

Kilkenny and Carlow Education and Training Board

Minutes

24 February 2026

Date: 24 February 2026
Time: 3.30pm
Venue: Online via Microsoft Teams

Attendance: Fergal Browne, Jenny Catt Slattery, Mary Hilda Cavanagh, Deirdre Cullen, Andrea Dalton, Thomas Kinsella, Ger Long, Madailín Mhic Lochlainn, Daniel Pender, Ann Penfold, Jacqueline Sheil, Maurice Shortall, Kathryn Wall.

Also in attendance: Chief Executive Dr Lindsay Malone, Director of Schools Dr Pauline Egan, Director of Further Education and Training Martha Bolger, Director of Organisation, Support and Development Liam Scott, Executive Support Kathleen Lennon.

Apologies: John Coonan, David Denieffe, Maria Dollard, Seán Lawlor, Sarah Millea, Clare Ryan, Joe Sheridan.

Chairperson Andrea Dalton presided at the meeting.

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

Condolences were extended to those recently bereaved.

Congratulations

Congratulations were extended to KCETB staff on hosting the Ministerial Visit to Kilkenny, where he visited Purcellsinch, Youthreach and the site at Joinersfolly, and hosting the Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science staff event in Carlow with 180 delegates on 16 February 2026. The Ministerial visit to Kilkenny culminated in a Ministerial announcement that the Minister has instructed his department officials and relevant agencies to prioritise work on this project, with a view to ensuring that design teams are appointed in 2026.

KCETB was shortlisted for two Education Awards. The award categories focus on areas vital to student success. Participating institutions (Higher Education, Further Education & Training) and their staff can be recognised for excellence across various aspects of their operations. KCETB was one of seven ETBs shortlisted. KCETB was shortlisted for the Best Further Education Provider and Best Collaboration Award – Domestic (Public Good, Culture & Social Impact) categories. The Awards will take place on 16 April 2026.

Congratulations were extended to Music Generation Carlow for their annual Music at Mount Leinster event in Visual, Carlow on 18 February.

The organisers of the Apprenticeship Expo on 29 January were also acknowledged for their work by the Board.

3. Minutes of the board meeting held on 13 January 2026

The minutes of the meeting held on 13 January 2026 had been circulated to board members in advance (Document 24022026-02). The minutes were taken as read.

The minutes of the meeting on 13 January 2026 were proposed by Kathryn Wall, seconded by Fergal Browne and agreed.

The minutes were recorded as a true record of the proceedings of the board meetings held on 13 January 2026.

4. Matters arising from minutes

No matters arising.

The Board agreed to bring the *Chief Executive's report* and *Section 9 Matters for approval, adoption or confirmation by the Board* forward on the agenda. The change to the running order was proposed by Mary Hilda Cavanagh, seconded by Ann Penfold and approved by the Board.

5. Correspondence

Department of Education and Youth Circular Letters – to be implemented

0001/2026 Changes to 1:50,000 Discovery Series Maps

0002/2026 Application of bonus marks for all components of state examinations through Irish to be examined in Leaving Certificate 2027 and in subsequent years

0003/2026 Teacher Fee Refund Scheme 2025

0005/2026 Revision of Salaries for Post Primary Teachers under the Public Service Agreement 2024-2026

0006/2026 Revision of Salaries for Special Needs Assistants (SNAs) under the Public Service Agreement 2024-2026

0007/2026 Revision of Salaries and Allowances of Certain Grades other than Teachers and SNAs employed by ETBS under the Public Service Agreement 2024-2026

0008/2026 Revision of Salaries for Clerical Officers and Caretakers employed in National Schools under the 1978/79 Scheme and Clerical Officers employed in Post Primary Schools under the Public Service Agreement 2024-2026

0009/2026 Revision of School Secretaries and School Maintenance Staff in Community and Comprehensive Schools under the Public Service Agreement 2024-2026

0010/2026 Revision of Salaries for School Secretaries Previously Funded Under Ancillary Grant Funding and Bus Escorts

0014/2026 Grant Scheme for ICT Infrastructure 2026

0017/2026 Extension to the Waiver of Abatement of Public Sector Pensions under Section 52 of the Public Service Pensions (Single Scheme and Other Provisions) Act 2012

0018/2026 Standardisation of the school year in respect of primary and post-primary schools for the years 2026/27 2027/28 and 2028/29

0019/2026 Concurrent Initial Teacher Education Bursary Scheme (STEM Bursary)



Other Departmental correspondence – for information

DEY- Grants for the financial year ending 31st December 2025

DEY- Update on Youth Funding Arrangements for 2026

DEY- Payment letter re Q1 UBU and YIC

DEY- Office of the Comptroller and Auditor General (OCAG) Insights: Providing Good Quality Financial Information Guidance

DEY- Your Place Your Space (UBU) Allocation letter 2026

DEY- Youth Information Centre (YIC) Letter of Allocation 2026

DEY- TYESI Funding Allocation Letter 2026

DEY- LYCGS Allocation Letter 2026

DEY- UBU Resilience and Effectiveness Initiative 2026

Other correspondence – for information

Duiske College- Notification of next Board of Management meeting Thursday 26 February

SOLAS – FET Funding for 2026

Schools Capital Projects

The Chair noted that the Kilkenny Schools Campus and other KCETB schools were not included in recent government announcements and recommended that the Board write to the Minister to outline the impact of these decisions. The proposal by the Chair was seconded by Deirdre Cullen. The Chief Executive reassured the Board that the Executive will continue to work on this matter with Department officials at their next meeting at the beginning of March.

6. Chief Executive's Report

Chief Executive Dr Lindsay Malone presented the Chief Executive's report:

KCETB Strategy Planning 2026

Invitations to tender have been issued to appoint a suitable consultant to support KCETB with the strategic planning process for the new KCETB Strategy Statement during 2026.

Progress on Strategic Equality, Sustainability and Language Initiatives

As part of KCETB's ongoing commitment to advancing equality, diversity, and inclusion, sustainability and Irish language, across our services, the Chief Executive was pleased to report the following developments:



Public Sector Duty & Inclusive Leadership

KCETB has established a Public Sector Steering Group to oversee and drive progress under the statutory obligations related to the Public Sector Duty. The first meeting of the steering group took place on 13 January. Following this, invitations were sent to staff to engage in a Public Sector Working Group. The working group will focus on the development of an implementation plan to advance actions under the public sector duty. Expressions of interest were received from staff, and the Chair of the Steering Group will review all applications and present recommendations to the Executive at its next meeting on 13 March.

Climate Action & Sustainability

A dedicated Steering Group for Climate Action and Sustainability has been formed to lead KCETB's implementation of the Climate Action Roadmap. The first meeting of the steering group took place on 13 January. Following this, invitations were sent to staff to engage in a Climate Action and Sustainability Working Group. The working group will focus on the development of an implementation plan to advance actions under the Climate Action targets. Expressions of interest were received from staff, and the Chair of the Steering Group will review all applications and present recommendations to the Executive at its next meeting on 13 March.

Irish Language Development

A dedicated Steering Group for Irish Language Development has been established to ensure organisational compliance with the Official Languages Act 2003 and the Official Languages (Amendment) Act 2021. The Steering Group held its first meeting on 13 January. Following this, staff were invited to participate in an Irish Language Development Working Group, which will focus on developing an implementation plan to advance actions aligned with KCETB's Irish language targets and statutory obligations under the Act. Expressions of interest were received, and the Chair of the Steering Group will review all applications and present recommendations to the Executive at its next meeting on 13 March.

6.1 Corporate Governance and Administration

The following were noted:

Annual Service Plan

Under the requirements of the ETB Act 2013 and Code of Practice for ETBs, the Board is required to adopt the Annual KCETB Service Plan for submission to DEY prior to 1 March 2026. The Chief Executive delivered a presentation regarding the service plan to the Board at the meeting. The Finance Committee have a role in reviewing the draft Service Plan and did so at the meeting held on 20 February 2026.

The adoption of the Service Plan was proposed by Mary Hilda Cavanagh, seconded by Ger Long and approved by the Board.



Annual Financial Statements 2025

The adoption of the Annual Financial Statements is required by the ETB Act and the Code of Governance and requires that the board adopt the Annual Financial Statements prior to submission to the Office of the Comptroller and Auditor General by 1 April 2026. It was noted that the accounts are currently in preparation for the ETB board meeting scheduled for 24 March 2026.

6.2 Schools

Director of Schools Dr Pauline Egan presented the following report:

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.

New Operational Guidelines have been circulated to REALT Co-ordinators to clarify roles and responsibilities in terms of finding schools and transport for both Beneficiaries of Temporary Protection (BOTP) and International Protection Accommodation Services (IPAS), as well as using new systems to record ongoing cases where applicable.

Teaching and Learning and assessment

A Schools Management Teams meeting was held on 23 January.

ETBI Annual Principals and Deputy Principals Conference took place on 29 and 30 January in Galway. The theme of the conference was *Leadership for Excellence*. Príomhoide Gaelcholáiste Cheatharlach, Orlagh Ní Fhaoláin presented at the conference on the subject of *Instructional Leadership – A School-Wide Impact*.

KCETB Guidance Counsellor Professional Learning Event took place on 3 February. The session was delivered by Further Education and Training colleagues who provided updates on PLC Programme and FET Options for 2026/2027.

Biodiversity Webinar on the 10 February, the Director of Schools participated in a panel discussion held by Irish Schools Sustainability Network with educational leaders from Education and Training Boards, Patron Bodies and School Trusts on the subject of *Leading Schools for a Resilient Future: Why Nature Education Matters Now*. This was a great opportunity to recognise the vital work taking place in our schools around biodiversity, sustainability, and climate action.



ETBI Let's Talk Ethos Symposium took place on 12 February which provided an opportunity for Ethos Leads and Patrons' Curriculum Leads to spotlight the effective enactment of the ETBI Patrons' Framework on Ethos.

ETBI Induction for Newly Appointed Principals and Deputy Principals will take place on 5 March.

KCETB Principals and Deputy Principals Spring Conference will take place on 19 and 20 March.

The B!G Idea Launch in Leinster House

The Chief Executive and staff and students from Borris College attended Leinster House on 28 January for the launch of The B!G Idea - Ireland Strategic Plan 2026 – 2028. This milestone reflects the ambition of the programme to empower young people with the skills, confidence, and opportunities needed to thrive in a rapidly changing world. Dara Coady, a student from Borris College, represented the student voice on the panel, sharing his experience of the programme, a powerful example of the confidence and capability developed through The B!G Idea.

Governance and Management

Inspections

Subject Inspection (Maths) - Scoil Aireagail Final Report received for factual verification.

Incidental Inspection (SEN) - Kilkenny City Vocational School took place on 4 February.

Evaluation of Provision in Special Classes for Young People with Autism – Borris College takes place on 23, 24 and 26 February.

Subject Inspection (Maths) – Coláiste Aindriú takes place on 24 and 25 February.

Special Class Provision 2026/2027

Some KCETB schools have received a pre-sanction letter to open a second special class in 2026/2027.

Human Resources

The Initial Staffing Allocation for 2026/2027 was awaited from the Department of Education and Youth.

Application forms in relation to job-sharing, career break and transfers for teaching staff closed on 1 February 2026.

2026/2027	Job- Sharing	Career Break	Transfers
Number of Applications	36	21	8

6.3 Further Education and Training

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

Governance and Management

FET Budget

The SOLAS Finance meeting scheduled for 3 February was postponed by SOLAS. The KCETB Further Education and Training Service Provision Business Case was prepared for submission to SOLAS in March. It was included as an appendices in the KCETB Service Plan.

FET College of The Future Capital Project

Since the last Board meeting a request was received from SOLAS regarding updating the Query Register. This was completed and submitted on 30 January.

REACH Applications

Over 150 applications have been received and KCETB was in the process of reviewing all applications received.

Teaching and Learning

QQI Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) Visit

A group of 50 European delegates visited Carlow on 28 January to discuss Recognition of Prior Learning. SETU and KCETB were chosen as the out of Dublin destination for this visit. Both KCETB and SETU delivered presentations to outline their practices regarding Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) which demonstrated how progression pathways for learners have been facilitated.

Youthreach Whole School Evaluation

Inspectors from the Department of Education and Youth conducted a Whole School Evaluation of Youthreach from 27 to 29 January. The service received very positive feedback, with inspectors highlighting multiple examples of effective practice. KCETB received the Draft Report for Factual Verification on 17 February.

Apprenticeship Expo

The Apprenticeship Expo took place on the Carlow Campus on 29 January 2026 and proved to be a major regional skills event. The Expo attracted over 1,000 attendees and 60 employers from across the Southeast and demonstrated the growing momentum behind apprenticeship pathways as a key driver of talent development and economic growth in the region. The strong employer presence, many actively recruiting for apprenticeship positions, highlighted both the



demand for skilled learners and the vital role that collaborative regional initiatives play in strengthening workforce pipelines and supporting industry needs.

Scheduling

KCETB received a schedule for Phase 2 Electrical delivery for the first half of 2026 from SOLAS. No updated calendar for the remaining half of the year has been received. The Director of FET and Chief Executive are due to meet with the National Apprenticeship Office (NAO) later this month.

Annual Guidance Information Sharing Event

The Annual Guidance Counsellor Event took place on 3 February and served as an important engagement forum for strengthening regional pathways from second-level into Further Education and Training. FET programme offerings for Kilkenny and Carlow were presented to Guidance Counsellors who support Leaving Certificate students in making informed decisions about their next steps. The event provided a valuable opportunity to highlight the breadth of local FET options, reinforce progression routes, and ensure that Guidance Counsellors are equipped with up-to-date information to advise learners effectively.

DFHERIS Staff Visit

KCETB was pleased to welcome over 180 staff from the Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science (DFHERIS) to the Carlow Campus on 18 February for their All-Staff Meeting. The event provided a valuable platform to showcase KCETB's strong alignment with national FET priorities and DFHERIS strategic objectives, particularly in the areas of access, skills development, innovation, and regional impact.

Participants received an overview of the significant progress achieved in Further Education and Training across Kilkenny and Carlow in recent years. An address was given by the Chief Executive and an engaging panel discussion was facilitated by members of the FET Senior Leadership Team, highlighting how KCETB's initiatives are directly supporting national policy goals, strengthening learner pathways, and responding to evolving labour-market needs.

This engagement reinforced KCETB's role as a key regional partner in delivering on the ambitions of the National FET Strategy and the wider DFHERIS agenda.

Youth Services

The Department of Education and Youth Migrant Fund has been discontinued for 2026. This fund was essential in supporting the needs of migrant young people in Kilkenny and Carlow in recent years.

Music Generation

Music Generation Carlow hosted their annual Music at Mount Leinster event in Visual, Carlow on 18 February. This event showcased the talent of musicians from Carlow and neighbouring counties.

6.4 Organisational Support and Development

Director of OSD Liam Scott presented the following report:

Human Resources

Recruitment

It was noted that online applications are open on the KCETB website for substitute teaching, SNA, cleaning and transport escort positions.

Assistant Principal posts have been filled at AP1 level for half of AP2 posts. Interviews are currently ongoing for the remaining AP2 posts.

Corporate Services

Contracts

Supplier of School Equipment for KCETB – Various
Electrical Apprenticeship Equipment & Materials
Mobile Phone Pouches

Leases

No leases for approval

Capital Projects

Kilkenny Schools Campus

The enabling works are substantially complete with utilities awaiting final connection. The tender report for pre-qualification of construction contractors is with the Department, but the Kilkenny Schools Campus project was not included in the list of school capital projects sanctioned to progress in 2026/2027.

Gaelcholáiste Cheatharlach

The stage 2b detailed design planning application was lodged on 31 July 2025. Traffic Survey reports are being prepared, and further information will be submitted shortly. The Gaelcholáiste Cheatharlach project was not included in the list of school capital projects sanctioned to progress in 2026/2027.



Coláiste Mhuire, Johnstown

Planning permission for the school extension was received on 5 November, and the Design Team is now preparing the Stage 3 detailed construction tender pack for submission to the DEY. The Coláiste Mhuire project was not included in the list of school capital projects sanctioned to progress in 2026/2027.

An emergency works application has been submitted to replace the heating boiler.

Grennan College Thomastown

The design team are preparing the Stage 3 detailed construction tender pack for submission to the DEY. The Grennan College project was not included in the list of school capital projects sanctioned to progress in 2026/2027.

An emergency works application has been submitted to replace the dust extraction system.

Duiske College, Graiguenamanagh

Discussions on the Viability Report for replacement and increased accommodation using the Department's Modular Accommodation Framework are ongoing.

Borris College

The Design Team submitted the Stage 2A developed design for additional accommodation to the Department on 5 February 2025, but the Borris College project was not included in the list of school capital projects sanctioned to progress in 2026/2027.

Coláiste Eoin, Hacketstown

The Department of Education and Youth are to organise a meeting on the Stage 1 submission.

Grennan Equestrian

Stage 2b detailed planning application designs have been approved.

A tender report for a construction contractor has been submitted to SOLAS for approval.

Scoil Aireagail, Ballyhale

Remedial works to the floor of the new extension are being assessed and the contractor has agreed to undertake further repairs during the school closure.

Coláiste Cois Siúire, Mooncoin

An emergency works application has been submitted to replace the heating boiler.

Corporate HQ

DEY has been requested to respond to the Corporate HQ proposal submitted in 2024.

FET College

Discussions are ongoing following Ministerial approval to appoint a design team on this project.



Grennan Mill

SOLAS have verbally provided sanction for extension and refurbishment.

The tender for a consultant to develop a Conservation Plan on Grennan Mill closed on 16 January and an appointment was pending.

Ormonde College

The tender for a consultant to develop a Conservation Plan on Ormonde College closed on 16 January and an appointment was pending.

Finance

Finance Report

The Service Plan Financial Report 2026 was prepared for presentation to the Board on 24 February following its consideration at the Finance Committee meeting of 20 February.

Governance

Minutes of Finance Committee and Audit and Risk Committee

The minutes of the Finance Committee and Audit and Risk Committee will now be circulated to the Board in accordance with the Code of Practice for the Governance of ETBs 2024. The minutes of both Committees will be included for information in the section dealing with the Minutes and Reports of ETB Committees and Boards of Management.

Training

OSD staff have received training in defibrillation and first aid. A defibrillator is now available for use at both Carlow HQ and Seville Lodge.

Policy Management

A Domestic Violence and Abuse Policy for the Education Sector has been circulated by the Department of Education and Youth. Training shall be provided by ETBI to provide for implementation.

SETU Work Placement

KCETB have agreed a work placement partnership with Aoife Moran O'Briain working in the ITG Department, focussing on communications and marketing, for three months.

Procurement

A major tender process is nearing completion for a Schools Management Information System. The process was managed by the Buildings, Estates and Procurement Department with significant input from Schools, FET and the Information Technology and Governance Department.

7. Risk Management

Health, Safety and Welfare

A Health, Safety and Welfare work programme has been agreed with AMS consulting for 2026. The work programme will focus on revising Safety Statements in FET centres and identifying requirements for SOP's, permits to work, confined spaces and similar risks in schools.

ISMS, ICT and Cyber Security

The ISMS project is proceeding under the management of the Information, Technology and Governance Department who will devote much of their work programme to the project over the coming year. Objectives include aligning with sectoral strategy and reaching the baseline standards.

IAU - ETBs Audit Plan 2025/6

ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) programme – deferred to 2026 and yet to be confirmed

CTC audit (Community Training Centres) – opening audit for CTC took place on 14 November and is ongoing

Local Training Initiatives (LTI) follow up – closing meeting took place on 14 November

SOLAS Capital funding: devolved funding and completed projects - opening meeting on 15 September and a meeting with IAU has discussed progress in the audit.

System of Internal Control

Ongoing work programme on the System of Internal control is progressing and includes:

Service Plan 2026

Statement of Internal Control

Assurance Declarations

Audit Registers

Risk Registers

Annual Financial Statements (AFS) 2025

Audit and Risk Committee Meetings 20 February and 20 March

Finance Committee meetings 20 February and 20 March

Board Meetings 24 February and 24 March

Pension Overpayment

The Department of Education and Youth was to provide direction on the treatment of historical overpayments to pensioners.



Revenue Review

A Revenue compliance self-review on chargeable excess and lump-sum tax on pensions from January 2021 has been agreed and finalised.

8. (a) Minutes of Committees and Boards of Management for information/approval

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

8. (b) Report from ETBI Reserve Members Forum

Mary Hilda Cavanagh gave a report from the latest ETBI Reserve Members forum meeting.

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

240226 - KCETB 01 Minutes of previous meeting(s)

Adopt the recorded minutes of the meeting held on 13 January 2026. The minutes will be published online.

Correspondence received and noted.

240226 - KCETB 02 Chief Executive's Report

For adoption, including the 2026 Draft Service Plan

240226 - KCETB 03 Corporate Services

No leases for approval.

240226 - KCETB 04 Finance

For approval

240226- KCETB 05 Risk Management

For approval/adoption/noting

240226- KCETB 06 Minutes and Reports of ETB Committees and Boards of Management

For information/approval



Unless stated previously the above items were adopted by the board as proposed by Thomas Kinsella, seconded by Daniel Pender and agreed.

10. Other Business with prior permission of the Chair

11. Date of next meeting

Tuesday, 24 March 2026 at 3:30pm in Seville Lodge.

Signed: 

Date: 24/3/26

