



5th February 2021

Ms. Éilis Fallon,
Committee Secretariat,
Committee of Public Accounts,
Leinster House,
Dublin 2.

Ref: S0170 PAC33

Dear Ms. Fallon,

I refer to your letter of 26th January 2021.

In 2019, Cork Education and Training Board provided education, training and part-time courses for over 40,000 participants and beneficiaries. This included in excess of 15,000 students in primary, post-primary and Post Leaving Certificate in 30 locations, and over 25,000 beneficiaries on Further Education, training and part-time courses in over 100 locations. Cork ETB had expenditure of €212m in 2019, including payroll costs of €133.1m to pay 3,959 employees.

Cork Education and Training Board (CETB) is working continuously to ensure compliance with all aspects of circulars, codes of governance and legislation. An ETB Sectoral Procurement Policy and Procedures document, developed in conjunction with ETBI, was implemented in Cork ETB in August 2018. This replaced all previous Procurement Policies and Procedures in operation throughout the organisation and training was provided to all management and budget holders involved in procurement processes.

Much of the non-compliant expenditure relates to instances where goods and services are procured locally, across more than 100 CETB locations, in line with CETB Procurement Policy and Procedures. In each case, the required number of quotations were sought for each purchase and a purchase order was issued. The difficulty arises where the aggregate expenditure across all CETB sites exceeds the national/EU tendering threshold, and, at the time of purchase, CETB had not tendered on an organisation-wide basis for these goods and services.


Cork ETB developed a Corporate Procurement Plan for 2019-2020, which included a schedule to address areas of identified non-compliance. The implementation of this plan has resulted in the conducting of appropriate tender processes in many areas and putting frameworks and contracts in place.

The ETBI/EPS Corporate Procurement Plan (CPP) template and Multi-Annual Procurement Plan (MAPP) was launched in April 2019. Since then, Cork ETB has been working on the completion of its MAPP and further analyses of expenditure in order to identify areas for drawdown from OGP and ETB

Sectoral Frameworks, where available, or to conduct appropriate tendering processes where a framework is not already in place. A CETB Corporate Procurement Plan for 2021 – 2022 will set out a schedule to continue to conduct appropriate tendering processes for areas of organisation-wide expenditure, where necessary, and for other identified future procurement needs.

Details of the €2.2m non-compliant procurement referred to in your letter are set out in Appendix 1.

Yours sincerely,



Denis Leamy,
Chief Executive.



Appendix 1

1. Expenditure of €384,373 from January to October for Bus Hire across all schools and centers paid to thirty different local bus companies for the transport of students to matches and other school events. A tender process has been conducted, with the support of the Education Procurement Service (EPS) in University of Limerick. Contracts have been issued and the Framework came into effect from 29th October 2019 for a period of four years. This area is fully compliant since this date.
2. Expenditure of €271,193 on printing, paid to thirty suppliers which mainly relates to expenditure for the printing of student and teacher diaries, student journals, posters, newsletters and general school printing requirements across all schools and centers. As OGP Frameworks are not suitable for the needs of the ETB sector, ETBI procurement network are assisting in the development of templates for use by ETBs to conduct a tender process. This process is ongoing.
3. Expenditure of €207,433 for Engineering supplies for schools, colleges and the apprenticeship programmes paid to thirteen different companies. Further analysis of expenditure is underway to progress an appropriate tender process.
4. Expenditure of €206,286 on managed print services across schools and centres for the provision of per printed page/image. The service includes the supply and installation of the print device, consumables, licensing, software and maintenance. Cork ETB is currently working on preparations to avail of OGP frameworks in this area.
5. Expenditure of €139,092 for Stationery throughout Cork ETB, paid to thirteen different companies. This non-compliance in Cork ETB was as a result of the collapse of the OGP Framework in June 2019 due to a legal challenge. A new framework was published by OGP in December 2020, CETB is currently engaged with supplier. This area will be complaint from this date.
6. Expenditure of €120,950 on woodwork course materials paid to suppliers for the supply of teaching materials across schools and colleges. Further analysis is underway to establish future needs and to inform an appropriate tender process.
7. Expenditure of €112,933 from January to June 2019, for a roll-over contract for the provision of learner information promotional material, Public Relations and Marketing of CETB educational, training and apprenticeship course opportunities for learners. Following a draw down from the OGP framework, a new Marketing and Public Relations contract has been in place since June 2019.
8. Expenditure of €103,482 paid to twenty-two suppliers for the provision of Art teaching materials across schools and colleges. Further analysis is underway to establish future needs and to inform an appropriate tender process.
9. Expenditure of €99,469 paid for the provision of electrical components for apprenticeship training. Contracts have been issued and the Framework came into effect from 20th January 2020 for a period of four years. This area is fully compliant since this date.

10. Expenditure of €77,487 paid to four different suppliers, providing cleaning services across a number of schools and centres. Approval was sought from OGP to run specific CETB tender outside of framework, this is in progress.
11. Expenditure of €71,283 was paid to one Recruitment Agency for the provision of administrative staff to two schools/colleges arising from the need to cover for absences and for the supply of an IT person to ETB Head Office, required to support the rollout of Office 365 SharePoint and a CORE specific purpose project. Payments were made for weekly service provided.
12. Expenditure of €69,342 on School and Office equipment. This expenditure mainly relates to the purchase of student and teacher desks and chairs, where quotations were sought for each purchase. A sectoral ETB Framework is currently under consideration for these items.
13. Expenditure of €61,604 was paid to suppliers for the supply of waste management services. New contracts are in place since 3rd February 2020. Non-compliance was due to a small number of schools not encompassed within the previous framework agreement.
14. Expenditure of €56,910 was paid to two suppliers for the supply of food which is classified as school meals/canteen services to two school/centres which prepare their own meals. The non-compliance arose as a consequence of the service provided and was not encompassed with the framework agreement. The service requirements of both centres are the subject of an ongoing review.
15. Expenditure of €54,581 paid to seven different companies providing IT support to a number of schools and centres. Cork ETB is currently preparing a specification of requirements to conduct an organisation-wide eTenders process.
16. Expenditure of €52,877 paid to suppliers for the supply of science supplies equipment across schools and colleges. Further analysis is underway to establish future needs and to inform an appropriate tender process.
17. Expenditure of €48,571 paid to suppliers for the supply of Beauty and Hair teaching materials across schools and colleges. Further analysis is underway to establish future needs and to inform an appropriate tender process.
18. Expenditure of €39,325 on Fire Equipment paid to 15 different suppliers. A tender process has been completed and a contract commenced 1st November 2019. This area is fully compliant since this date.
19. Expenditure of €36,720 paid to four different suppliers for IT Consumables for items not included in frameworks already in place. Further analysis is underway to establish future needs and to inform an appropriate tender process.
20. Expenditure of €34,506 paid to seven different companies providing electronic consumables for apprenticeship training. Cork ETB is currently preparing a specification of requirements to conduct an organisation-wide eTenders process.

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