



KWETB Board Meeting

Minutes of the Board of KWETB held on Tuesday, 27th January 2026

Time: 10.30am

Location: Ar líne/online

Present: Cllr. Paul O'Brien, Cllr. Evie Sammon, Cllr. Tom Fortune, Cllr. Louise Fenelon Gaskin, Cllr. Rupert Heather, Cllr. Claire O'Rourke, Cllr. John Snell, Ms. Carol Nolan, Ms. Elaine Finnerty, Mr. Eamon O'Flaherty, Mr. John Cullen, Ms. Maria Barry, Ms. Lisa Campbell, Mr. Stephen Horan, and Ms. Anne Ferris.

In attendance: Dr. Deirdre Keyes, Ms. Áine O'Sullivan, Mr. Joe Kelly, Mr. Ken Seery, Mr. Ken Scully, Ms. Ann Kinsella and Ms. Deirdre Wood.

Apologies: Cllr. David Trost and Cllr. Avril Cronin

Absent: Mr. Tom Russell, Cllr Daragh Fitzpatrick, Cllr. Nuala Killeen and Cllr. Brendan Wyse



Introduction:

Due to weather conditions, the Chairperson, Cllr. Paul O'Brien, in consultation with the Executive made the decision to move the meeting to online only to avoid unnecessary travel arrangements for members. Once the required quorum was confirmed, the Chair, welcomed all members of the Board and proceeded to conduct the meeting

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| Minute ETB - No. 01 |
| Declaration Conflicts of Interest |

The Chair, Cllr. Paul O'Brien addressed Board Members and asked if there were any conflicts of interest and if so to declare.

No conflicts were declared by the Board Members.

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| Minute ETB – No. 02 |
| Apologies, Sympathies & Congratulations Leithscéalta, Comhbhrón & Comhghairdeas |

2.1 Apologies: Cllr. Avril Cronin and Cllr. David Trost

2.2 Sympathies :

- **Andrea Gill (nee Pérez)** - Wife of teacher Stephen Gill, Maynooth Poist Primary.
- **Michael (Mickie) Sweeney** - Father of Brenda Sweeney, Deputy Principal – Athy College.
- **Margaret (Peggy) Carter** – Mother of Alison Rice, a member of the administrative staff at Confey College.

The Chair invited the Board to stand for a minute's silence as a mark of respect to those recently deceased.

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| Minute ETB - No. 03 |
| Adopting the Minutes of previous meetings – signing by Chairperson Glacadh le Miontuairiscí ó chruinnithe roimhe seo – síniú an Chathaoirleach |

3.1. The minutes of Board Meeting Tuesday 25th November 2025 at 10.30am

Proposed by: Cllr. Louise Fenelon Gaskin
Seconded by: Mr Joh Cullen
And agreed.

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| Minute ETB – No. 04 |
| Matters arising from the minutes Nithe ag Síolrú ó na Miontuairiscí |

4.1 No matters arising.



Minute ETB – No. 05

**Chief Executive / The Executive's Update
Nuashonrú Príomhfheidhmeannaigh**

The Chief Executive, Dr. Deirdre Keyes, welcomed the Board and provided a summary of recent and forthcoming events within KWETB.

Dr Keyes advised the Board that the schools' recruitment campaign would commence in February and confirmed that sanction from the Department of Education and Youth (DEY) for key posts in OSD is still awaited.

It was noted that the statutory reporting period is approaching. Members were advised that the February Board meeting will be held online for the purpose of approving the 2026 Service Plan, with a submission deadline of the 1st of March to the DEY. It was further advised that an additional meeting will be required in March to approve the draft Annual Financial Statements and Statement of Internal Control, subject to prior consideration by the Finance Committee and the Audit and Risk Committee, in advance of submission to the DEY. The importance of members' attendance at these meetings was emphasised.

The Chief Executive noted that a full review of the Corporate Risk Register is ongoing following the recent approval of the Risk Policy. It was also advised that an external nominee is required for the Finance Committee and that, should the Board have any recommendations, these should be submitted in the coming weeks; otherwise, the position will be advertised externally.

Dr. Keyes updated the Board on FET and advised that the FET allocation now stands at €39 million, representing a slight reduction on the 2025 allocation. It was further noted that there is currently a focus on integrating the FET college concept while maintaining provision at a level similar to that of 2025. Estate management was identified as a priority over the next five years to ensure alignment with national sustainability targets, with a significant allocation to Devolved Capital. She also informed the Board of KWETB's recent representation at the British Educational Training and Technology (BETT) Conference in London, which she attended with the FET team.

The Chief Executive acknowledged the success of KWETB schools at the recent Young Scientist & Technology Exhibition. Mr. Ken Scully, KWETB Director of Schools highlighted major achievements, including a first-place award in the Senior Chemical, Physical and Mathematical Sciences category achieved by Greystones Community College, as well as recognition through the Educator of Excellence Award. The Repak Innovation Award in Packaging Design and Recycling was presented to Scoil Chonglais for the project titled - Fruit Stickers. Praise was extended to all students and teachers for their outstanding contributions. It was confirmed a letter of congratulations would issue from the Chief Executive and the Board.

Dr. Keyes reported that the completion and handover of Greystones Community College took place on the 23rd of January 2026. The Board offered congratulations and expressed appreciation to the members of the School Board of Management for their support, the contractors (BAM), Dr. Keyes, and the KWETB team. Special recognition was given to the school's Principal, Mr. Ruairí Farrell, noting that his contributions went over and beyond expectations in terms of contact with contractors and keeping the Board of Management updated.

The Chief Executive updated the Board on the official sod-turning event for the Kilbride Campus, scheduled to take place in Arklow on Thursday, 29th of January, and extended an invitation to any Board members interested in attending.



Dr. Keyes invited Mr. Ken Seery, Director of FET, to provide further updates in relation to FET and the recent visit to the BETT Conference. Mr. Seery advised the Board in relation to the AI Centre at Celbridge FET, confirming that Microsoft has agreed to collaborate with KWETB, making the centre one of only three hubs nationally and the only ETB to work with Microsoft. The collaboration will initially explore educator training and development in this area. Further research is ongoing into how AI fits within the classroom and how it can be integrated in the future. A launch date for this initiative will be communicated to the Board once confirmed.

Minute ETB – No. 06

**Matters for approval, noting, or adoption
Cúrsí le faomhadh, le nótáil nó le glacadh**

6.1 Adoption/Glacadh:

N/A

6.2 Approval:

6.2.a Appointment of Vera Reid as Community Representative to the Board of Management, St. Kevin's Community College.

Proposed: Cllr. Paul O'Brien

Seconded: Ms. Maria Barry

Agreed.

6.2.b Nomination of a Board Member to the Board of Management, St. Kevin's Community College, to replace Mr. Tom Russell.

The Chair invited expressions of interest from Board members to serve on the Board of Management of St. Kevin's Community College, to replace Mr. Tom Russell. No expressions of interest were received at this time.

6.3 Noting / Notáil:

6.3.a Audit and Risk Committee Report

Ms. Maria Barry verbally reported to the Board on behalf of the Audit and Risk Committee (ARC). She noted that the Committee's most recent report had been shared with Board Members in advance of the meeting and proceeded to read the report to the Board. The Chair thanked her for the comprehensive report and invited comments from Board members. No questions or queries were raised.

6.3.b KWETB School Boards of Management update

Mr. Ken Scully, Director of Schools, addressed the Board and confirmed that all schools are regularly submitting their Board of Management meeting minutes. He advised that links to the School Board of Management minutes are available through the agenda page on the KWETB Board SharePoint.



Minute ETB – No. 07

Risk Management Report

The Risk Management Report had been linked to the agenda for all Board Members to review in advance of the Board meeting. Ms. Áine O’Sullivan of the Executive confirmed that there were no changes to risk ratings to report.

Minute ETB – No. 08

Capital Programme Report

The Director of OSD, Mr. Joe Kelly, presented the Capital Programme Report for January 2026, previously circulated to Board Members via SharePoint. He outlined key updates across several major projects:

Regarding the Kilbride Campus, Arklow (Gaelcholáiste na Mara and Gaelscoil Inbhir Mór) - it was noted that following approval from the DEY and the signing of the Letter of Acceptance in December 2025, construction of the two school buildings commenced on the 6th of January 2026 under a 20-month programme. He also noted that the official turning of the sod is scheduled for the 29th of January 2026.

The Executive reported that handover of the new Greystones Community College building took place on the 23rd of January 2026, with preparations underway for relocation and fit-out. Acknowledgment was given to all involved in completing the project.

An update was provided on St. Farnan’s Community College - noting that the project has been challenging and remains ongoing. The completion of the modular units has been delayed by two weeks due to the delivery and installation of fire doors, with handover now anticipated on the 17th of February 2026. The principal is being kept informed and is satisfied that the units will be in place in time to accommodate students for their mock exams.

The Board was advised that an emergency works application for roof repairs at Curragh Community College is being prepared by the consultant. The principal has closed off classrooms affected by leaks as a precaution, and contingency teaching accommodation in Kildare FET is being used until the repairs are completed.

Updates were provided to the Board on Coláiste Lorcaín, Castledermot - it was noted that it had been selected for inclusion in the 2026 RePowerEU Schools Retrofit programme. The Department of Education and Youth project team anticipate that the works will commence by Easter 2026 and be completed no later than the 31st August 2026.

The Executive reported that there was no new update on the BIFE roofing upgrade and modular accommodation works. The Board was reminded that the tender summary for the appointment of a roofing contractor was submitted to SOLAS on 12 March 2025 and remains under consideration by DHERIS. SOLAS has approved a revised schedule of accommodation for the modular units. As the project value now exceeds €1 million, a full design team must be retendered, with this process due to commence in Q1 2026.

The Board was advised that the Stage 1 Level Design cost report for Phase 2 of traffic safety works at Pipers Hill Campus has been completed and submitted to KWETB and the DEY. It was noted that the report is complex but is expected to help traffic and congestion issues. It was also noted that the boundary fence on



Kilcullen Road had been dismantled for a third time, and security cameras are being priced and considered as an option to prevent recurrence and alleviate any arising security concerns. The Board asked if the report would be shared with the school Principal. The Executive confirmed that the principal is up to date, but as the report contains sensitive cost information relevant to the tendering process, significant redactions would be required if it were shared.

The Board thanked Mr. Joe Kelly of the Executive and the Capital Programme Management team for their ongoing work on the current building and maintenance projects. However, Board members, in their capacity as representatives on school and centre boards, expressed concerns regarding frustration within schools, centres, and their Boards of Management.

KWETB Board members on the school Board of Management at Blessington Community College also expressed significant concern at the ongoing delays to the school building project, confirming the school Board's growing frustration with the situation.

Key issues highlighted included leaks, heating problems, delays in emergency works due to required departmental procedures, and limited space to accommodate learners. While acknowledging that these processes could not be expedited by KWETB, it was noted that both staff and students were affected. The Board recognised the high level of service provided by KWETB staff but expressed concern that the condition of some of the organisation's buildings was undermining the services delivered.

The Executive addressed the Board and thanked members for their feedback and representation. The Chief Executive emphasised the importance of their input, noting that while some issues raised were challenging to present, they were essential and that the goodwill of the staff and learners was acknowledged. The Executive confirmed that the Board's support of schools was crucial in advocating with the Department and reiterated that their representation played a significant role. The Executive confirmed they continue to lobby the Department in relation to capital projects and outlined specific criteria that must be adhered to. It was advised that the Senior Management Team are working closely with schools in supporting them through some of the challenges which they face with significant engagement which is ongoing and provision of support to staff. The Board acknowledged this support and engagement and reiterated the frustration and thanked the Executive for the work to make the students and staff as comfortable as possible, which is appreciated.

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| <i>Minute ETB – No. 09</i> |
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| Finance Report Tuirisc Airgeadais |
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The Finance Report was linked to the meeting agenda via the Board member SharePoint page in advance of the Board meeting. The Executive confirmed that the figures presented were in line with expectations and that there were no additional updates to report.

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| <i>Minute ETB – No. 10</i> |
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| Correspondence for the Board Comhfhreagras – Don Bhord |
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No correspondence received.



Minute ETB – No. 11

**Members Business / Questions
Gnó/Ceisteanna na mBall**

11.1 Board Assessment Survey Results

The Chairperson outlined the results of the Board Effectiveness Survey circulated in November 2025 to Board members, noting a low response rate of 14%. Overall feedback was positive, with respondents indicating satisfaction with Board effectiveness and describing meetings as business-like and engaged. Key priorities identified for the coming months included capacity planning, sustainability initiatives, and implementation of the new Strategy Statement.

11.2 Amendment to Board meeting venues / formats.

On behalf of the Executive, the Chairperson proposed that where achieving a quorum presents a challenge, the Chair, in consultation with the Executive, may decide to revert to an online-only meeting. No issues were raised by the Board in relation to this proposal. It was confirmed that the Standing Orders would be amended accordingly and brought to a future meeting for the Board's review and approval.

Minute ETB – No. 12

**Date of next meeting
Dáta an chéad chruinnithe eile**

The Chair, Cllr. Paul O'Brien confirmed that the next board meeting will take place on Tuesday, 24th February, at 10.30AM. This will be an online meeting only.

Signed: _____

Paul O'Brien

Date: _____

3/3/26

Cllr. Paul O'Brien

Chairperson of Kildare and Wicklow ETB