

Kilkenny and Carlow Education and Training Board
Minutes
18 March 2025

Date: 18 March 2025
Time: 3.30pm
Venue: KCETB Office, Seville Lodge, Callan Road, Kilkenny

Attendance: Fergal Browne, Jenny Catt Slattery, John Coonan, Deirdre Cullen, Andrea Dalton, David Denieffe, Maria Dollard, Seán Lawlor, Madailín Mhic Lochlainn, Ger Long, Daniel Pender, Ann Penfold, Clare Ryan, Jacqueline Sheil, Joe Sheridan, Maurice Shortall, Kathryn Wall

Also in attendance: Chief Executive Eileen Curtis, Director of Further Education and Training Martha Bolger, Director of Organisation, Support and Development Liam Scott, Director of Schools Pauline Egan, Head of Finance Linda O'Brien, Executive Support Caoimhe Byrne

Apologies: Mary Hilda Cavanagh, Thomas Kinsella, Sarah Millea

Chairperson Andrea Dalton presided at the meeting. The chairperson welcomed John Coonan as the nominee of Kilkenny County Council to replace Peter Cleere.

1. Conflict of Interest

At the start of the meeting, the Chairperson reminded members about procedures for dealing with any potential conflict of interest arising during a board meeting:

The ETB Act of 2013 and the Code of Governance (2019) both state that a member of an ETB board must absent himself/herself when the board is deliberating or deciding on matters in which that member has an interest. He/she should not take any part in any deliberation of the board relating to the matter, should not influence, or seek to influence, a decision to be made in relation to the matter and should not vote on a decision relating to the matter.

2. Condolences and Congratulations

Congratulations was extended to Grennan College on winning the Senior Soccer All Ireland competition and on being finalists in the All-Ireland Hurling Competition.

Condolences were extended to those recently bereaved.

3. Minutes of the board meetings held on 18 February and 10 March 2025

The minutes of the meetings held on 18 February 2025 and 10 March 2025 had been circulated to board members in advance (Document 180325-02/03). The minutes were taken as read.

The minutes of the meeting on 18 February 2025 were proposed by Fergal Browne, seconded by Ger Long and agreed.

The minutes of the meeting on 10 March 2025 were proposed by Madailín Mhic Lochlainn, seconded by Jenny Catt Slattery and agreed.

The minutes were recorded as a true record of the proceedings of the board meetings held on 18 February and 10 March 2025.

4. Matters arising from minutes

No matters arising.

5. Correspondence

Department of Education Circular Letters - to be implemented

- 0015/2025 - Revision of Teacher Salaries under The Public Service Agreement 2024 - 2026 effective from 01 March 2025
- 0016/2025 - Revision of Salaries for Special Needs Assistants (SNAs) under The Public Service Agreement 2024 - 2026 effective from 01 March 2025
- 0017/2025 - Revision of Salaries and Allowances of Certain Grades other than Teachers and SNAs employed by ETBs under The Public Service Agreement 2024 - 2026 effective from 01 March 2025



- 0018/2025 - Revision of Salaries of Clerical Officers and Caretakers employed under the 1978/1979 Scheme under The Public Service Agreement 2024 - 2026 effective from 01 March 2025
- 0019/2025 - Revision of Salaries of School Secretaries and School Maintenance Staff in Community and Comprehensive Schools effective from 1 March 2025
- 0020/2025 - Revision of Salaries for School Secretaries Previously Grant Funded Effective from 01 March 2025
- 0021/2025 - Prescribed Material for the Leaving Certificate English Examination in 2027
- 0022/2025 - Postgraduate Certificate/Diploma of Teacher Professional Learning for Teachers working with Students with Special Educational Needs - Autism

Other Departmental correspondence – for information

- DoE - Climate Action Summer Works Scheme
- DCEDIY - Summer 2025 Holiday Meals Pilot Programme
- DCEDIY - Transfer of Functions to Department of Education and Youth

Other correspondence – for information

- Kilkenny County Council - Appointment of Elected Members to Kilkenny & Carlow ETB

6. Chief Executive's Report

Chief Executive Eileen Curtis presented the Chief Executive's report:

6.1 Corporate Governance and Administration

Annual Financial Statements for 2024

It was outlined that the KCETB Annual Accounts for 2024 have been completed and will be submitted to the C&AG by the deadline of 31 March 2025, subject to board approval. Thanks was extended to all staff who have collaborated in the process, and to the Finance and Audit and Risk Committees for the role they play in ensuring that KCETB upholds high standards of governance.

It was also set out that the statement of internal control for 2024 would be signed by the Chair and submitted with the accounts. The statement is based on the assurances provided by the Finance and Audit and Risk Committees in their reports to the Board and all relevant matters have been included in the Statement of Internal Control.



Annual Report 2024

It was noted that a draft Annual report is being prepared and will be presented to the board for adoption as is the requirement under the Code of Practice for the Governance of ETBs. A draft copy will be circulated in advance of the next meeting, and should members wish to suggest any relevant amendments or have any queries at that stage they may do so.

FET Updates

College of FET Kilkenny

A meeting took place with the SOLAS Capital Team in respect of the refinement of the FET College Business Case in preparation for final publication.

FET Budget 2025

SOLAS have advised that the indicative budget will issue at the end of March with all aspects finalised by the end of May. Provision will be aligned with the approved budget

Kilkenny Schools Campus

The enabling works contractor is about to commence on site to complete the enabling works in respect of ESB, water and other services, and the first meeting took place on the 6 March. A groundbreaking ceremony took place in respect of the works in advance of the meeting.

A further meeting took place with DE personnel in respect of the Stage 2b report on the 11 March with further submissions to be made by the end of March.

The process for the appointment of the main contractors has commenced.

ETB Week

A number of nominations have been submitted for various award categories and the outcome is awaited from ETBI in respect of same.

Ukrainian Educational Provision

Enrolment figures were provided as was a full update on KCETB services and networking with other agencies in the provision of services to Ukrainian and other international protection refugees. The REALT Steering Group continues to meet and demand for places has been met to date.

6.2 Schools

Director of Schools Pauline Egan presented the following report:

Teaching and Learning

KCETB Leadership Programme for middle leaders (Assistant Principals/AP1's) continues this term with Dr. Joe O Connell.

KCETB Guidance Counsellor Professional Learning Event took place on 25 February 2025. The session was delivered by the Further Education and Training team who provided updates on PLC Programme and FET Options for 2025/26. A presentation on the Tertiary Programmes available was outlined also. 24 attended the event.

ETB Week – takes place from 20 to 24 March

ETB Week provides an opportunity to promote and celebrate our ethos and our continued promotion of excellence in education. Local events will take place in schools and be promoted through social media platforms. The KCETB Schools Debating Competition is currently taking place with further rounds to be held during ETB week in celebration of student voice in our schools.

ETBI Induction for Newly Appointed Principals and Deputy Principals took place on 06 March 2025.

The KCETB Principals and Deputy Principals Spring Conference took place on 13 and 14 March. The theme of this year's conference was *Leading Change*.

ETBI SEN Mapping Schools Project

This project supports schools to set out the provisions and interventions available to students along the continuum of support. It provides a basis to strategically plan provision, allocate resources and identify staff CPD needs.

A Community of Practice has been established for the Special Education Needs Co-ordinators (SENCOs) in our schools with the next session on 20 March.

Governance and Management of Schools

Inspections

- Kilkenny City Vocational School – final report issued for the Programme Evaluation (LCA) that took place in December 2024.



- Coláiste Cois Siúire – final report issued with regard to their Special Education Needs Evaluation.

New Model of DEIS Inspection – DEIS Plus – Kilkenny City Vocational School welcomed the Department Inspectorate to their school the week beginning 3 March to engage in a research lead pilot inspection on the new DEIS model of Evaluation. This was a very positive experience for all involved and all in the school community were delighted to have achieved outstanding in the quality framework. School Management were also thrilled to have their work on integrating national policy into classroom practice particularly acknowledged.

Boards of Management – An ETBI Webinar took place on 11 February on “*Meeting the needs of Children and Young People with Special Education Needs in primary and post primary schools: An introduction for Boards of Management.*”

Human Resources

The Initial Teacher Allocation for 2025/26 has issued and schools have been working on their curricular appeals applications which were submitted to the Department of Education by 12 March.

Letters have issued to teachers with respect to their job share and career break applications. Application forms and circulars in relation to job-sharing, career break and transfer for Special Needs Assistants closed on 1 March 2025.

6.3 Further Education and Training

Director of Further Education and Training Martha Bolger presented the following report:

Capital

College of FET Kilkenny

A meeting was held on 3 March with the capital team in SOLAS in respect of feedback on the Business Case. This feedback is being considered, and any clarifications/advice will first be incorporated into an addendum document and following agreement will be incorporated into the final version of the Business Case.

Grennan Equestrian Centre

Philip Doyle, Buildings Officer, has been working with the design team to prepare information for the Further Information request. This has involved consideration of the alignment of the sight lines at the current entrance with some reconfiguration of the arena.



2025 Financial Allocation

No budget or teaching allocation has been received to date.

Recruitment

Recruitment for a Senior Training Advisor is currently taking place.

REACH Funding

The 2025 REACH funding guidelines have been received. The initial Reach funding allocation for KCETB is €225,000. To date €180,000 in applications have been approved.

DEIS to FET Annual Guidance Counsellor Event

This event took place on 25 February in Carlow, where Guidance Counsellors from KCETB schools were updated on the programmes on offer for Leaving Certificate students. Presentations were delivered on full-time Level 5 & 6 programmes, apprenticeships and degree programmes.

AONTAS Learner Forum

KCETB in collaboration with AONTAS hosted a Learner Forum on 11 March. This event, is part of a suite of events organised for ETB Week and was attended by 100 learners representing all FET programmes.

Heritage Council Collaboration

On 7 March, both KCETB and the Heritage Council hosted an open event at Sheepstown, Kilkenny to invite interested parties and media to view the Thatching programme. The programme aims to skill participants in thatching and thatching techniques in response to a request from the Heritage Council. This one-of-a-kind programme is being commended nationally and will provide further evidence to support KCETB's application for a centre for Specialist Conservation Skills as part of the College of FET Business Case.

Youth Office

Applications from both Ossory Youth and Carlow Regional Youth Service for monies under the Resilience and Effectiveness Fund for 2025 have been assessed with both receiving €10,000.

Correspondence received from DCEDIY has indicated that the ETB Youth Grant for 2025 is €289,023. This represents an increase of 4% to the overall funding allocation for 2025.

Apprenticeship EXPO

On 6 March KCETB hosted its second Apprenticeship Exhibition. This exhibition featured a large range of national and regional companies as well as consortia who are currently recruiting for apprentices. The event was booked out in advance with over 1200 people in attendance on the evening.

Final update on 2024 Strategic Performance Agreement (SPA) Targets

A full update on the SPA targets was provided with further work required in the area of Key Skills.

6.4 Organisational Support and Development

Director of OSD Liam Scott presented the following report:

Human Resources

Recruitment

Planning in respect of teacher recruitment for the 2025/26 academic year has commenced. As part of this planning process a review is currently taking place in respect of entitlements to Contracts of Indefinite Duration, additional CIDs to relevant teaching staff and the termination of Year One Fixed Term Contracts.

E-Recruitment System

Jobtrain are the successful supplier in respect of the E-Recruitment System for Kilkenny and Carlow Education and Training Board. The Human Resources Departments are currently engaging with Jobtrain to develop and implement the system for positions in respect of the 2025/26 academic year.

Career Break and Job-Sharing Applications

Letters to staff in respect of Job Sharing and Career Break for the 2025-2026 academic year have been issued.

Appointments

Dr. Pauline Egan has been appointed as Acting Chief Executive effective from the 1 April 2025.

Corporate Services

No Leases

Capital Projects

1. Kilkenny Schools Campus

- a. The groundbreaking ceremony for the enabling works took place on 6 March 2025.
- b. The first project meeting with the enabling works contractor took place on 6 March 2025.

2. Gaelcholáiste Cheatharlach

- a. The Stage 2A developed design submission was forwarded to the DE in February.

3. Coláiste Mhuire, Johnstown

- a. A meeting between KCETB, the school and Design Lead took place on 26 February 2025.
- b. The planning application is scheduled to be lodged on 9 April.

4. Grennan College, Thomastown

- a. The installation of the modular unit to provide general classrooms is ongoing and is scheduled to be operational later in March.
- b. The Stage 1A preliminary design for a substantial extension will be submitted to the Department shortly.

5. Duiske College, Graiguenamanagh

- a. Discussions on the Viability Report for replacement and increased accommodation using the Department's Modular Accommodation Framework are ongoing.
- b. Emergency gas and electrical upgrades are ongoing.

6. Borris College

- a. The Design Team have submitted the Stage 2A developed design for additional accommodation to the Department.
- b. Roof repair emergency works are nearing completion.

7. Coláiste Eoin, Hacketstown

- a. Roof repair emergency works are ongoing and scheduled to be completed at the end of March.
- b. Site surveys have commenced to facilitate the additional accommodation project.

8. Kilkenny City Vocational School

- a. The building contractor for the fire safety project has been appointed.
- b. The works are scheduled for completion by April 2025.

9. Grennan Equestrian

- a. The planning pack for the refurbishment project has been submitted to Kilkenny County Council and discussions are ongoing on traffic management.



10. PV Programme

- a. A PV installation company has been appointed to provide PVs in 4 Carlow schools.

11. Corporate HQ

- a. No response to the options proposal has yet been received from the DE.

Finance

The income and expenditure report to the end of December 2024 was presented.

EFT Banking Facilities

Approval from the board was sought for the continuation of the Electronic Fund Transmission (EFT) facility from Bank of Ireland in the amount of €2,825,000 until 22 March 2026. The approval for the continuation for the Electronic Fund Transmission (EFT) facility from Bank of Ireland was proposed by Ann Penfold, seconded by Ger Long and agreed.

Governance

1. Training

- a. Governance Training
 - Phase 2 of Board Governance Training is ongoing with the IPA/ETBI.
 - Phase 3 will commence shortly and continue to 8 April.
 - Training for Chairs of the Audit and Risk and Finance Committees is to be provided by IPA/ETBI/IAU in April 2025.
 - A briefing for Senior management of KCETB will take place on 30 April 2025.

2. Policy Management

- a. The following policies are presented for noting:
 - Business Continuity Guidelines

3. Ethics Returns

- a. Board member forms have been returned to SIPO.

7. Annual Financial Statements

Adoption of Financial Statements

A meeting of the Finance Committee took place on 14 March 2025 and the Audit and Risk Committee met on 14 March 2025 to consider the Draft Annual Financial Statements and associated documents for the 12-month period 1 January 2024 to 31 December 2024.

The committees' recommended that KCETB Financial Statement for 2024 be adopted by the Board and signed by the Chair.

The committees also reviewed internal control procedures and the assurance of the Chief Executive with full reports from the committees provided to members for consideration.

Head of Finance Linda O'Brien provided an overview of the Annual Financial Statements for 2024 and provided clarification on areas as required.

The Annual Financial Statements 2024 and accompanying documents were proposed by Ger Long, seconded by Joe Sheridan and agreed.

8. Appointment to KCETB Committees and BOMs

The following Nominees to the Finance Committee were proposed for ETB Board ratification:

Finance Committee	
KCETB Board Member	Madailín Mhic Lochlainn

The following Nominees to the Youth Work Committee were proposed for ETB Board ratification:

Youth Work Committee	
KCETB Board Member	Ann Penfold

The following Community Nominees to School Boards were proposed for ETB Board ratification:

Coláiste Aindriú	
Community Nominees	Fr Declan Foley
	Nigel Whyte

9. Risk Management

1. Health and Safety

- a. The Health and Safety Work Programme is ongoing.

2. ISMS, Cyber Security and ICT

- a. An analysis of ISMS, Cyber Security and ICT infrastructure is ongoing.

3. Internal Audit

- a. Management responses for two draft Internal Audit Reports were submitted to IAU on 14 March 2025:
 - i. Apprenticeship Audit
 - ii. PLC and Co-operation Hours

10. (a) Minutes and Reports of ETB Committees and Boards of Management for information/approval

Minutes of Boards of Management and committees were noted and confirmed as appropriate by the Board.

10. (b) Report from ETBI Reserve Members Forum

No update was provided at this meeting.

10. (c) Report from Finance Committee

Report from meeting of KCETB Finance Committee on 14 March 2025

Members in attendance: Marie Bracken Chairperson, Mary-Hilda Cavanagh and Shane Finn.

Executive in attendance: Eileen Curtis, Chief Executive, Liam Scott, Director of OSD, Linda O'Brien, Head of Finance and Gillian Hegarty, Governance and Compliance Officer.

Liam Scott presented the report at the Board meeting as Mary Hilda-Cavanagh was not present.

The agenda included:

- Minutes of previous meeting 14 Feb 2025
- Risk Management and Executive Reports
- Contracts in excess of €50,000
- Assurance Statement of CE

- System of Internal Control 2024
- Audit and Risk Committee Annual Report
- Statement on Internal Control 2024
- Opinion of ARC on System of Internal Control
- Working Papers 2024
- Variance Report 2024
- Letter of Representation
- Consideration of draft Annual Financial Statements
- Finance Committee Annual Report

Draft Financial Statements: **The Finance Committee reviewed the draft financial statements and recommends their adoption by the Board and submission for audit** and taking account of public accountability and the special considerations which attach to ETBs in relation to their management and operation, **consider that the annual report and financial statements, taken as a whole, is fair, balanced and understandable and provides the information necessary for an assessment of the ETB's financial position and financial performance, business model and strategy.**

The Annual Report of the Finance Committee was provided to board members for their consideration.

The next meeting of the Finance Committee is proposed for week commencing 12 May.

10. (d) Report from Audit and Risk Committee

Report from the Audit and Risk Committee meeting on 14 March 2025

Members in attendance: Chairperson Ger Mulvey, Ger Long, Daniel Pender, Sarah Millea, Aine Donovan and Marie Bracken.

Executive in attendance: Eileen Curtis, Chief Executive, Liam Scott, Director of OSD, Linda O'Brien, Head of Finance and Gillian Hegarty, Governance and Compliance Officer.

Daniel Pender presented the report to the Board:

The agenda included:

- Minutes of 7 February 2025 meeting
- Risk Management and Executive Reports
- Assurance regarding internal control and audit arrangements for ESBS-ETB payroll
Shared Services - ESBS
- Finance Committee Minutes 2024
- Finance Committee Annual Report 2024
- KCETB Board Minutes 2024
- ARC Annual Report 2024
- Assurance Statement of CE
- System of Internal Control Review
- Statement on Internal Control
- Opinion on System of Internal Control
- Draft Annual Financial Statements

The Audit and Risk Committee considered the reports on the relevant checklist in respect of their deliberations on the adequacy of the System of Internal Control.

The Audit and Risk Committee determined that, on balance, KCETB operated an effective System of Internal Control in 2024.

The Annual Report of the Audit and Risk Committee was provided to Board Members for consideration.

The next meeting of the Audit and Risk Committee is proposed for week commencing 12 May.

11. Matters for approval, adoption or confirmation by the Board

180325 - KCETB 01 Minutes of previous meeting(s)

Adopt the recorded minutes of the meeting held on 18 February and 10 March 2025. The minutes will be published online.

Correspondence received and noted.

180325 - KCETB 02 Chief Executive's Report

For adoption

180325 - KCETB 03 Corporate Services

180325 - KCETB 04 Finance

For approval, including continuation of EFT facility

180325 - KCETB 05 Risk Management

For approval/adoption/noting

180325 - KCETB 06 Annual Financial Statements 2024(and associated documents)

For approval

180325 - Appointment of members to KCETB Committees and BOMs

For approval

180325 - KCETB 07 Report of Committees

For approval/ noting – Finance Committee and ARC for noting

For information – BOM minutes

Unless stated previously the above items were adopted by the board as proposed by Ann Penfold and seconded by Madailín Mhic Lochlainn and agreed.

12. Other Business with prior permission of the Chair

Grateful thanks and congratulations was extended to Chief Executive Eileen Curtis by the chairperson, executive team and board members ahead of her retirement.

Thanks was extended by the CE to the chairperson and board members; to previous chairs and board members and to the executive team and staff of KCETB.

The chairperson extended congratulations and good wishes to Pauline Egan during her term as Acting CE.

13. Date of next meeting

Tuesday, 20 May 2025 at 3:30pm.

Signed: 

Date: 20/5/25

