



KWETB Board Meeting
Minutes of the Board of KWETB held on Tuesday 24th February 2026 at
10.30am
Venue: Online

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

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

Apologies: Ms. Lisa Campbell

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



Introduction:

Once the required quorum was confirmed, the Chairperson, Cllr. Paul O'Brien welcomed all members of the Board and the Executive and proceeded to conduct the meeting.

Minute ETB – No.01
Declaration Conflicts of Interest

The Chairperson – 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.

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

2.1 Apologies: Ms. Lisa Campbell

2.2 Sympathies:

- Pauline Scully - Mother of Ken Scully, KWETB Director of Schools.
- Nicholas Walsh - Former Principal of Coláiste Lorcáin (1976-1999)
- Kevin Lee - Former Principal of Coláiste Bhríde, Carnew (1979 - 2011)
- Dr Noel Kavanagh – Board Member at Athy College.

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

Minute ETB – No.03/01
Adopting the Minutes of previous meetings – signing by Chairperson Glacadh le Miontuairiscí ó chruinnithe roimhe seo – síniú an Chathaoirligh

3.1. The minutes of Board Meeting Tuesday 27th January 2026 at 10.30am

Proposed by: Ms. Maria Barry

Seconded by: Ms. Anne Ferris

And agreed.

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

4.1 No matters arising.

Minute ETB – No.05
Finance Report Tuirisc Airgeadais



The Finance Report was circulated with the agenda for review by all Board members in advance of the meeting. It was noted that the report focused primarily on the review of the Annual Service Plan 2026, which had been considered by the Finance Committee on 18th February.

Cllr. Louise Fenelon Gaskin reported verbally to the Board on behalf of the Finance Committee, providing a brief overview. She confirmed that the Committee had been presented with the draft Annual Service Plan 2026, and that the financial figures were presented by Ms Linda Wynne, APO, Finance. The Committee subsequently reviewed the Draft Service Plan and the associated financial information and recommended that the Board adopt the Draft Service Plan 2026.

She further noted correspondence received from the Revenue Commissioners in relation to KWETB's 2023 and 2024 self-review, which had been requested in the previous year. The letter acknowledged and thanked KWETB for its unprompted disclosure and confirmed that the matter is now closed.

Minute ETB – No.06

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

6.1 Adoption/Glacadh:

6.1.a Draft Annual Service Plan 2026

Áine O'Sullivan, Director of OSD, addressed the Board to present the draft Annual Service Plan 2026 and delivered a short presentation outlining the purpose and statutory basis of the Plan. She explained that the Annual Service Plan derives from Section 47 of the Education and Training Boards Act 2013 and from the Annual Letter of Determination issued by the Department of Education and Youth.

She advised that the Plan sets out the ETB's priorities, objectives, performance targets, and estimated income and expenditure for the year, and provides a clear line of sight between strategic goals, operational delivery, and resource allocation, particularly in relation to financial resources. She further noted that the document acts as the formal accountability framework for reporting to the Finance Committee, the ETB Board, and Government Departments, principally the Department of Education and Youth (DEY). The objectives and targets contained within the Plan are aligned with the KWETB Strategy Statement and the strategic targets for 2026.

In outlining the approval process, she confirmed that the draft Service Plan 2026 had been reviewed by the Senior Management Team and the Finance Committee and was now being presented to the Board for adoption. She reminded members that, in accordance with Section 47(3)(a) and (b) of the Education and Training Boards Act 2013, the Board's function is to adopt the Service Plan or, following consultation with the Chief Executive, to adopt it with agreed modifications.

She further advised the Board that the Statement of Strategy 2025 - 2029 guides the preparation of the Annual Report, which is submitted each year to the Department of Education and Youth (DEY) at the end of June. She noted that the Annual Service Plan is based on the Strategy Statement and sets out the key priorities and targets for the year. These priorities are reflected in the implementation plans developed by schools and centres. Progress on these plans is then reported on and forms the basis of the Annual Report, ensuring a clear link between strategy, planning, delivery and reporting.



Ms. Ann Kinsella, the KWETB Corporate Governance Officer was then invited to address the Board with an overview of the draft KWETB Service Plan 2026. She explained that the draft Annual Service Plan 2026 is compliance-related and fulfils the requirements of the DEY. She advised that the Plan is derived from KWETB's 5-Year Statement of Strategy for the period 2025–2029 and outlines the organisation's strategic objectives for the year ahead, together with the projected financial allocations as set out in the Letter of Determination issued by the Department.

She noted that the draft Service Plan had been presented to the Finance Committee on 18th February 2026 in line with Sections 12 of the Code of Governance for ETBs and Sections 47 of the Education and Training Boards Act 2013. She further advised that, once adopted by the Board, the Service Plan must be submitted to the Department of Education and Youth for review before the 1st March 2026.

Ms. Kinsella informed the meeting that KWETB is the fourth largest Education and Training Board in the State, delivering services across both post-primary schools and Further Education and Training (FET). She confirmed that KWETB operates 23 post-primary schools, three national schools and one special school. The FET division serving more than 17,000 learners annually.

Ms. Kinsella advised that the Department of Education and Youth (DEY) has developed a new template to capture additional information relating to FET. ETBs have been notified that completion of this template is now required as part of the Annual Service Plan process, and that the completed template must be incorporated into the main body of the Annual Service Plan. This requirement is in addition to the FET information previously provided in earlier Service Plans.

It was noted that the template has been incorporated into the draft Service Plan 2026 under the Appendices section.

Ms. Linda Wynne, APO Finance, addressed the Board and provided an overview of the financial aspects of the draft Service Plan 2026. She explained that the projected estimates for 2026 were based on the Letter of Determination issued by the DEY, while the figures for 2025 reflect the unaudited outturn for that year. She noted that the 2026 figures remain provisional and may be subject to change pending the finalisation of the audited accounts.

Ms. Wynne explained that the financial information is presented across five programme areas and that receipts and expenditure are reported on a cash basis. Overall, estimated income for 2026 is projected to increase by 12.6%, while expenditure is projected to increase by 22%, with the primary driver of this increase arising in the capital programme, particularly in relation to the development of the Kilbride campus to accommodate both primary and post-primary provision. A projected cash deficit of €9.6 million is anticipated; however, this will be covered by a cash surplus carried forward from 2025.

In relation to Schools and Head Office, she advised that main scheme pay for 2026 reflects an increase of 6.4% in line with the Letter of Determination, incorporating annualised salary increases of 2.2%, together with additional provision and teacher allocation. Non-pay funding of €6.4 million has been notified, with no specific spending limit set, although expenditure will be monitored through Department returns. Associated and targeted expenditure programmes continue to be driven by school activity. She further advised that no income is expected in 2026 under the former Book Grant Scheme, as this now comes under the targeted expenditure of the Free Post-Primary Schoolbooks Scheme. The balance of the Mobile Phone Storage Grant is expected to be expended in 2026. Gaeltacht funding represents a new support for the provision of education Gaelcholáistí. Capitation funding for Community National Schools remains in line with 2025 levels, and the ancillary grant for CNS has now largely been incorporated into main scheme pay.



With regard to Further Education and Training, she advised that expenditure is determined by SOLAS and that the figures included in the draft Service Plan were initially based on indicative allocations communicated on 18th December 2025. Updated correspondence received on 17th February 2026 confirmed an increase of €80,000 in core funding, bringing that allocation to €9.09 million, and a further increase of €10,000 in FET Pathways funding. This brings the total SOLAS funding to support Further Education and Training in 2026 to €39.545 million, representing an overall increase of 3.2%.

In the area of Youth Services, she noted that UBU youth work and related youth supports transferred to the Department of Education and Youth in 2025. An overall increase of 5.3% has been provided across five Drug and Alcohol Task Force projects and thirteen UBU projects. Youth Club Grants will continue to operate on an application basis and will be advertised by KWETB in the coming months; these figures may vary during the year depending on uptake. At present, there is no confirmation as to whether Summer Meals or Youth Night Grants will proceed in 2026, and updates will be provided should further information become available.

The Chair opened the floor for questions, The Board sought further clarification on the following matters:

- Gaeltacht Funding: It was confirmed that no funding was required for 2025 as sufficient teacher allocation had been provided for that period.
- FET Core Funding: The Executive confirmed that the 2026 allocation set by SOLAS is lower than the previous year. This reflects SOLAS' analysis of projected expenditure for the forthcoming year based on expenditure incurred in the previous year. The Executive advised that rental rates on existing leases remain unchanged and that no other mitigating factors are impacting the allocation. It was noted that SOLAS may revise the allocation following the submission of returns, which typically occurs in the third quarter of the year.
- Mobile Phone Storage: The Executive advised that the proposed increase in expenditure compared to last year reflects that only six schools utilised the scheme in 2025, resulting in a residual balance of €202,793 under the Mobile Phone Storage Grant. This balance is expected to be expended in 2026.

No further questions were raised by the Board.

The Executive confirmed that the Annual Service Plan remains in draft until accepted by the Department of Education and Youth.

Proposed: Cllr. David Trost
Seconded: Ms. Maria Barry
Agreed.

6.2 Approval/Faomhadh:

6.2.a Standing Orders of Kildare and Wicklow



Ms. Kinsella addressed the Board in relation to a proposed amendment to the Standing Orders, as previously discussed at the January Board meeting. She advised that the proposed revision provides that, where achieving a quorum is likely to present a difficulty due to unforeseen circumstances, the Chair, in consultation with the Executive, may determine that the meeting will proceed on an online-only basis. The revised Standing Order reflecting this proposed change had been circulated and linked with the meeting agenda in advance for the Board's consideration.

Proposed: Cllr. Louise Fenelon Gaskin
Seconded: Cllr. Evie Sammon
Agreed.

6.3 Noting/Nótáil:

The Executive addressed the Board to advise that the Office of the Comptroller and Auditor General (OCAG) had issued an information guide to ETBs for Boards, Audit & Risk and Finance Committees Education and Training Boards. This had been circulated and linked within the meeting agenda for members' reference in advance of the meeting. It was outlined that the document was developed by the OCAG to support Boards and Committees in their consideration of financial information presented by management and includes examples of good practice to assist members in assessing whether the information provided meets their oversight and governance needs.

She confirmed that the guidance should be read in conjunction with the Code of Practice for the Governance of Education and Training Boards 2024 and with due regard to the requirements of the legislative framework applicable to ETBs.

<i>Minute ETB – No.07</i>
Date of next meeting Dáta an chéad chruinnithe eile

The Chair, Cllr. Paul O'Brien confirmed the next board meeting is Tuesday, 24th March 2026 at 10.30am in Marine House, The Murrough, Wicklow Town.

Signed: Paul O'Brien

Date: 24/3/26

Cllr. Paul O'Brien

Chairperson of Kildare and Wicklow ETB