

**Kilkenny and Carlow Education and Training Board**  
**Minutes**  
**24 March 2026**

Date: 24 March 2026  
Time: 3.30pm  
Venue: KCETB Office, Seville Lodge, Callan Road, Kilkenny

Attendance: Fergal Browne, Jenny Catt Slattery, Mary Hilda Cavanagh, John Coonan, Deirdre Cullen, Andrea Dalton, Thomas Kinsella, Seán Lawlor, Ger Long, Madailín Mhic Lochlainn, Sarah Millea, Clare Ryan, Jacqueline Sheil, Joe Sheridan.

Also in attendance: Chief Executive Dr Lindsay Malone, Director of Further Education and Training Martha Bolger, Director of Organisation, Support and Development Liam Scott, Head of Finance, Linda O'Brien, Executive Support Kathleen Lennon.

Apologies: David Denieffe, Daniel Pender, Ann Penfold, Kathryn Wall

Dr Pauline Egan, Director of Schools

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**

KCETB has been accepted into the EU Pact for Skills, becoming the first Education and Training Board in Ireland to sign the Pact's Charter. Membership strengthens KCETB's ability to deliver high-quality, future-focused education and training by giving access to EU expertise in upskilling, reskilling, and emerging skill needs linked to the green and digital transitions. Through the Pact's Networking Hub, KCETB can collaborate with partners across Europe, supporting innovation and stronger pathways for learners and employers. This commitment positions KCETB as a national leader in shaping Ireland's evolving skills ecosystem.

### **Emergency Services – Road Traffic Accident Simulated Event**

Congratulations were extended to staff in Carlow Institute on the hosting of an Emergency Services – Road Traffic Accident Simulated Event 19 March. The purpose of this event was to provide a simulated work-placement activity for Emergency Services (pre-Garda, Paramedic, Fire and Defence Forces) students. In this field, real placement is not available for Level 5 students, for practical and ethical reasons, and this project aimed to provide simulated experience to support student learning and assessment, in a highly controlled and ethically considered way.

This project builds on relationships with the Emergency Services professional developed over the last four years and has the engagement and support of the services leads in each field.

### **All- Ireland Schools Senior D Hurling Final**

Congratulations were extended to Scoil Aireagail on reaching the final of this All-Ireland competition.

### **“Songbook” A live music event in Visual Theatre Carlow**

Music students from Carlow Institute of Further Education and Training were commended by the Board for a great evening of live music which took place in Visual Carlow on 19 March.

## 3. Minutes of the board meeting held on 24 February 2026

The minutes of the meeting held on 24 February 2026 had been circulated to board members in advance (Document 24032026-02). The minutes were taken as read.

The minutes of the meeting on 24 February were proposed by Mary Hilda Cavanagh, seconded by Madailín Mhic Lochlainn and agreed.



The minutes were recorded as a true record of the proceedings of the board meeting held on 24 February 2026.

#### 4. Matters arising from minutes

No matters arising.

#### 5. Correspondence

##### **Department of Education and Youth Circular Letters – to be implemented**

0020/2026 Revision of the process set out in Circular 0023/2015 which set out the Implementation of the Recommendations of the Expert Group on Fixed-Term and Part-Time Employment in Primary and Second Level Education in Ireland (Primary Schools)

0021/2026 Revision of the process set out in Circular 0024/2015 which set out the Implementation of the Recommendations of the Expert Group on Fixed-Term and Part-Time Employment in Primary and Second Level Education in Ireland

0024/2026 Prescribed Material for the Leaving Certificate English Examination in 2028

##### **Other Departmental correspondence – for information**

DEY-Guidance Note on the award of Contracts of Indefinite Duration (CIDs) for Primary School Teachers

DEY-Guidance Note on the award of Contracts of Indefinite Duration (CIDs) for Post-Primary School Teachers

DEY- ETB Youth Grant Part 1

DEY- Summer 2026 Holiday Meals

DEY- KCETB Summer Meals 2026

##### **Other correspondence – for information**

SOLAS CEO Appointment

#### 6. Chief Executive's Report

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

##### **KCETB External Engagements**

It was noted that KCETB is now a strategic partner in the Powerhouse Network in Carlow.



KCETB was invited to become a member of the National Creative Campus Group who will develop a framework for FET and HE to work towards becoming Creative Campuses. The Chief Executive and the Chairperson hosted a meeting with Minister Jennifer Murnane O'Connor on 16 March to discuss strategic priorities for KCETB.

The Chief Executive and two Assistant Principals, Mary Collins and Annette Dempsey, in Carlow Institute presented at the National Altitude Summit on 19 March. The Director of FET presented at the National Altitude Summit on 20 March and represented KCETB to formally adopt the Altitude Charter.

### **Strategic and Implementation Groups**

Staff have been formally appointed to the Public Sector Duty Implementation Group, Climate Action and Sustainability Implementation Group and the Irish Language Implementation Group. The first meeting of all three Implementation Groups will take place on 13 April in Carlow.

## **6.1 Corporate Governance and Administration**

The following were noted:

### **System of Internal Control**

A meeting of the Audit and Risk Committee took place on 20 March 2026 to consider the System of Internal Control for the 12-month period 1 January 2025 to 31 December 2025.

The committee's role is to review and consider recommendations that an adequate system of internal control operated effectively in KCETB during 2025.

A report on the System of Internal Control as operated in KCETB and the deliberations of the Audit and Risk Committee on this matter were included in Section 9.

## **6.2 Schools**

Director of FET Martha Bolger presented the following report on behalf of the Director of Schools:

### **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

### **ETBI Symposium Let's Talk Ethos**

This took place on 12 February and was well attended by the school Ethos Leads. It was noted that KCETB is running the annual Ethos Photography Competition which asks young people to capture in photographs the 5 ETB Values (Excellence in Education, Care, Equality, Community and Respect) lived out in their school community.

### **ETBI Induction for Newly Appointed Principals and Deputy Principals**

This took place on 5 March. Eimear Ryan, Director of Schools WWETB and Dr Pauline Egan, Director of Schools KCETB co-delivered a workshop on interviewer skills for competency-based interviews for teacher appointments.

### **Restorative Practice**

The third Community of Practice for restorative practitioners took place on 11 March online.

### **The KCETB Principals and Deputy Principals Spring Conference**

Took place on 19 and 20 March. The theme of this year's conference was *Working Collaboratively: Sharing Best Practice*.

### **ETBI RISE (Realising Inclusive Special Education) Day**

This takes place on 16 April. Coláiste Cois Siúire and Duiske College will be presenting together in one of the two main presentations on the day - the key focus of their presentation will be on policy integration. The Inclusion Leads across KCETB schools are invited to create a poster display.

### **Special Class Provision 2026/2027**

The National Council for Special Education issued pre-sanction letters for the opening of additional special classes for KCETB/School response as follows:

- Coláiste Cois Siúire
- Duiske College
- Tyndall College
- Borris College

## Governance and Management

### **Inspections**

Borris College - An Evaluation of Provision in Special Classes for Young People with Autism took place on 23, 24 and 26 February 2026.

Coláiste Aindriú - Subject Inspection (Maths) took place 24 and 25 February 2026.



Coláiste Mhuire - Subject Inspection (Maths) also took place in February.  
Coláiste Cois Siúire - final report issued on their recent follow through on SEN Evaluation.

### **Boards of Management**

An ETBI Webinar *Looking at Child Protection: what members of a Board of Management need to know* will take place online on 15 April at 7.00 p.m. Further details will be provided to Board members, and they were encouraged to attend.

### **Human Resources**

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

Application forms and circulars in relation to job-sharing, career break for Special Needs Assistants closed on 1 March. There were 6 applications for job-share and 2 applications for career break.

## **6.3 Further Education and Training**

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

### **Governance and Management**

#### **FET Budget**

FARR / FET Service Plan Submitted to SOLAS on 6 March.

#### **PLC Allocation**

A letter was received from SOLAS on 11 March stating that the Approved Places for 2026 were 1453 PLC Places + 40 Tertiary Places.

#### **FET Conference iVET in Action**

The Initial Vocational Education and Training (iVET) module is an optional Transition Year programme developed jointly by the NCCA, ETBI, and SOLAS to strengthen links between post-primary schools and the FET sector. It introduces students to vocational learning through practical, hands-on activities and exposure to FET pathway courses offered by Education and Training Boards. This year, KCETB is leading the rollout of this exciting initiative, giving Transition Year students valuable early insight into the opportunities available through vocational education and training.

Melinda Niland (Training Services Manager), Gillian Ryan (Assistant Training Services Manager) and David Forde (Principal of Carlow Institute of Further Education and Training) presented on this at the conference.



### **Contracted Training Framework**

The competition / tender process to appoint new contractors to ETBs to run specific skills training programmes has collapsed. This competition had been run through EPS, supported by ETBI. This leaves KCETB open to a number of potential risks:

- Budgetary
- Monetary / Financial
- Reputational with Employers
- Lack of meeting SOLAS targets

While in the interim some quotations may be sought for programmes, in the medium-term procurement competitions / tenders will need to be run. Further discussions with Training Services are required to identify the programme / areas.

### **Powerhouse Network**

The Powerhouse Network event celebrated International Women's Day 2026 on 6 March, as part of Local Enterprise Week. The keynote speaker was Emma Maye, sharing her journey to becoming CEO of not one but two companies, and the lessons learned along the way. The morning also featured panel discussions with industry experts and local businesswomen. The Chief Executive took part in a panel discussion, the Director of FET gave an address, and the Training Services Manager Melinda Niland will represent KCETB on this steering group going forward.

## **Teaching and Learning**

### **QQI Blended Learning Application**

QQI are working to finalise a panel date.

### **QQI Validation Panel**

QQI convened a panel last week to review the validation application for the Thatching Programme. After a number of sessions with KCETB staff, The Heritage Council and Subject Matter Experts, the panel are recommending the application for validation.

### **Music Generation**

Both Local Music Education Programmes (LMEPs) met recently, and the topic of funding was discussed. Funding has not increased since Music Generation commenced.

Extensive financial analysis completed in 2025 indicates significant projected deficits for 2026. To address this, Music Development Officers (MDO's) supported by the Adult Education Officer (AEO) have developed a phased, strategic approach aimed at sustaining visibility and protecting morale while avoiding abrupt or damaging cuts. Key actions include reassessing school partnerships based on sustainability, reshaping rather than cancelling concerts, increasing



school charges from 2026, reducing non-essential expenditure, and expanding higher yield community provision.

Both programmes will intensify funding applications, strengthen partnerships, and pursue new income opportunities, such as leveraging Kilkenny’s Mobile Recording Studio and Carlow’s collaboration with libraries, to enhance financial sustainability. Clear communication and careful pacing of reductions will be essential to mitigate risks, maintain public confidence, and ensure continued delivery of high-quality performance music education across both counties.

## 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 2026-2027 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.

#### Recruitment Campaigns

Current recruitment campaigns include Assistant Head of Human Resources, Project Worker for Carlow School Completion Programme, Clerical Officer Coláiste Pobail Osraí and substitute positions for Musician Educators, Teachers, SNAs, Cleaners and Transport Escorts.

#### Career Break and Job-Sharing Applications

Correspondence to staff in respect of Job Sharing and Career Breaks for the 2026-2027 academic year have been issued.

### Corporate Services

#### Contracts

Contracts reviewed by the Finance Committee to the value of over €50K were Consultant FET Conservation Architect, Capital Projects - Project Management Consultancy Services, Student Management Information System and School Equipment – Engineering.

#### Leases

A lease for approval was considered by the Board under Section 12 “*Other Business*”, with the prior permission of the Chair.

## Capital Projects

### **Kilkenny Schools Campus:**

The enabling works are substantially complete with utilities awaiting final connection.

The Kilkenny Schools Campus project was not included in the list of school capital projects sanctioned to progress in 2026/2027.

KCETB management met the Assistant Secretary, Planning and Building Unit, Department of Education and Youth on 2 March 2026.

KCETB management met with school management on 12 March.

### **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.

### **Coláiste Mhuire, Johnstown**

Planning permission for the school extension was received on 5 November 2025, and the Design Team is now preparing the Stage 3 detailed construction tender pack for submission to DEY. Fire safety concerns are being discussed.

Emergency works to upgrade the boiler system has been approved.

### **Grennan College Thomastown**

The design team are preparing the Stage 3 detailed construction tender pack for submission to DEY. The Disability Access Certification (DAC) and Fire Certificate are to be submitted in May.

Emergency works to upgrade the dust extraction system has been approved.

### **Duiske College, Graiguenamanagh**

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

Emergency works to upgrade the lighting system has been submitted to DEY.

### **Borris College**

The Design Team submitted the Stage 2A developed design for additional accommodation to the Department on 5 February 2025.

### **Coláiste Eoin, Hacketstown**

The Stage 1 designs were lodged with DEY in December 2025, and a design meeting is to be arranged by the Department.

Emergency works to upgrade the boiler system has been approved.



**Coláiste Cois Siúire, Mooncoin**

Emergency works to upgrade the boiler system has been submitted to DEY.

**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.

**2025 Summer Works Scheme**

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

**Corporate HQ**

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

**FET College of the Future**

Minister Lawless announced on 18 February that the KCETB project is a priority project and SOLAS are to provide further documentation to progress to design stage.

**Grennan Mill**

SOLAS have verbally provided sanction for conservation and refurbishment.  
A consultant has been appointed to develop a Conversation Plan for Grennan Mill.

**College of FET, Ormonde Road**

A consultant has been appointed to develop a Conversation Plan for Ormonde College.  
Planning has been granted for the lift installation.

**Grennan Equestrian Centre**

Stage 2b detailed planning application designs have been approved.  
Tenders have been received for the competition for appointment of a contractor and are being analysed.

## Finance

### Finance Report

The income and expenditure report to the end of December 2025 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 23 March 2027. The approval for the continuation for the Electronic Fund Transmission (EFT) facility from Bank of Ireland was proposed by Mary Hilda Cavanagh, seconded by Madailín Mhic Lochlainn and agreed.

## Governance

### Policy Management

Policies approved by the Executive Leadership Team to be added to the Policy Register are ETBI AI Guidelines for ETBs, KCETB AI Policy and KCETB AI Adoption Register and were noted by the Board.

### Procurement

A major tender process to select a supplier for the Schools Management Information System has been completed.

## 7. Annual Financial Statements

### Adoption of Annual Financial Statements

A meeting of the Finance Committee took place on 20 March 2026 to consider the Draft Annual Financial Statements for the 12-month period 1 January 2025 to 31 December 2025.

The committee's role is to review KCETB's Annual Financial Statements for 2025 and consider recommending their adoption by the Board.

Finance Committee Member Mary Hilda Cavanagh provided a report to the Board regarding the consideration of the Annual Financial Statements and outlined the following: The Finance Committee reviewed the draft Annual Financial Statements 2025 on 20 March 2026. The Finance Committee recommended their adoption by the Board and submission for audit to the Comptroller and Auditor General. The Finance Committee took account of public accountability and the special considerations which attach to ETBs in relation to their governance, management and operations. The Finance Committee determined that the Annual Financial



Statements are fair, balanced and provide the information necessary for an assessment of the ETB's financial position, business model and strategy.

The Annual Report of the Finance Committee was provided to the Board for their consideration in advance of the meeting.

The Head of Finance, Linda O'Brien, delivered a presentation to the Board on the Annual Financial Statements.

## **8. Board Effectiveness Review**

A report on submissions received by the Board as part of the Annual Board Effectiveness Review is presented for your consideration.

Director of OSD, Liam Scott, delivered a presentation to the Board regarding submissions received as part of the Annual Board Effectiveness Review. The Board agreed that a workshop to include refresher training regarding the role of the Board will be facilitated for Board members. This had been requested during the Review of Effectiveness process.

The Chief Executive thanked the Board for all their work and welcomed their valuable feedback. The Board were also assured that the ongoing work to educate people about the remit of KCETB continues and mentioned the KCLR "*Learning Local*" podcast with KCETB as evidence of this.

## **9. 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 (Standard Operating Procedures) SOPs, 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 Audits

### IAU- ETBs Audit Plan 2026

The proposed schedule for 2026 internal audits is as follows:

*Specialist Training Providers* is proposed for commencement in mid-April 2026

*ESOL* is proposed for commencement in June 2026.

*Book Grant* is proposed for commencement in November 2026.

### Closing meetings

For the CTC audit, the closing meeting is scheduled for 24 March 2026.

For the SOLAS Capital funding devolved funding and completed projects - opening meeting on 15 September 2025.

### KCETB System of Internal Control 2025

The work programme on the System of Internal control is now complete as detailed in the following checklist:

#### ARC's Review of Internal Control Checklist 2025

Document/report	Reviewed (Yes/No)	Completed
Audit Register	Yes	Ongoing
Sectoral Audit Report	Yes	Ongoing
Compliance Audit Report	No	IPB developing template with Compliance Officer network
Engagement with C&AG representatives	Yes	At executive level
Engagement with IAU Director/Unit	Yes	At executive level
Risk Management Report	Yes	At each meeting
Review of Risk Registers	Yes	Dec 2025
Review any audits received	Yes	At each meeting
Review Finance Committee Minutes	Yes	Jan 2026
Review Board Minutes	Yes	Jan 2026
FC Annual Report	Yes	Feb 2026

Policy Register	Yes	Jan 2026
Input into IAU audit plan 2026-2028	Yes	Dec 2025
C&AG Management Letter regarding AFS 2024, Audit 2025	Yes	Dec 2025
Protected Disclosure Report 2025	Yes	None in 2025
Assurances from Chief Executive*	Yes	March 2026
Assurances of Directors to Chief Executive	Yes	Feb 2026
Assurances from Managers to Directors	Yes	Jan 2026
Executive and Risk Management Reports	Yes	At each meeting
Performance Delivery Agreement and Oversight Agreement, plus Review	No	Dept. unable to meet.
Review of Committee Effectiveness	Yes	ARC & FC completing these on MS Forms
Chair of ARC, Board and FC engagement	Yes	Chairs have confirmed positive engagement
Draft Annual Financial Statements	Yes	Mar 2026
Draft Statement on Internal Control	Yes	March 2026, instructions due from Dept.
Draft Letter of Representation to C&AG	Yes	Mar 2026
Complete Annual Report of ARC	Yes	Mar 2026

### **Recommendation of Audit and Risk Committee on KCETB's System of Internal Control in 2025**

A meeting of the Audit and Risk Committee took place on 20 March 2026 to consider the System of Internal Control for the 12-month period 1 January 2025 to 31 December 2025.

The committee's role is to review and consider recommending to the Board that KCETB's System of Internal Control operated effectively during the period 1 January 2025 to 31 December 2025.

Audit and Risk Committee member Ger Long provided a report to the Board regarding the consideration of KCETB's System of Internal Control and outlined the following: The Audit and Risk Committee reviewed the System of Internal Control at its meeting on 20 March 2026 and at previous meetings. The Audit and Risk Committee determined that, on balance, KCETB operated an effective System of Internal Control in 2025.



The Annual Report of the Audit and Risk Committee was provided to the Board for their consideration in advance of the meeting.

Thanks were 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.

#### **Pension Overpayment**

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

#### **OACG Audit**

OACG Letter of Engagement for 2026 has been received but the audit is not scheduled to date.

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

Duiske College Board of Management Minutes 27 November 2025  
Gaelcholáiste Cheatharlach Board of Management Minutes 10 December 2025  
Grennan College Board of Management Minutes 11 December 2025  
Kilkenny City Vocational School Board of Management Minutes 29 August 2025  
Kilkenny City Vocational School Board of Management Minutes 3 November 2025  
Tyndall College Board of Management Minutes 17 November 2025  
Tyndall College Board of Management Minutes 19 January 2026  
Finance Committee Minutes 20 February 2026  
Audit and Risk Committee Minutes 20 February 2026

### **10 (b) Report from ETBI Reserve Members Forum**

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

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

#### ***240326 - KCETB 01 Minutes of previous meeting(s)***

Adopt the recorded minutes of the meeting held on 24 February 2026. The minutes will be published online.

Correspondence received and noted.

#### ***240326 - KCETB 02 Chief Executive's Report***



For adoption

**240326 - KCETB 03 Corporate Services**

Lease for approval included in Section 12

**240326 - KCETB 04 Finance**

For approval, including continuation of EFT facility

**240326- KCETB 05 Risk Management**

For approval/adoption/noting

**240326 - KCETB 06 Annual Financial Statements 2025 (and associated documents)**

For approval

**240326- KCETB 07 Minutes of ETB Committees and Boards of Management**

For noting – Finance Committee, Audit and Risk Committee and School Board of Management.

Unless stated previously the above items were adopted by the board as proposed by Mary Hilda Cavanagh, seconded by Madailín Mhic Lochlainn and agreed.

**12. Other Business with prior permission of the Chair**

The chair left the meeting for discussion of a lease due to a potential conflict of interest, and the vice-chair took over.

**Lease for approval**

**St. Catherines Childcare Centre**

**Term of Lease** – 12 years from 29.08.2026 to 27.08.2038

The above lease was proposed by Mary Hilda Cavanagh seconded by Jenny Catt Slattery and agreed.

**13. Date of next meeting**

Tuesday, 19 May 2026 at 3:30pm

Signed: 

Date: 19/5/26