

Kilkenny and Carlow Education and Training Board
Minutes
13 January 2026

Date: 13 January 2026
Time: 3.30pm
Venue: Carlow Institute of Further Education and Training, Kilkenny Road, Carlow

Attendance: Fergal Browne, Jenny Catt Slattery, Mary Hilda Cavanagh, John Coonan, Andrea Dalton, David Denieffe, Seán Lawlor, Ger Long, Madailín Mhic Lochlainn, Ann Penfold, Clare Ryan, Jacqueline Sheil, Joe Sheridan, 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: Deirdre Cullen, Maria Dollard, Thomas Kinsella, Joe Malone, Sarah Millea, Daniel Pender.

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 Gerry McGill and the team in Tyndall College for a successful Careers Fair which hosted local and national employers, Higher Education Institutions and training services, Youthreach guidance information and supports. With 12 schools in attendance, it was a very worthwhile event to showcase the career and progression opportunities available for young people in the region.

KCETB has successfully achieved Investors in Diversity Bronze, from the Centre for Diversity. KCETB met the requirements of the Bronze standard, and the accreditation is valid from December 2025 for a period of 12 months. Achieving Investors in Diversity Bronze demonstrates that KCETB has established a strong foundation for embedding Diversity and Inclusion within the organisation. The application was led by Martha Bolger, Director of FET.

Congratulations were extended to Coláiste Aindriú on their school show "Take a chance on Me" and Borris College were commended for their work on "Voulez Vous The Mamma Mia Story". It was noted these shows offered students the opportunity to showcase their talents and build their confidence.

3. Minutes of the board meeting held on 18 November 2025

The minutes of the meeting held on 18 November 2025 had been circulated to board members in advance (Document 13012026-02). The minutes were taken as read.

The minutes of the meeting on 18 November 2025 were proposed by Fergal Browne, seconded by Ann Penfold and agreed.

The minutes were recorded as a true record of the proceedings of the board meetings held on 18 November 2025.

4. Matters arising from minutes

No matters arising.

5. Correspondence

Department of Education and Youth Circular Letters – to be implemented

0037/2025 Recruitment procedures for all staff other than persons employed as teachers or special needs assistants in Education and Training Boards (ETBs)

0072/2025 Enhancement to Irish Sign Language (ISL) Scheme provision

0076/2025 Payment of Tool Allowance to Craft Workers -2025

Other Departmental correspondence – for information

DEY- Payment Letter- Summer Meals Funding 2025

DEY- Whole School Evaluation: Management, Leadership and Learning Report

DEY- Publication of Kilkenny and Carlow ETB's Annual Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 December 2024

DEY- Overdraft Facility for Kilkenny and Carlow ETB

DEY- Payment Letter- New UBU Services

DEY- KCETB- December ONP Funding

Other correspondence – for information

SOLAS- Final FET Funding Allocation 2025

Irish Centre for Diversity- confirmation that KCETB has successfully achieved Investors in Diversity Bronze Standard

6. Chief Executive's Report

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

6.1 Corporate Governance and Administration

Progress on Strategic Equality and Sustainability Initiatives

As part of KCETB's ongoing commitment to advancing equality, diversity, and inclusion across our services, the following developments were noted:

Public Sector Duty & Inclusive Leadership

KCETB has established a Public Sector Steering Group to oversee and drive progress under our statutory obligations related to the Public Sector Duty. The first meeting of the steering group took place on January 13. Following this, invitations will be 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.

KCETB established a strategic partnership with the Centre for Diversity, and successfully achieved Bronze Accreditation on 17 December, marking a significant step in embedding inclusive practices across the organisation.

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 will be 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 public sector duty.

External Relations & Partnerships

Members of the KCETB Executive Team were invited to speak at the Powerhouse Empowering Businesswomen Network on 9 December. Powerhouse Empowering Businesswomen Network is a collaboration between Carlow County Council - Local Enterprise Office, Library Service, County Carlow Chamber of Commerce, Carlow Kilkenny Skillnet and South East Technological University. KCETB has been invited to become a strategic partner in the Powerhouse Empowering Businesswomen Network. KCETB's involvement in the partnership will be officially launched on International Women's Day on 6 March.

Ethics Declaration

Documentation in compliance with the Ethics in Public Office Acts 1995 and 2001 and the Code of Practice for the Governance of ETBS 2024, in regard to the disclosure of interest was circulated to all members. The forms must be returned by 13 January.

Report on Annual Service Plan

A report on the Service Plan 2025 was circulated to board members. This document reflects the progress made on priorities and actions during the year. The Chief Executive also delivered a presentation to the Board on the Service Plan 2025.

Approval of Service Plan

Approval of the Annual Service Plan for 2026 is required prior to 1 March in accordance with the Education and Training Board Act 2013 and the Code of Practice for the Governance of ETBs 2024. A meeting of the Finance Committee must take place prior to the Board meeting. The ETB Finance Committee meeting to consider the Service Plan 2026 is scheduled for 20 February.

Approval of Annual Financial Statements

Approval of the draft Annual Financial Statements 2025 will take place at the Board meeting on 24 March. The Finance Committee and Audit and Risk Committee have a specific role and work programme in relation to the AFS and internal control assurances prior to the approval of the statements. This is essential to meet the Department of Education and Youth submission deadline.

Board Self Review of Effectiveness

Section 4 of the Code of Practice for the Governance of ETBs 2024 stipulates that the “The Board should undertake a self-assessment annual evaluation of its own performance”. To facilitate this process, a self-evaluation questionnaire was circulated to the Board members at the November Board meeting. Board members were invited to consider the 34 areas, and score issues independently, in advance of the Board meeting on January 13. During the meeting the Board reviewed the responses received and agreed a consensus score for each area. It was agreed that the additional feedback will be collated and summarised for members at the next meeting.

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.

Teaching and Learning

Induction - The Final Induction for New Teachers to the scheme took place on 20 November which was delivered by Dr. Joe O’Connell. The theme of this session was *Effective Communication and Building Positive Relationships in the school community*.

SEN - The first Community of Practice for 2025/26 took place for SENCOs on 10 November. Sinead O’Hara, WWETB delivered a workshop on student support planning and AI.

Restorative Practice - A Refresher Day on *Restorative Practices training for our RP teachers* across KCETB’s schools took place on 11 November. The second session of *Integrating Restorative Practices training into our professional practice*, with 12 teachers involved, will place on 15 January.



Féilte Bursary Scheme - Scoil Aireagail and Duiske College in collaboration with St. Laserian's School, Carlow, have been awarded funding as part of the Féilte Bursary Scheme to collaborate with South East Technological University (Waterford), to form a regional professional learning community focused on inclusive practice, wellbeing, creativity, and sustainability among teachers of Home Economics. Teachers will engage in evening workshops on felting and creative textiles, fast fashion and the circular economy, nutrition and wellbeing, financial literacy, inclusive teaching, and developing new culinary skills.

Term Two for schools began, 5 January.

Conference - The ETBI Principals' and Deputy Principals' Conference entitled *Leadership and Voice: Influencing Education* takes place in Galway on the 29 and 30 January 2026.

State Examinations

Planning is underway in schools regarding arrangements for the State Examinations.

The timetables for the 2026 Leaving Certificate, Leaving Certificate Applied and Junior Cycle examinations have been published on www.examinations.ie.

The Leaving Certificate 2026 written examinations will start on 3 June and finish on 23 June.

The 2026 Leaving Certificate Oral examinations will be conducted in the first week of the school Easter holidays from 28 March to 2 April 2026 inclusive. Candidates must present themselves over this time period. Candidates who are ill or bereaved may be accommodated with a later Oral examination in late May, subject to evidence.

Governance and Management of Schools

ETBI Joint Forum - *Together Towards Tomorrow: Building a Sector-wide Inclusive Learning Landscape* took place on 19 and 20 November. The Director of Schools presented a *Spotlight on Schools: Exploring the school context for inclusive special education*.

Inspections

The following Inspection Reports have issued:

Duiske College – Whole School Evaluation- Management Leading & Leadership (MLL)- final report.

Scoil Aireagail – Subject Inspection (Maths) – final report.

Inspections have taken place in the following school:

Coláiste Cois Siúire – follow through inspection on *Evaluation of Special Education Needs (SEN)* Inspection.

The Director of Schools will attend a meeting of the KCETB Audit and Risk Committee and will provide assurances regarding the systems of internal controls in schools. The Schools Risk Register and Internal Audit Risk Register are being updated as appropriate.



Human Resources

Career Break/Job share/Transfers forms were emailed to schools before Christmas. The deadline for teacher applications is 1 February 2026 with SNA applications being 1 March 2026.

The following nominee to a School Board was put forward for ratification:

Duiske College	
Nominee of KCETB Board	Eileen Curtis

The nomination was proposed by Mary Hilda Cavanagh and seconded by Andrea Dalton.

The board were asked for an additional nominee to the Board of Management of Duiske College.

Duiske College	
Nominee of KCETB Board	Ger Long

The additional nomination was proposed by Seán Lawlor seconded by David Denieffe and agreed.

6.3 Further Education and Training

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

Governance

Budgets/Funding: Notification has been received of preliminary funding for 2026. The draft allocation, subject to approval by the board of SOLAS, was noted.

Creating Futures: Further Education and Training Strategy 2026 – 2030

The SOLAS Creating Futures: Further Education and Training Strategy 2026 – 2030 sets out the vision: *Further Education and Training in Ireland is at the heart of a thriving inclusive economy and society, creating opportunities for people, through career development, upskilling and lifelong learning.*

There will be 4 main themes:

- Future Ready Knowledge and Skills: FET will excel in providing future-ready knowledge and skills that support priority enterprise sectors and drive innovation.
- Inclusion for Prosperity and Cohesion: Learning opportunities will be inclusive, with universal design principles fully embedded and learner experience shaping ongoing improvement and impact.



- **Quality with Innovation:** The quality of learning will be recognised nationally and internationally, characterised by relevance, innovation, and contribution to the future of work and society.
- **Collaborating for Impact:** FET creates strong, sustainable impact through collaboration with key stakeholders, including learners, businesses, communities, education, and social partners.

The SOLAS Creating Futures: Further Education and Training Strategy 2026 – 2030 is due to launch in 2026.

Teaching and Learning

2025 Learner Enrolments

There were increases to enrolments in Post Leaving Certificate (PLC) Community Education, Skills to Advance, FET Cooperation Hours and Back to Education (BTEI). Overall draft figures indicate that the learner enrolment figure for 2025 is 16470, in 2024 it was 16504.

REACH Applications

REACH will be advertised shortly for 2026 applications. Funding for this is largely in line with last year.

To support the aim of REACH funding proposals that meet the criteria in these guidelines under the categories set out below can be considered for funding:

- Projects focused on widening and increasing participation of specific target groups in learning that offers accreditation at NFQ level 1 to 3, or on non-accredited programmes that provide clear pathways to accredited provision at NFQ levels 1 to 3.
- Projects that will support learners to engage/participate in community based educational programmes, mentoring projects, transport costs for learners, or urgent educational response.
- Projects that address topics such as climate justice education, education for sustainable development, or building climate literacy.
- Projects engaged in education outreach and pre-development work to support the most marginalised and disadvantaged groups.

DFHERIS Creative Campus

The Chief Executive and Director of FET attended this event in TU Dublin Grangegorman in November. The Chief Executive represented CEs and ETBI regarding the understanding of what a creative campus could be. The overall event explored the concept of a creative campus and had presentations from universities and from Cardiff where they over 10 years have fostered creativity across education, government and society.



QQI Blended Learning

The application to extend the scope of provision to allow Blended formats was submitted. Feedback was received and after some discussion the application was accepted. The panel visit has been scheduled for the week of the 9 February.

QQI are also hosting a European Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) event on 28 January and have chosen Carlow: SETU and KCETB, as the outside Dublin destination.

Music Generation

A festive Singout Concert for Schools participating in Music Generation programmes was held in Kilkenny on 12 December. The festive evening was a culmination of the year's participation by many young people in music education activities across both programmes.

6.4 Organisational Support and Development

Director of OSD Liam Scott presented the following report:

Human Resources

Recruitment

An update in respect of recruitment was provided.

Recruitment to Post of Responsibility positions has progressed well in schools and centres and recruitment in respect of teaching positions continues.

On-line application forms are available on the KCETB website in respect of substitute teaching positions, substitute SNA positions, substitute cleaning positions, substitute caretakers' positions, and transport escort positions.

Corporate Services

Leases

KCETB Training Services - Unit 18, Danville Business Park, Ring Road, Kilkenny (to be a replacement for Unit 4, Danville Business Park) -**Term of Lease** – 01.02.26 to 31.01.34

Adult Literacy & Carlow Youthreach Tullow Road, Carlow -**Term of Lease** – 03.08.26 to 02.07.29

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 has been submitted to the Department, but no sanction has been received -to-date. The Department are awaiting adjudication of the project by the NTMA prior to providing sanction to proceed to construction.

Gaelcholáiste Cheatharlach

The stage 2b detailed design planning application was lodged on 31 July. Further information will be submitted shortly.

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 DEY.

Grennan College, Thomastown

The design team are preparing the Stage 3 detailed construction tender pack for submission to DEY.

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.

Coláiste Eoin, Hacketstown

KCETB met with the design team on 12 December, and the Stage 1 designs will be submitted to DEY for approval.

Grennan Equestrian

Stage 2b detailed planning application designs have been approved. The competition for the appointment of a contractor is ongoing.



Scoil Aireagail, Ballyhale

Remedial works to the floor of the new extension are being assessed.

2025 Summer Works Scheme

None of 11 summer works climate action related applications were successful under the current round of allocations.

Corporate HQ

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

FET College

SOLAS are to instruct on the appointment of a Design Team.

Grennan Mill

SOLAS have verbally provided sanction for conservation and refurbishment.

A new provider will be required to develop a Conservation Plan on Grennan Mill and also Ormonde College.

FET Utilisation

A pilot project on the utilisation of FET infrastructure is ongoing.

Finance

The income and expenditure report to the end of November 2025 was presented.

Overdraft Facility

At its meeting on 18 November 2025, the board considered the Chief Executive's proposal to seek consent of the Minister for Education and Youth to approve continuation of its overdraft facility. Sanction has been received from the Department of Education and Youth for an overdraft of €2,000,000 covering the period 7 December 2025 to 6 December 2026. Under Section 49 of the Education and Training Boards Act 2013, having regard to the directions of the Minister, the Chief Executive requested the Board to accept proposal. The continuation of the overdraft facility, duly sanctioned, was proposed by Fergal Browne, seconded by Ann Penfold and agreed.

Governance

Training

The annual KCETB Administration Training Day took place on 5 December 2025.

Policy Management

The following policies were updated to reflect minor technical amendments and were presented to the board for noting

Disposal of Assets Policy

KCETB Energy Policy

Climate Action

The Summer Works Scheme applications have focused on replacing fossil fuel boilers with Bi-valent systems which would reduce our CO2 output.

Tutor Adult Educator Conversion Process

Arrears due under the conversion process have been paid in line with SOLAS approval.

Work Placement Experience Programme

Two work placement opportunities in KCETB have been advertised on jobsireland.ie

A Communications Assistant has been advertised for Carlow and an Administrative Assistant for Kilkenny.

7. Risk Management

Health and Safety

The Health and Safety Work Programme 2026 is ongoing

ISMS, Cyber Security and ICT

Baseline Standards Phase 1 Consultancy Engagement

The Cyber Security Baseline Standards are mandatory for all Public Sector organisations and requires the implementation of an Information Security Management Systems (ISMS) system. KCETB commenced Phase 1 Consultancy Engagement with IAU/KOSI with a two-day working meeting on 18 and 19 December 2025.

The project will provide a full suite of ISMS documentation relating to all eight ISMS Audit Areas.

It will leverage KCETB's Strategic Objectives to generate approximately 18 ISMS primary objectives for implementation.

KCETB will prioritise the ISMS objectives based on business requirements.



Priorities may include Business Continuity Planning (BCP), IT Disaster Recovery Planning (IT DRP) and Business Impact Assessments (BIA).

The overall duration of the Phase 1 Project will be approximately one year.

The project will be led from the Executive Management Team and requires organisation wide engagement and endeavour.

A significant part of the workload of the Information, Technology and Governance Department (ITG) will be devoted to the project.

Internal Audit

ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) programme- the IAU has deferred this audit to 2026 and replaced it with an audit on Contracted Training Centres.

Contracted Training Centres Audit – the opening meeting took place on 14 November and the audit is ongoing.

Local Training Initiatives (LTI) follow up - closing meeting took place on 14 November and the audit is complete.

SOLAS Capital funding- devolved funding and completed projects opening meeting was held on 15 September

FET Management Accounting and Budgetary Control Processes

The Internal Auditor has reported an effective system of internal control for KCETB

FET Management Accounting Processes and Budgetary Controls Audit Sectoral Report

IAU Pension Sectoral Report received in December 2025

External Audit

The letter of engagement for the 2025 Financial Audit has been received from the Office of the Comptroller and Auditor General (OCAG).

Pension Overpayments

The Department are to provide direction on how to proceed with overpayments made to date.

Revenue Review

A Self-review on chargeable excess tax and excess lump-sum tax for Jan 2021 to date has been requested by Revenue

8. (a) Minutes and Reports 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.

8. (c) Report from Finance Committee

Report from meeting of KCETB Finance Committee on 17 December 2025

A meeting of KCETB Finance Committee took place on 17 December 2025 at KCETB Head Office, Athy Road, Carlow.

Members in attendance: Marie Bracken (Chairperson), Gerard Mulvey, Shane Finn, Mary Hilda Cavanagh and Madailín Mhic Lochlainn.

Also in attendance: Liam Scott, Director of OSD; Linda O'Brien, Head of Finance and Brenda Scully, Governance and Compliance Officer.

Mary Hilda Cavanagh presented the report to the Board:

The Committee's activities included consideration of the following agenda items:

- Minutes of meeting of 31 October 2025
- Executive and Risk Management Report
- Contracts in Excess of 50k
- Leases
- Finance Report
- Revenue Compliance Level 1 VAT review agreed and finalised with Revenue
- Review Level 1 Compliance re chargeable excess tax on pensions, return being prepared for Revenue
- Approval for overdraft facility of €2,000,000 received from DEY
- Finance Committee Review of Effectiveness - MS Forms to be completed
- The Terms of Reference were reviewed by the Committee - no modification was required as proposed by Ger Mulvey and seconded by Mary Hilda Cavanagh
- Date for next meeting was agreed for 20 February 2026

8. (d) Report from Audit and Risk Committee

Report from meeting of Audit and Risk Committee on 17 December 2025

A meeting of KCETB Audit and Risk Committee took place on 17 December 2025 at KCETB Head Office, Athy Road, Carlow.

Members in attendance: Chairperson Gerard Mulvey, Ger Long and Marie Bracken.

Apologies: Áine Donovan, Sara Millea.

Also in attendance: Lindsay Malone, CE, Liam Scott, Director of OSD, David Guiney, APO ITG, Jilly McDonagh, Communications Officer ITG, Kathleen Lennon, Assistant Staff Officer ITG, Brenda Scully, Governance & Compliance Officer.

Guests in attendance: Robert Moore, Client Enterprise Risk Manager, IPB Insurance and Jeannine Tanner, Senior Risk Advisor, IPB Insurance.

Ger Long presented the report to the Board:

The Committee's activities included consideration of the following agenda items:

- Minutes of meeting of 31 October 2025
- The agenda for the meeting was deferred to facilitate a presentation and discussion by Robert Moore and Jeannine Tanner, IPB in relation to Governance, Risk Management and Risk Registers.
- Robert's presentation focused on the changes introduced by the Code of Practice for the Governance of ETBs 2024
- A discussion between the Board and IPB on these issues followed the presentation
- Executive and Risk Management Reports
- IAU Audits
- FET Accounting and Budgetary Controls Audit - The ARC welcomed the overall finding of effective and noted that the only 2 recommendations relating to KCETB are deemed to be low risk
- School Meals Sectoral Audit – The Chair will liaise with the Director of the IAU for clarification on sectoral issues
- ESF NFID Review Recommendations – recommendations will be added to the Audit Register



- The Chair advised that the Committee return to the internal audit reports following consideration of the AFS.
- Audit Universe – ARC recommendations:
- Recruitment & Selection
- Governance
- Major Capital Works
- Self-Financing Activities – Music Generation
- Revenue Compliance Level 1 VAT review agreed and finalised with Revenue.
- Committee’s Review of Effectiveness - MS Forms to be completed
- Committee’s Review of Terms of Reference - The Terms of Reference were reviewed by the Committee. No modification was required as proposed by Ger Mulvey and seconded by Marie Bracken
- Date for next meetings were agreed for 29 January and 20 February 2026

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

130126 - KCETB 01 Minutes of previous meeting(s)

Adopt the recorded minutes of the meeting held on 18 November 2025. The minutes will be published online.

Correspondence received and noted.

130126 - KCETB 02 Chief Executive’s Report

For adoption, including Board Review of Effectiveness

130126 - KCETB 03 Corporate Services

Approve leases.

130126 - KCETB 04 Finance

For approval, including permission to seek overdraft facility

130126 - KCETB 05 Risk Management

For approval/adoption/noting

130126 - KCETB 06 Report of Committees

For approval/noting- Finance Committee and ARC for noting

For information – BOM minutes

