solo singing to traditional music, recitation to line dancing. The concert is anchored in the TY school year programme and volunteers then come forward from all other year groups. The nights were all sold out and this is a testimony to the growing community of music students, choir and traditional groups in the school.
<b>WINNER OF MIND'BOG'GLING ART COMPETITION</b> CARRIGALLEN V.S CO LEITRIM	A 5th Year Carrigallen Vocational School student was the national winner of the Art section in the Trinity College Centre for Natural Products Research 'MindBOGgling' competition. The student submitted her beautiful painting 'Landscape of Bogs' and it was returned to her framed as part of her prize.
<b>2nd YEAR STUDENT PRESENTS HISTORY PODCAST</b> CARRIGALLEN V.S	A 2nd Year History student at CVS, researched and presented their own podcast as part of the Cavan County Council Decade of Centenaries series. The topic of his podcast was ' <i>The Death and Retrieval of the Body of Séan McIntyre in June 1921</i> '. Sean McIntyre was killed while destroying Tompkin roadhouse near Belturbet. This

CO LEITRIM	is an amazing achievement for a 2nd Year student. The podcast is available on Spotify, Acast on online and <a href="http://www.cavancoco.ie/centenaries">www.cavancoco.ie/centenaries</a>
<b>MENTAL HEALTH WEEK 2023</b> CARRIGALLEN V.S CO LEITRIM	Mental Health week was celebrated in CVS in October 2023. There were daily activities, both in and out of the classroom. The theme of the week was 'Just Say Hi!', encouraging students to actively engage with each other in the school environment. A gratitude tree was built by staff and students in the corridor. Open Mic sessions were held at break times. Students performed and photographed their Random Acts of Kindness. Older students gave dance classes to junior students. There were homework breaks, mindful breathing and a games and relaxation room. Most popular of all was the annual soccer game between teachers and staff which is attended enthusiastically by all the school community and cements the positive relationship between staff and pupils.
<b>MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS DAY IN AID OF STOP</b> NORTH CONNAUGHT COLLEGE CO SLIGO	The Health Supervisory Skills Class ran an event in North Connaught College of Further Education, on Thursday 2nd March called Mental Health Awareness Day in aid of STOP. The day began at 10. am with a talk from a guest speaker from Northwest STOP. At 10.45 they held a coffee and cake morning. At 11.am they had Open Access to the Sensory/Meditation Room. There were also Beauty Treatments available on the day (appointment only). At 1pm they held a group Reiki session. In attendance at the coffee morning was a Peer Support Worker (Finian) from Health Service Executive ('HSE'). The message is STOP and Share.
<b>COFFEE MORNING IN AID OF NORTH WEST HOSPICE</b> NORTH CONNAUGHT COLLEGE CO SLIGO	North Connaught College held 2 Bewley's Big Coffee mornings in aid of North West Hospice Sligo. The event raised a massive €300 for the Hospice. Thanks to all who attended or helped in any way. Special thanks to the health service skills, nursing studies & OTA groups for organising this fantastic event, the business group for designing the poster and to all who brought baked goods and yummy treats.
<b>OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY WEEK</b> NORTH CONNAUGHT COLLEGE CO SLIGO	As part of International Occupational Therapy Week, here at NCC we were delighted to welcome an Occupational Therapist to speak with our Occupational Therapy Assistant group. Thank you for sharing your time and knowledge.
<b>OUR ELC STAGE 1 STUDENT VISITS</b> NORTH CONNAUGHT COLLEGE CO SLIGO	Our ELC stage 1 students visited Hopes and Dreams Montessori School. Using The Montessori Method of teaching their aim is to provide purposeful and stimulating early childhood activities, which enhance each child's growth and development. They believe that the early years are the most important time for exploration and discovery; that children need to create, play, make friends, and learn whilst having fun. Hopes and Dreams offers each child an atmosphere of warmth, understanding and a place to develop, both as an individual and as part of a group. Thank you for showing us The Montessori Method.

	Our ELC stage 1 students also visited Sligo Woodland School, Founded, and led by an experienced educator with a passion for nature, her school is a haven for individuals and communities seeking to rekindle their connection with the natural world while gaining valuable skills and knowledge.
<b>INFORMATION SESSIONS FOR ERASMUS 24</b> NORTH CONNAUGHT COLLEGE CO SLIGO	Info sessions were held for Erasmus+24. Best of luck to all who have applied. Interviews have been happening during the second half of November. This year 12 students received the opportunity to complete 2 weeks work placement in Malaga, Spain in Feb 2024. The 12 students took part in work placement in a vocational setting.
<b>ANNUAL GARDENING COMPETITION</b> ST TIERNAN'S COLLEGE CROSSMOLINA CO MAYO	<p>St Tiernan's College annual gardening competition is always a highlight of the summer for those students that take part. It has been a long tradition in our school. Students out do themselves every year growing and harvesting amazing produce.</p> <p>Some of our students also entered the Crossmolina Show! Well done to two of our Transition year students who were both mentioned in this article in the National Vegetable Society Ireland magazine. This magazine is published for international readers as well as in Ireland.</p>
<b>AN GHAEILGE AG DUL O NEART GO NEART</b> COLAISTE CHOMAIN ROSSPORT CO MAYO	Bhí bliain ghnóthach agus rathúil i nGaelcholáiste Chomáin, Ros Dumhach. I mí na Bealtaine, bhaineamar amach an Gaelbhratach, scéim a chuireann an Ghaeilge chun cinn sa scoil. Bhí stádas faighte ag an gColáiste mar chuid den Scéim Aitheantais mar Scoil Ghaeltachta. Agus chomh maith le sin, bhí buaiteoir náisiúnta againn sa scoil i mí na Samhna nuair a d'éirigh le duine d'ár scoláirí an chéad áit a bhuachaint sa Tráth na gCeist beo agus idirghníomhach a bhí eagraithe ag Conradh na Gaeilge do Ghaeilge 24.
<b>NATIONAL MARINE AMBASSADOR</b> COLAISTE IASCAIGH EASKEY CO SLIGO	<p>For the last two years we have worked on the theme Global Citizenship- Marine Environment, it is the eighth theme of the Green Schools Programme. Our school was selected to be the Marine Ambassador School in Ireland for 2022/23. There were 27 students of the green schools committee. Throughout the year we organised a range of activities, competitions, beach cleans and plastic bottle initiatives that were introduced to our school.</p> <p>As part of our Action Day the committee organised for 1st to 3rd years to do a beach clean which entailed getting high vests, bags and gloves for all 80 students involved. Students made posters at home which were hung around the school on a variety of topics such as single-use plastics, climate change, microplastics and littering. In May 2023, a small group of the committee spoke at the National Marine Environment Conference in Athlone. It was in front of 200 primary school students on 6 native species, particularly whether they were endangered and ways we could help reduce the impact. Throughout the year we hoped our committee aided in increasing awareness of ways to reduce our ecological footprint.</p>

<b>NATIONAL MUSEUM OF COUNTRY LIFE EXHIBITION</b>  ST JOSEPH'S COMMUNITY COLLEGE CHARLESTOWN CO MAYO	In November 2023, the National Museum of County life, Turlough hosted an exhibition by St. Joseph's Community College, Charlestown on The Revolutionary Women of East Mayo and South Sligo 1918-1923. This exhibition was funded by the Decade of Centenaries Programme and follows on from their award-winning project in the All-Island Schools' History Competition 2022. The students and their history teacher presented their research, along with guest a speaker. The exhibition will be on display in the Charlestown Arts Centre; the County Library, Castlebar; Belmullet Library; Swinford Cultural Centre and Ballyhaunis Community Hall in 2024.
<b>€1920.00 RAISED FOR MND</b>  ST JOSEPH'S COMMUNITY COLLEGE CHARLESTOWN CO MAYO	In March of 2023 during a class discussion of the theme of gratitude with fifth year students, the idea to host a tea day fundraiser for the charity MND emerged. The students were engaging with the SVP Youth for Justice programme, and they wanted to create awareness around the disease & try to raise some much-needed funds for the charity. Co-ordinated by a creative group of students under the direction of their dedicated teacher Ms. Stacey McDermott, the students orchestrated a very enjoyable event that saw the school & wider Charlestown community come together to 'drink tea for MND' and raise a phenomenal €1920.00. Raising such a figure is a testament to the collective effort, teamwork & generous spirit of everyone involved. The dedication and compassion of the students shines brightly, reflecting their deep commitment to making a positive impact within their community. Everyone at St. Joseph's Community College is so proud.
<b>ERASMUS +</b>  MAYO CFE WESTPORT CO MAYO	A total of 84 students participated in our Erasmus+ programme last year to destinations in Spain, Iceland, Germany, France, Estonia, Finland and Denmark. 15 staff also participated in a Staff Mobility to Malaga, Spain in April 2023. There were 12 incoming mobilities from France, Estonia and Denmark.
<b>GRADUATION 2023</b>  MAYO CFE WESTPORT CO MAYO	Our annual Graduation took place on Friday 10 November 2023 in the TF Royal Hotel & Theatre, Castlebar. The graduation was attended by a large crowd of proud graduates and their families. Management and staff from the College were also in attendance, as well as dignitaries and invited guests including Mr Tom Grady, CE, Mr Peter Egan, Director of FET, Mr Pat Howley, Director of OSD, Ms Tereasa Maguire, Chairperson, Board of Management, Mr Justin Kerr, Head of School, ATU Mayo. Certificates for a total of 27 Level 5 courses, 11 Level 6 courses and 3 Night Classes were presented on the day.
<b>ETHNIC FOOD FAIR</b>  BALLINODE COLLEGE BALLINODE CO SLIGO	The halls of Ballinode were filled with the beautiful aromas of the Ethnic Food Fair, which was part of Race Awareness Week. It was an opportunity for everyone to tantalise the tastebuds and try a new dish. Well, done to all involved.
<b>MINI COMPANY</b>  BALLINODE COLLEGE BALLINODE CO SLIGO	Congratulations to Ms Tighe, Mini company co-ordinator and her budding entrepreneurs in TY who showcased their mini companies in Johnston Court.

<b>CRAFT FAIR</b> BALLINODE COLLEGE BALLINODE CO SLIGO	Students had a great time at the Gifted Craft Fair in the RDS and afterwards got a tour of Butlers Chocolate Factory. A great trip for all especially when they got to decorate their own chocolate gift.
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## 8. Further Education and Training (FET)

### 8.1 Development of FET Services in MSLETB

MSLETB provides a broad range of FET programmes throughout the region. All FET provision and its associated services are designed to meet the education and training requirements of individuals, both employed and unemployed, and the business and economic needs of employers in the region.

The responsibility for the management of MSLETBs FET provision lies with the Director of FET, the FET Leaders and PLC Principals Group that manages the MSLETB FET provision.

#### Role of “Future FET”: Transforming Learning FET Strategy 2020 – 2024

The “Future FET”: Transforming Learning FET Strategy 2020 – 2024 aims to transform learning over 5 years. The Strategy is based around three strategic pillars: building skills; fostering inclusion; and facilitating pathways. This will be underpinned by a strong focus on four enabling themes: digital transformation; learner and performance focus; staffing and structures; and capital development.

The central premise of the new strategy is that FET is for everyone and will serve as a major driver of both economic development and social cohesion. It is available in every community and offers people pathways to take them as far as they would like to go on their education and training journey, regardless of any previous level of education.

The core benefits of MSLETB Further Education & Training services will offer learners:

- a better chance of employment
- the opportunity to progress to other education and training
- the transversal skills that will allow them to integrate and engage effectively with society
- a means of accessing education throughout a lifetime - vocational skills that are linked to regional and national critical skills requirements
- and new models of delivery which can meet their rapidly evolving needs

MSLETB will contribute to the ambitious *FET Strategic Plan 2020 – 2024* and will actively engage in the implementation plan to establish *Strategic Framework for Future FET* to deliver the plan. MSLETB engages with SOLAS in a strategic dialogue annually to update our three-year strategic performance agreements which is shaped and informed by the *Overarching Planning and Funding Parameters and Requirements for Education and Training Boards Further Education and Training Provision* issued by SOLAS. The annual update facilitates reflection on the strategic context, direction, and progress of the MSLETB/SOLAS SPA agreement and, facilitates addressing the needs of evolving priority areas and cohorts on an annual basis.



MSLETB specifically supports the FET Strategy and System Targets set under the National FET Strategy and reflected in national FET system targets agreed between MSLETB and SOLAS, delivered over a 3-year cycle. It does this by continuing to align skills development and training with the enterprise needs of the region and by continuing to contribute to the National Challenges posed by cross-government policy where MSLETB FET will be expected to make a key contribution, such as in Future Jobs, Climate Change, and Project Ireland 2040.

MSLETB also consider the Wider Education & Skills Policy issues. The National Skills Strategy and 3-year Action Plan for Education set out a series of commitments in relation to the FET system, while the development of a tertiary education framework promises a more coordinated approach between FET and Higher Education. This is particularly relevant to MSLETB with the advent of the Atlantic Technological University.

## 9. FET Programmes

MSLETB is committed to addressing the evolving skills gap in the 21st century and to providing learners with the skills, knowledge and competencies needed to succeed in today's world of work. To achieve this, MSLETB has developed innovative programmes that cater to key skill needs in various industries. These programmes are developed in consultation with industry experts to ensure that they are relevant and responsive to the current workforce demands.

Additionally, MSLETB continuously reviews and updates its programmes to keep up with the ever-changing needs of the industries, and to equip learners with the latest skills and knowledge. Through this commitment, MSLETB aims to support learners in achieving their career goals while also addressing the skills gaps within the industries they serve.

As part of the programme approval process, MSLETB considers the employment skills needs for all level 5 and 6 courses. We carefully review all courses offered at these levels to ensure that they provide employment opportunities and have potential for progression based on local, regional, and national trends. This ensures that students who complete these courses are well-equipped with the necessary skills and knowledge to succeed in the workforce in the cognate area of vocational study. During 2023, MSLETB offered both full-time and part-time courses in a wide range of fields to a large and diverse population of adult and post-second-level learners. Numbers of enrolments increased across all provision types in 2023. In 2023, MSLETB learner activity was 19,664 across the three counties.

The following is a sample of the highlights within the programmes:

### 9.1 Post Leaving Certificate (PLC)

- **Sligo College of Further Education (Sligo CFE)** - In September 2023, Sligo College of Further Education welcomed its first group of learners on the Tertiary Access Route into General Nursing (BSc. Hons). The programme provides learners with direct entry into the Nursing Degree programme at ATU St Angela's. In October 2023 Minister Simon Harris visited Sligo College of Further Education to meet our inaugural class of Tertiary Degree learners. Attendees included Mr Tom Grady CE of MSLETB, and Mr Peter Egan, Director of Further Education and Training, MSL, Dr E. McSharry Head of the Dept of Nursing in St Angela's College, Dr Justin Kerr, Vice President of GMIT Mayo

& Head of School of Health Science & Maria Doherty (Tertiary Regional Coordinator). There was also a live feed to the Tertiary groups in Dunmore (GRETb), Letterkenny (DETb).

- **North Connaught College of Further Education** North Connaught College was excited to introduce a new course in Occupational Therapy in 2023. This builds on our already strong provision in the Healthcare sector and responds to the increasing need for healthcare specialists in the community. Students participated in a few activities as part of International Occupational Therapy Week. Students were also involved in the OT-led 'Sense-Ability' project with Sligo County Library, which aims to create a world of sensory-friendly spaces and provides tools for people with sensory or additional needs.
- **Mayo College of Further Education and Training** - Mayo College of Further Education and Training was awarded an Erasmus+ Grant in excess of €400,000 in May 2023. In the current academic year over 125 students and over 20 staff partook in Erasmus+ mobilities. The college was also shortlisted for two categories in the Education Awards for Further Education Provider of the Year and Erasmus Programme of the Year. The college commenced Skills to Advance courses via a partnership with Mayo GAA to promote courses to learners throughout the county. Courses include Sustainability in the Workplace, Project Management, Leading Through Change and Mentorship Practice.
- Both **Drumshanbo Vocational School** and **Lough Allen College** in Leitrim both continue to offer PLC courses in Business and Outdoor Education.

## 9.2 Apprenticeships and New Generation Apprenticeships

- In 2023, MSLETB continually and actively reviewed its ability to increase capacity in craft apprenticeship programmes. Particularly, we were aware of the continuing challenges involved due to the backlog in apprenticeship provision for Electrical and Carpentry and Joinery (C&J) and increased provision in these areas. MSLETB continues to actively engage with SOLAS to identify opportunities for expanding our training capacity.
- MSLETB participated actively in the Emergency Oversight Group with SOLAS and apprenticeship stakeholders to implement an emergency approach from September 2021 to address this backlog. The goal in this group was to increase throughput by the utilisation of existing resources and to facilitate three intakes per annum of Phase 2 apprentices. MSLETB successfully implemented this in 2023.
- MSLETB continued to grow the national new generation apprenticeships in Sales and Craft Butchery. Both apprenticeship programmes underwent thorough evaluations conducted by their respective teams. Extensive research was gathered from all stakeholders, leading the teams to revise the programmes to ensure their alignment with industry standards and suitability for both apprentices and the industry. Subsequently, both programmes were successfully revalidated for a five-year period, with the QQI panel commending various aspects of each programme. These new apprenticeships are thriving, with a few ETBs nationwide joining as collaborative partners. With MSLETB being the Coordinating Provider, the Craft Butchery Apprenticeship is now being delivered in 3 locations nationally and the Sales Apprenticeship is being delivered in 7 locations.



- MSLETB was delighted to be represented at the World Skills (Ireland) competition in RDS. During this 3-day event, our apprentices battled it out against over 200 young people across the country with a broad range of skill-based trades. Eleven apprentices from the Craft Butchery, Commis Chef and Sales apprenticeship programmes were invited to appear on the “Hero’s Stage” to speak to attendees about their positive experience as apprentices.
- The World Butcher Challenge took place in Sacramento, California, featuring competitions amongst 13 countries vying for the title of the “World’s Best Butchers”. Leading the Irish Team were representatives from the Associated Craft Butchers of Ireland (ACBI), which included representation from the Craft Butchery Apprenticeship programme by two apprentices and two instructors.
- Members of the Craft Butchery Team (instructors and apprentice) represented the apprenticeship programme at the prestigious EuroSkills 2023 competition in Gdansk, Poland. EuroSkills Gdańsk marked the eighth edition of this major vocational education and skills excellence event in Europe.
- The Sales Apprenticeship Consortium won the Exceptional Leadership Award 2023 at the Regional Skills West Awards. The award was in recognition of their contribution to the development of industry-relevant skills in the West region. In addition, the sales Apprenticeship programme won the 2023 Workplace Excellence Award in the area of Graduate Training and Apprenticeships Initiative of the Year. This was a notable achievement, considering MSLETB faced competition from four prominent companies - Dawn Meats, Applegreen, Cairn Homes Plc and Boston Scientific.
- In 2023, MSLETB remained dedicated to innovation, as evidenced by its involvement in developing emerging new-generation apprenticeships in digital marketing and media, and immersive technology. These programmes are poised to equip learners with the skills needed for rapidly evolving sectors, contributing to a highly skilled workforce.

### **9.3 Traineeships**

- In 2023, our traineeship provision in MSLETB continued to enable learners to acquire the skills and knowledge to start their careers in a variety of disciplines including Women’s and Men’s Hairdressing, Beauty Therapy, Welding and Fabrication, Equestrian Manager Traineeship, HGV Professional Driver, Instructor & Beach Lifeguard Traineeship, Hospitality and Software Development.

### **9.4 Vocational Training Opportunities Scheme (VTOS)**

- VTOS provision in Co. Mayo transferred to Mayo College of Further Education and Training in April 2022. This resulted in six VTOS centres becoming Hubs of Mayo College of Further Education and Training. The VTOS programmes in Co. Mayo continued to go from strength to strength offering programmes in IT and Business Skills (Level 5), Computer and Office Skills (Level 4), National Tour Guiding (Level 6 Special Purpose), Culture and Heritage (Level 5), Tourism with Business (Level 5) to name a few.
- In 2023, VTOS Sligo continued to provide full-time programmes in English Language Skills Development with Computers, Social & Cultural Studies with IT Skills Year 2,

Social Studies, Tourism & Culture, Using Computers in the Workplace (Microsoft Office Suite) and VTOS General Studies in Health Sciences (Level 4).

- VTOS Drunshambo's 2023 offerings included Business & IT with Payroll and Bookkeeping (Level 5), Business Administration (Level 5), Health, Nutrition and Food Science (Level 5), Tourism with Business (Level 5) and Traditional Irish Music (Level 5).

### **9.5 Back to Education Initiative (BTEI)**

- In 2023, the BTEI continued to provide part-time FET courses for young people and adults, the priority for BTEI was to continue to target individuals and groups that experience particular and acute barriers to participation in education and deliver courses that reduce/overcome these barriers. In 2023, BTEI programmes in MSLETB continued to provide in demand courses across a range of areas including healthcare, childcare, digital skills, hospitality, customer service to name a few.
- BTEI South Mayo with MSLETB funds have worked in partnership with the Mayo Arts Squad Castlebar offered a number of Level 5 Art components to their Community Education (CE) scheme participation. The participants had their creative artworks displayed for Mayo Day.
- Focus on Tourism studies for candidates seeking work opportunities locally is a hugely important employment sector in Co. Mayo. We have offered Level 4 QQI modules in 2023 which has attracted low skilled reception employees with local hospitality employers as well as Community Education participants and others retraining for employment in this sector. Level 4 IT Skills were offered combined with "Tourism Visitor Awareness" to make the package very relevant to the local tourism sector. The interesting content has built candidate knowledge around the many visitor attractions and amenities of interest in Co. Mayo. In December 2023 Benjamin from "Joyce Country & Western Lakes" Geopark project, Tourmakeady based, made an interesting presentation to the course participants on the geology and rock formation in Co. Mayo and the potential to add extra value to the tourism product locally through promoting this to visitors.

### **9.6 Adult Basic Education/ Family Learning/ Adult Literacy and Numeracy**

- In 2023, MSLETB successfully provided English for Speakers of Other Languages ('ESOL') courses and services to more than 4,139 Ukrainian nationals, International Protection Applicants and Migrant workers which is a significant accomplishment. MSLETB provided English for Speakers of Other Languages from QQI Levels 1-6.
- In 2023, over 1,859 learners attended Adult Literacy programmes.
- MSLETB expanded Family Learning across five Literacy and Basic Education centres. In 2023, we focused on developing an 8-week pilot course to support parents in helping their primary level children with their maths homework and are running numeracy for toddlers and maths homework support in the libraries.
- Under the 10-year Adult Literacy for Life Strategy, MSLETB appointed a Regional Adult Literacy Coordinator whose work involves rolling out the strategy across MSLETB and build on the existing service while also setting up proactive coalition groups that ensures all stakeholders, learner voices, community and employers are consulted on the needs of our region. In 2023, we have set up a Regional Literacy Coalition Group and have been engaged in a number of projects:

- Collaboration between Libraries and MSLETB to create digital literacy drop-in sessions in library spaces. The Digital Literacy Programme in Leitrim library has been a very positive experience for everybody who has been involved; library staff, tutors and of course the people who availed of the service. There was huge demand for the initiative with 778 one-to-one sessions delivered over 22 weeks in six of our branch libraries. Many learners involved in this programme also engaged in literacy support as a result. This project was nominated for an AONTAS award.
- The project will be rolled out to Sligo and Mayo. Mayo Library is currently working on this project called Digital DIY for ALL.
- Literacy Awareness Training for ALL - rolled out training for stakeholders in May 2023.
- Under Inclusion, we engaged with Down Syndrome Ireland and plan to run a QQI Full certificate in Drama and Personal Development at Level 1 & 2.
- MSLETB appointed a Learner Support Coordinator (LSC) who will build on rolling out learning supports across MSLETB. In 2023, the LSC looked at the following areas:
  - Carrying out a Needs Analysis across MSLETB FET centres
  - Learning Hubs (pilot) – 3 Mayo, 2 Leitrim, 1 Sligo – feedback and reviewed end of June
  - Woodcock Johnson Training for Reasonable accommodations in Exams and placement on correct level and programme
  - Literacy Awareness training & specialised training took place.
- Collaboration projects included:
  - Development of Wider Benefits of Learning tool with 8 ETBS
  - UDL National Charter for Tertiary Education
  - UDL Regional for Tertiary Education
  - Member of the Support for Apprentices National Working Group
  - Learning Support for Parents -developing resources nationally in maths.
  - Preparing Lit Awareness Webinar & video for Agencies and MSLETB staff
  - MSLETB QA - Blended & Online Progs Learning Support info.
  - Plain English – website accessibility – compiling Support info for website
  - Recognition of Prior Learning
  - CUBBIEs- study space for learners on the spectrum
- In November 2023, one of our literacy learners became a member of the Disabilities Advisory Group co-chaired by AHEAD and USIs. The group is more diverse than ever with representatives from across the country, from differing age groups, and from 12 education institutions.
- In 2023, Adult Literacy and ESOL staff engaged in Erasmus programmes in Norway, Finland and Italy and have built up networks. Over 70 Adult Literacy and ESOL MSLETB tutors also participated in a three-day Transversal skills Symposium 'Cruinniu' that focused on Transversal skills, Inclusion and Good Practice in Adult Literacy.

## **9.7 Community Education**

- In 2023, MSLETB allocated €246,000 in Community Grants between Mayo, Sligo & Leitrim. The Community Grants included reaching out to migrant groups, supporting digital hubs, Active Retirement groups and men's groups.

## **9.8 Youthreach / Community Training Centres**

- Leitrim Youthreach – Learner Art Exhibition. An exhibition of artwork by 15

students in Youthreach Leitrim were showcased in the Dock, Carrick-on-Shannon between 3rd of February to 31st of March. The exhibition showcased digital and photographic works created by the students as part of the Envision project. Each artist directed the theme and technique to suit their individual vision. Some of the techniques used included digital drawing, long exposure, blended exposure, and digital/physical assemblage.

- A Youthreach Leitrim Learner was awarded for highest results in the region. The student was progressing on to a PLC in Engineering with Sligo College of Further Education.
- Youthreach Ballinrobe had one Leaving Cert Applied (LCA) student in 2023 that was awarded the Fergal Quinn Trophy having achieved 100% in her LCA.
- Youthreach Kiltimagh had an event "The Mural Experience" Positive Mental Health Mural Launch officially unveiled by Maria Walsh MEP incorporating an open day with members of the local community, local businesses, and parents in attendance.
- Youthreach Sligo Learners and staff attended a mental health conference in conjunction with the traveller support group.
- Leitrim Community Training Centre Trainee took part in the All-Island Healthy Home Chef Competition.

### **9.9 Local Training Initiatives (LTIs)**

- Mayo Abbey Cookery School visited Ashford Castle and the Lodge at Ashford Castle to show the students the importance of customer care within the industry and to display the kitchens in action.
- MSLETB now have eight LTIs in operation in counties Mayo and Leitrim; the sole remaining LTI in Sligo ceased operations in 2023.
- In 2023, MSLETB implemented the findings of the sectoral review which took place in 2022 and which will help to maintain our course provision to the highest of educational and governance standards.

### **9.10 Skills to Advance (STA)/ Skills for Work (SFW)**

- MSLETB commenced courses through of its NZEB Centre of Excellence in Collooney, Sligo. This new centre focuses on the teaching of Nearly Zero Energy Building methods and retrofit skills for the construction sector.
- The "One More Job" initiative launched in Sligo by Minister Simon Harris TD is aimed at supporting micro and small businesses in Ireland by providing tailored training and financial assistance for those employing apprentices. Developed in collaboration with Enterprise Ireland and apprenticeship partners, including MSLETB, the initiative offers various supports such as an online Mentorship Practice programme for employers preparing to train apprentices. This programme was developed by three MSLETB FET practitioners. The initiative was designed to encourage more businesses to engage in apprenticeships and invest in the development of skilled workers.
- MSLETB secured funding via the SOLAS "Skills to Advance: Innovation through Collaboration" Call for Proposals in 2021 to develop a series of micro-qualifications focusing on Immersive Technology. These qualifications encompass training and resources tailored for the renewable wind energy sector, leveraging immersive

technology-enhanced learning tools. The initial micro-qualification was validated in 2023 and is scheduled for industry delivery in Q1 2024. Validation for the second micro-qualification is anticipated in the same quarter, with its launch planned for Q2 of 2024.

### 9.11 Music Generation

- In September 2023, Music Generation Sligo co-ordinated Culture Night Sligo 2023. Music Generation Sligo stepped back in time and immersed Sligo in an unforgettable musical journey at Sligo Abbey's medieval ruins for Culture Night 2023. Local young musicians filled the air with a spectacular event marking Culture Night Sligo 2023. Organised by Music Generation Sligo, *'Live at the Abbey'* was an enchanting evening of music, showcasing the incredible talent of young performers from Sligo Youth Voices, Music Generation Sligo's Harp ensemble, and captivating Music Generation Sligo solo acts and bands. This was the first-ever concert staged at Sligo Abbey, a 13th-century OPW site in the heart of Sligo town which was featured in national press.
- In June 2023 Music Generation held its largest ever school performance 'Schools Celebration Concert' which was a celebration of a selection of performers from our performance music education programme *'Discovering and performing music'*. Over 520 young musicians performed together on the day in The Knocknarea Arena in Sligo. Over 900 came to celebrate this end of year event.
- Music Generation Mayo Fret Frenzy has been highly successful in engaging teenagers in Castlebar and its surrounds. A new call out to schools for 23/24 programmes has resulted in responses from 59 schools (56 Primary Schools and 3 Secondary Schools.) We are also engaging with additional Secondary Schools through the Core. These numbers are a reflection on the success of both of our PS programmes, Ceili Ukulele and our new Ceol na nÓg early years programme. Ceol na nÓg has excellent sustainability due to the new fee system implemented.
- Music Generation Mayo Harp Ensemble travelled to Edinburgh International Harp Festival with the Music Generation Harp Collective.
- A new Youth Ensemble commenced rehearsals in The Youth Café in Drumshambo and performed at the launch of the Local Youth Creative Partnership.
- Cruinniu na n-og – A Bucket Drumming had a workshop for 10 – 17-year-olds in The Island Theatre Ballinamore. Sound Explorers, a composing and improvisation project in partnership with the library in Carrick-on-Shannon and a ukulele project in partnership with the library in Mohill also took place.

### 9.12 Outdoor Education Centres

- A project was carried out by Achill Outdoor Education and Training Centre in collaboration with the local secondary school, Colaiste Pobail Acla and Sláintecare Healthy Communities funding in 2023. The aim of this project was to promote the wellbeing of young people by connection, both to the natural environment and to others. It sought to foster an inner connection to self through the interconnectedness of the natural environment. The programme also hoped to provide a resource that supports a young person in the future.
- In 2023, Achill Outdoor Education provided *"Achill Trails"* a series of community-based walks focusing on wellbeing in nature run in conjunction with Sláintecare.

### **9.13 Evening courses and self-financing night classes**

- In 2023, MSLETB achieved remarkable progress in expanding course offerings to meet diverse learner needs. In 2023 MSLETB provided evening training to 984 learners. We focused on upskilling individuals in employment and reskilling career changers as well as providing courses for those looking to enter the workforce, ensuring relevant training for all. Through continuous needs assessment, we tailor programmes to serve our local community effectively. Our commitment to education remains unwavering as we strive to empower individuals and drive positive change through learning.
- The Green Cert course continues to be extremely popular in Mayo College of Further Education and Training with over 200 part time students.

### **9.14 Youth Work**

- MSLETB continued to fulfil its statutory youth work function to support the provision, coordination, administration, and assessment of youth work services. The key policy and funding partner in this regard is the Youth Affairs Unit of the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth (DCEDIY).
- In 2023, MSLETB supported volunteer-led and operated youth groups through the Local Youth Club Grant Scheme.
- The Youth Capital Scheme supported minor works and equipment for staff-led youth projects.
- A wide range of professional youth projects were operated under the UBU Your Place Your Space, Youth Information Centre and Northwest Regional Drugs and Alcohol Task Force funding lines. These projects provide targeted supports primarily to marginalised cohorts of young people.
- 2023 also saw the operation of the Integration Fund, which supported the provision of youth work supports to Ukrainian young people across Mayo, Sligo, and Leitrim.

### **9.15 Local Creative Youth Partnership (LCVP):**

- The LCYP was delighted to support so many creative projects again from all over Mayo, Sligo, and Leitrim this year. We had a very well received and successful official launch of our three-year Strategic Plan in March where we got the opportunity to showcase some of the fabulous creative and innovative work undertaken by young people from all over the three counties. These projects ranged from textiles, puppetry, dance, filmmaking, eco-art, steam, animation, theatre, street art. Local Creative Youth Partnership were privileged to be able to support so many young people across this region in exploring their creative potential, many who are living with economic and social disadvantage. We are very proud to have engaged and supported young people in their creative experiences spanning from the islands off Mayo including Clare and Achill Islands, right throughout the county of Sligo and right over to Ballinamore and Carrick Allen in Co. Leitrim.
- As part of the LCYP commitment to ensuring a sustainable model of creative practice we ran a series of creative workshops in the area for youth and community workers. These included Theatre Skills, Sustainable Fashion with, Mobile Film making and podcasting with Kinia and Eco-Art.



### **9.16 Adult Education Guidance and Information Service**

- In April 2023 Leitrim AEGIS hosted a Leitrim Learners Conference, in collaboration with Leitrim County Library Services along with Adult Literacy Service to link in with Adult Literacy classes facilitated by the Library Services in county Leitrim.
- In December launched County Leitrim Course Prospectus and distributed widely throughout schools and community groups in the county.
- In October 2023, Adult Guidance Service Sligo co-facilitated with the Department of Social Protection ('DSP') a day for under 25s.
- Sligo Adult Guidance service hosted IGC Conference in ATU. Sligo AEGIS Co-ordinator was pivotal in the planning of this event.
- Guidance Coordinator in Mayo was nominated as MSLETB representative on the ETBI FET Guidance Network Group.
- In March, Mayo Adult Guidance organised and co-ordinated with second level schools and parents Education and Training Expo over 2 days in Breaffy House Hotel. This gave attendees an insight to all FET Activity in Mayo, and we received excellent testimonials from current and former learners.

### **9.17 Professional Development (PD)**

In MSLETB, Professional Learning and Development remains a key priority to keep pace with evolving educational methodologies and technologies. By fostering continuous growth and enhancement among its workforce, MSLETB ensures the delivery of high-quality education and training services to all learners. Professional development not only equips staff with the latest pedagogical approaches and technological advancements but also cultivates a culture of innovation and excellence within the organisation. Through ongoing learning opportunities, educators and staff members refine their skills, stay abreast of evolving best practices, and remain responsive to the diverse needs of learners. This commitment to professional development underscores MSLETB's dedication to nurturing a dynamic and proficient workforce capable of meeting the educational challenges of today and tomorrow.

Example of Professional Learning and Development undertaken in 2023 include:

- Dignity in the Workplace training
- Performance Management
- Encounters with Play
- Online Wellbeing Seminar for Staff
- Train the trainer
- Teastas sa Ghaeilge Ghairmiúil
- MSc in Outdoor Education
- Safe Pass Manual Handling
- International Course in Dry Cured Meat Products
- Professional Diploma in Health & Safety
- Professional Diploma in Education
- Cert Sports Psychology
- Postgraduate Diploma in Educational Practice in Teaching For Further Education
- Certificate in Sports Massage
- Certificate in Digital Education

- M.Sc Food, Nutrition & Health
- Certificate in Adult Guidance
- Certificate in Managing People Skills
- Teagasc Distance Education Green Certificate
- Training Yoga Course
- Dry needling for pain management
- Management Applications

Throughout 2023, several FET staff members were invited to share their knowledge and expertise at the following educational events:

- AHEAD Conference “Smashing the Myths of Apprenticeships”
- The Irish Learning Technology Association EdTech Winter Conference “Harnessing TEL to Create Apprenticeships of the Future”
- National Teaching & Learning Forum “Academic Integrity in Further Education & Training”
- FESS Workshop “Employer Engagement for Programme Development in FET”
- Maynooth University “Graduating through the Workplace – the Sales Apprenticeship as a Case Study” (to learners registered the Level 9 Diploma in Programme Design and Validation for Further Education and Training (FET))
- The National Apprenticeship Office “Learnings from Delivering a Consortium Led Apprenticeship”

### **9.18 Communications & Events**

In 2023, MSLETB continued its active involvement in various events, showcasing achievements and contributions across different fields. The following are a summary of events:

- Commis Chef Apprentices at Catex Exhibition
- FET Expo
- Employer Roadshow Leitrim
- The School Summit
- Higher Options
- Digital Business Ireland - Digital Summit
- Leitrim Learners Conference
- Worldskills Competition
- Craft Butchery Programme representation at Euroskills Gdansk, Poland
- Graduations across various programmes
- Minister Norma Foley Visit to Coláiste Iascaigh
- Launch of An Cosán
- Launch of Tertiary Degree Programmes
- Cruinniú - Transversal Skills Event
- Minister Simon Harris Visit to Quay Street and Sligo College of Further Education
- Kiltimagh Mural Launch with Maria Walshe MEP
- Generation Apprenticeships Apprentice of the Year: MSLETB had 13 nominations for the Generation Apprenticeships Apprentice of the Year award, showcasing the excellence of its apprentices.



- Generation Apprenticeships Workplace Champion of the Year: MSLETB had 11 nominations and one winner for the Generation Apprenticeships Workplace Champion of the Year award, highlighting its commitment to supporting apprentices in the workplace.
- Representation at over 6 Apprenticeship Expo's across the country

### **9.19 Erasmus 2023**

Some of the Erasmus activities in MSLETB in 2023 included the following trips.

- Mayo College of Further Education and Training has partners in over 20 destinations for their highly successful Erasmus programme. This year 13 destinations were utilised for placements greatly enriching students learning experience.
- Drumshanbo Further Education and Training Centre brought 12 VTOS Learners to Barcelona as part of Erasmus+ programme.
- Adult Education and Further Education services visited to Finland as part of an Erasmus Study.
- 20 members of the Adult Education and Further Education and Training (FET) staff members travelled to Italy as part of an Erasmus programme aimed at enhancing their project management abilities. Engaging in a week-long programme, they completed it alongside fellow EU education professionals, fostering a community of practice.
- Three staff members successfully completed a two-year Erasmus programme – ApprEUance - collaborating with FET peers from Iceland, Belgium, France, Slovenia, and Portugal. The research centred on comparing work-based learning initiatives throughout the EU. Their research concentrated on apprenticeship stakeholders in each nation, revealing exemplary practices observed across all countries. One of the key benefits of this project was the establishment of a community of FET practitioners spanning six countries.
- Sligo College of Further Education currently has eleven partners across six countries, in the form of Internship Companies and European VET colleges. The college sent 70 PLC students abroad in the 23 academic year, with two Childcare students spending a full academic year at a Private English school in El Puerto De Santa Maria, Spain. Currently, there are 5 past pupils working at this school on a full-time basis.
- In early February, 12 students from North Connaught College travelled to Malaga in Spain to participate in a two-week European Work Placement as part of an Erasmus+ funded project. Students from a few courses including Childcare, Occupational Therapy and Horsemanship enjoyed amazing workplace opportunities in Andalusia.

### **9.20 The Reach Fund (formerly MAEDF)**

- The aim of the Reach fund is to provide funding to support educationally disadvantaged learners in accessing and participating in community education. It aims to increase the participation of disadvantaged learners, particularly those who are undertaking literacy and skills programmes. The fund has a strong focus on building the digital infrastructure of community education providers, including providing devices and software, and increasing their capacity to deliver learning. The fund was specifically designed to tackle inequalities and support access to community education and intended to address specific actions in the Adult Literacy for Life (ALL) Strategy to

target funding on access to technology and devices, expand community access to wi-fi and broadband resources and to directly address unmet literacy needs.

- In 2023, MSLETB provided €100,000 in funding to fifty-six community groups across Mayo, Sligo and Leitrim.

### **9.21 Contracted Training**

- In 2023, MSLETB continued to avail of Contracted Training to provide an agile response to training needs which emerge throughout the year.
- The Ballina Digital Skills Centre continues to expand and excel and is delivered between MSLETB and our Contracted Training partners.
- Contracted Training provides delivery for some of our ETB initiatives including Skills to Advance, Skills to Compete and Further Education supports.

### **9.22 Towards FET College of the Future**

- In April 2022, Mayo College of Further Education and Training was launched moving away from what has previously been a separated mode of provision of Further Education and Training programmes, towards a more integrated system geared around course offerings. Plans were underway in 2023 to launch Sligo and Leitrim Colleges of Further Education. The development is aligned with the goals of the *SOLAS Future FET: Transforming Learning, National FET Strategy 2020-2024*. The colleges will focus on Building Skills, Fostering Inclusion and Creating Pathways.

## 10. Contact Information

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## 11. Glossary

<b>ALL</b>	Adult Literacy for Life
<b>BTEI</b>	Back to Education Initiative
<b>C&amp;AG</b>	Comptroller and Auditor General
<b>CE</b>	Chief Executive
<b>CFE</b>	College of Further Education
<b>CPD</b>	Continuous Professional Development
<b>CRM</b>	Client Relationship Management
<b>CRO</b>	Chief Risk Officer
<b>CTC</b>	Community Training Centre
<b>DE</b>	Department of Education
<b>DEIS</b>	Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools
<b>DSP</b>	Department of Social Protection
<b>DFHERIS</b>	Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science
<b>ESD</b>	Education for Sustainable Development
<b>ESF</b>	European Social Fund
<b>ESOL</b>	English for Speakers of Other Languages
<b>ESBS</b>	Education Shared Business Services
<b>ETB</b>	Education and Training Board
<b>ETBI</b>	Education and Training Board Ireland
<b>EY</b>	Ernst Young Accounting Firm
<b>FET</b>	Further Education and Training
<b>FIT</b>	FastTrack to Information Technology
<b>HR</b>	Human Resources
<b>HSE</b>	Health Service Executive
<b>HSA</b>	Health and Safety Authority
<b>IAU</b>	Internal Audit Unit
<b>ICT</b>	Information and Communications Technology
<b>LCDC</b>	Local Community Development Committee
<b>LTI</b>	Local Training Initiative
<b>MAPP</b>	Multi Annual Procurement Plan
<b>MDM</b>	Mobile Device Management
<b>MEP</b>	Music Education Partnership

<b>MSLETB</b>	Mayo, Sligo and Leitrim Education and Training Board
<b>NFQ</b>	National Framework of Qualifications
<b>NQSF</b>	National Quality Standards Framework for the Youth Work Sector
<b>OSD</b>	Organisation Support and Development
<b>P2P</b>	Purchase to Pay
<b>PLC</b>	Post Leaving Certificate
<b>PLN</b>	Professional Learning Network
<b>QQI</b>	Quality and Qualifications Ireland
<b>REALT</b>	Regional Education and Language Teams
<b>SCP</b>	School Completion Programme
<b>SFW</b>	Skills For Work
<b>SIC</b>	Statement of Internal Controls
<b>SSRP</b>	Sligo Sport and Recreation Partnership
<b>STA</b>	Skills to Advance
<b>STB</b>	Services To Business
<b>STEAM</b>	Science, Technology, Engineering, the Arts and Mathematics
<b>TUI</b>	Teachers Union of Ireland
<b>TY</b>	Transition Year
<b>VEC</b>	Vocational Education Committee
<b>VTOS</b>	Vocational Training Opportunities Scheme

## 12. Appendix 1: MSLETB Schools, Centres and Committees

SCHOOLS	DETAILS
<b>Mayo</b>	
<b>Coláiste Pobail Acla</b>	Polranny, Achill Sound, Co. Mayo, F28 CP49 <a href="http://colaistepobailacla.ie/">http://colaistepobailacla.ie/</a>
<b>Davitt College and Mayo College of Further Education</b>	Springfield, Castlebar, Co. Mayo, F23 VY15 <a href="http://www.davittcollege.com">www.davittcollege.com</a> / Newtown, Castlebar, Co. Mayo, F23 EW84 <a href="https://ccfe.ie/">https://ccfe.ie/</a>
<b>Moyne College</b>	Ballina, Co. Mayo, F26 W884 <a href="http://www.moynecollege.ie">www.moynecollege.ie</a>
<b>Coláiste Chomain</b>	Rosspoint, Co. Mayo, F26 YR99 <a href="http://www.gcr.ie">www.gcr.ie</a>
<b>St. Brendan's College</b>	Belmullet, Co. Mayo, F26 C782 <a href="http://www.stbrendanscollege.com">www.stbrendanscollege.com</a>
<b>St. Joseph's Community College</b>	Lowpark, Charlestown, Co. Mayo, F12 WE19 <a href="http://www.sjcc.ie">www.sjcc.ie</a>
<b>St. Patrick's College</b>	Lacken Cross, Killala, Co. Mayo, F26 NW52 <a href="http://www.lackencross.ie">www.lackencross.ie</a>
<b>St. Tiernan's College</b>	Crossmolina, Co. Mayo, F26 WK25 <a href="http://mayosligoleitrim.etb.ie/school/st-tiernans-college/">mayosligoleitrim.etb.ie/school/st-tiernans-college/</a>
<b>Westport College of Further Education</b>	Westport, Co. Mayo, F28 TP82 <a href="http://www.westportcfe.ie">www.westportcfe.ie</a>
<b>Sligo</b>	
<b>Ballinode Community College and Sligo College of Further Education</b>	Clarion Road, Sligo, F91 DY66 <a href="http://www.ballinodecollege.com">www.ballinodecollege.com</a> / <a href="http://www.sligocfe.ie">www.sligocfe.ie</a>
<b>Coláiste Iascaigh</b>	Easkey, Co. Sligo, F26 EC56 <a href="http://www.colaiasteiascaigh.ie">www.colaiasteiascaigh.ie</a>
<b>Coola Post Primary School</b>	Riverstown, Co. Sligo, F52 XE71 <a href="http://www.coola.ie">www.coola.ie</a>
<b>Corran College</b>	Ballymote, Co. Sligo, F56 DP86 <a href="http://www.corrancollege.com">www.corrancollege.com</a>
<b>Grange Post Primary School</b>	Grange, Co. Sligo, F91 F722 <a href="http://grangepps.ie">grangepps.ie</a>
<b>North Connaught College</b>	Tubbercurry, Co. Sligo, F91 X883

	<a href="http://northconnaughtcollege.net">northconnaughtcollege.net</a>
<b>Leitrim</b>	
<b>Carrigallen Vocational School</b>	Carrigallen, Co. Leitrim, H12 TD72 <a href="http://mayosligoleitrim.etb.ie/school/carrigallen-vocational-school">mayosligoleitrim.etb.ie/school/carrigallen-vocational-school</a>
<b>Drumshanbo Vocational School</b>	Drumshanbo, Co. Leitrim, N41 D623 <a href="http://www.dvs.ie">www.dvs.ie</a>
<b>Lough Allen College</b>	Drumkeerin, Co. Leitrim, N41 XT98 <a href="http://www.loughallencollege.ie">www.loughallencollege.ie</a>
<b>Mohill Community College</b>	Mohill, Co. Leitrim, N41 YT72 <a href="http://mohillcommunitycollege.ie">mohillcommunitycollege.ie</a>



FURTHER EDUCATION AND TRAINING CENTRES	DETAILS
<b>Mayo:</b>	
<b>Ballina Training Centre</b>	Carrowcushlaun West, Ballina, F26 P278
<b>Claremorris Part-time Further Education Centre</b>	Chapel Lane, Claremorris, Co. Mayo, F12 F5W7
<b>Achill Further Education Centre</b>	Achill Outdoor Education Centre, Achill, Co. Mayo, F28 H7F2
<b>VTOS Swinford</b>	Swinford, Co. Mayo, F12 DC93
<b>VTOS / Youthreach Ballina</b>	Cathedral Road, Ballina, Co. Mayo, F26 FEF4
<b>VTOS / Youthreach Ballinrobe / Ballinrobe Further Education Centre</b>	Ballinrobe, Co. Mayo, F31 FK54
<b>Youthreach Kiltimagh</b>	Kiltimagh, Co. Mayo, F12 CK33
<b>Belmullet Further Education Centre</b>	Belmullet, Co. Mayo, F26 D8H2
<b>Ballina Further Education Centre</b>	Ballina, Co. Mayo, F26 E264
<b>Ballyhaunis Further Education Centre</b>	Ballyhaunis, Co. Mayo, F35 A064
<b>Castlebar Further Education and Training Centre</b>	Castlebar (Kingsbridge), F23 FW70
<b>Sligo:</b>	
<b>Adult Education Centre, Sligo</b>	Castle Street, Sligo, F91 DK33
<b>Ballinode College / Sligo College of Further Education</b>	Clarion Village, Ballinode, Sligo
<b>Sligo Training Centre</b>	Ballytivnan, Sligo, F91 N284
<b>Youthreach Sligo</b>	Cleveragh Industrial Estate, Sligo, F91 FY68
<b>Leitrim:</b>	
<b>PLC - Mayflower, Drumshanbo</b>	Drumshanbo, Co. Leitrim, N41 Y8P6
<b>Adult Education - Bee Park Centre, Manorhamilton</b>	Manorhamilton, Co. Leitrim, F91 HCD9
<b>Adult Education - Presentation House, Carrick-on-Shannon</b>	Carrick-on-Shannon, Co. Leitrim, N41 A2H5
<b>Marion College</b>	Mohill, Co. Leitrim, N41 CY58

MAYO, SLIGO AND LEITRIM ETB COMMITTEES	
Audit and Risk Committee	
Finance Committee	
Further Education and Training Committee	
Youth and Arts Committee	
Youthreach Advisory Committee	
MSLETB also has representatives on the Atlantic Technical University (ATU) at ATU Sligo, ATU Galway-Mayo and ATU Letterkenny	



**msletb**

Bord Oideachais agus Oiliúna  
Mhaigh Eo, Shligigh agus Liatroma  
*Mayo, Sligo and Leitrim*  
Education and Training Board

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