



**Miontuairisci agus Chruinnithe den  
Bord Oideachais agus Oiliúna Luimnigh agus An Chláir  
Coláiste Breisoideachais agus Oiliúna, Campas na hInse  
ar an 27 Eanáir, 2026  
Ag 16:30**

**I Lathair /Present** Cllr. Kieran O'Hanlon Chairperson (in person),  
Ms. Ann Norton Deputy Chairperson (in person)  
Cllr. Antoinette Baker Bashua (in person)  
Cllr. Michael Begley (in person)  
Cllr. Maria Donoghue (online)  
Cllr. Rachel Hartigan (online)  
Ms Kate Hehir (in person)  
Cllr. Gabriel Keating (in person)  
Mr. Conal Kelly (in person)  
Mr. Michael MacCurtain (in person)  
Mr. Adrian O'Hanlon (in person)  
Cllr. Noreen Stokes (online)  
Cllr. Brigid Teefy (online)  
Cllr. Mary Howard (online)

**Executive** Ms. Bernadette Cullen, Chief Executive, Mr. Eamon Murphy, Director of Organisation Support & Development, Ms. Breda Flynn, Director of Organisation Support & Development (online), Mr. Donncha O'Treasaigh, Director of Schools and Youth, Mr. Paul Patton, Director of Further Education and Training, Mr. Denis O'Brien, Head of Corporate Services & IT and Ms. Caroline Hayes, Corporate Services.

**1. Preliminary**

**1.1 Conflicts of interest**

None

The Board was requested to declare any conflicts of interest in respect of any matters listed on the agenda.

There were no conflicts of interest declared.

**1.2 Attendance/apologies/condolences**

The attendance was noted, and a quorum verified.

The Chairperson Cllr. Kieran O'Hanlon welcomed everyone to the meeting.

**Apologies** Cllr. Peter Doyle, Mr. Darren Feldon, Ms. Jeannette Ferguson,  
Ms. Claire Knight, Cllr. Catherine Slattery, Mr. Sean McMahan.

**In absentia** Cllr. John Sheahan.

## Condolences

- The Family of the later Mr. Paul Carey (retired Staff Member, Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board, Head Office, Marshal House)
- Ms. Louise Condon (Fedamore Community National School and Glenroe Community National School) on the death of her mother, Ms. Bridie Condon.
- Ms. Mary Kate Hanley (Coláiste Chiaráin) on the death of her father, Mr. Jerry Murphy.
- Ms. Suzanne Crosby (Mol an Óige Community National School) on the death of her brother, Mr. Patrick Linnane.
- Ms. Kate Haren (Mol an Óige Community National School) on the death of her father-in-law, Mr. Nestor Hernando Parra Escobar.
- Ms. June Phelan Shire (Limerick Community Special School) on the death of her sister-in-law, Ms. Eleanor Shire.
- Ms. Tara Guiney (Limerick Community Special School) on the death of her sister Ms. Julie Guiney.
- Mr. Dylan Fitzgerald (Limerick Community Special School) on the death of his grandfather, Mr John Hewitt.
- Ms Megan O’Hehir (Limerick Community Special School) on the death of her uncle, Mr. Alan Donnelly
- Ms. Caitriona O’Halloran (Limerick Community Special School) on the death of her uncle, Mr. Cormac O’Halloran.
- Mr. Gearoid Hegarty (Desmond College, Newcastle West) on the death of his grandfather, Mr. Martin Darcy.
- Ms. Marian McGonagle (College of Further Education and Training, Ennis Campus) on the death of her mother, Ms. Margie Flanagan.
- Ms. Ruth McAuliffe (College of Further Education and Training, O’Connell Avenue Campus) on the death of her mother, Ms. Maura McAuliffe.
- Ms. Máire Roche (College of Further Education and Training, Mulgrave Street Campus) on the death of her father, Mr. Martin Roche.
- Ms. Trish Gleeson (College of Further Education & Training O’Connell Avenue Campus) on the death of her father, Mr. William (Bill) Gleeson.

### **1.3 Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board Minutes**

The minutes of Limerick and Clare ETB meeting held on 2 December, 2025 which were circulated to all prior to the meeting were adopted.

Proposed by: Cllr. Gabriel Keating

Seconded by: Cllr. Michael Begley

### **1.4 Matters arising**

The Chairperson informed members that a paper solution will be made available in the coming weeks for those experiencing difficulties with submitting travel and subsistence claims online.

The Chief Executive advised members that the Finance Section are working on a process to support Board members with the Travel and Subsistence system.

This was welcomed by the members, and the Chairperson thanked the Executive for arranging this.

## **2. Information and Communication**

The Chief Executive advised members that Circular letters from the Department of Education and Youth are included in members packs circulated prior to the meeting for their information.

The Chief Executive noted the extensive news releases by the ETB showcasing many of the opportunities available to students and learners.

These correspondences are included in members packs circulated prior to the meeting for their information.

### **2.3 Universal Design for Learning (UDL) Aobhan Harverty Presentation**

Ms. Aobhan Haverty, Adult Education Officer provided a comprehensive presentation on Universal Design for Learning (UDL) and the development and delivery of consistent learner supports across a multi-campus College of Further Education and Training. The presentation outlined approaches to designing campuses that accommodate the diverse needs of all learners. This included the establishment of a device library enabling all learners to borrow a device for the duration of their course. Initiatives focused on building a positive college experience for learners. She advised that one hundred twenty-six people have completed the UDL training with 19 having completed the UDL Facilitator training meaning they are able to deliver this training to colleagues and that learning hubs have been created and are accessible to the wider community and are very popular.

The presentation is included in members packs circulated prior to the meeting for their information.

Ms. Ann Norton queried the number of learners availing of the service, the methods used to promote it, and expressed concerns regarding a potential gap between school leavers with additional needs and entry into FET courses.

Ms. Haverty advised that two hundred and thirty learners had used the service and outlined that individual education plans are developed based on each learner's needs. The Director of Further Education and Training noted that Limerick and Clare ETB are the only ETB with a dedicated Disability Officer and has made significant investment in this area. Mr. Patton and Ms. Haverty confirmed that they could provide further information to Ms. Norton at a later stage.

#### **2.4 REALT Post for 2026**

The Chief Executive provided an update on the Department review of the REALT programme which has resulted in the need to rationalise the funding allocated to ETBs from 2026. The Department has considered a range of factors including the number of arrivals into the State that need assistance from REALT, the level of activity reported by REALT coordinators through their REALT returns, the drawdown of ESOL. The decision was also taking within the overall budgetary context of the Department. The Chief Executive advised that a further appeal was made by six ETBs who have a significant Ukrainian population. The Director of Schools and Youth explained that due to the decline in the numbers of Ukrainians in the area. Unfortunately, this appeal was not successful therefore only the REALT Co-ordinator post will continue for 2026. The Director of Schools and Youth will update the board if there is anything further to report.

The correspondence is included in members packs circulated prior to the meeting for their information.

The Chairperson stated that he was very proud of the improved responsive learner supports.

Ms. Ann Norton noted the recent RTE report on Ukrainian refugees currently living in Kilkee that highlighted the good work that has been done.

#### **2.5 National Apprenticeship Office Mental Health Aware (Video)**

The video is included in members packs circulated prior to the meeting for their information.

#### **2.6 Commis Chef Apprenticeship Culinary Event - College of FET, Hospitality Campus (Video).**

The video is included in members packs circulated prior to the meeting for their information.

#### **2.7 ETBI Strategy 2025 - 2028 (Video).**

The video is included in members packs circulated prior to the meeting for their information.

Cllr. Gabriel Keating will provide an overview of ETBI at the next Board meeting.

#### **2.8 Primary School Survey – update.**

The Director of Schools and Youth thanked Members for getting the information out and noted that nearly fifty percent of households had responded, The Department of Education and Youth is currently validating the survey responses with results being issued to individual schools and results being published at the end of quarter one of 2026.

The correspondence is included in members packs circulated prior to the meeting for their information.

## **2.9 SOLAS Funding 2025 & Initial 2026 funding**

Mr. Eamon Murphy, Director of Organisation Support & Development advised members that the final 2025 SOLAS funding allocation was €95.34 million. Mr. Murphy further advised the meeting that SOLAS issued a letter in December 2025 detailing indicative funding for 2026 in the amount of €96.21 million, an overall increase in Budget of €872,400. It was further noted that considering the public sector pay increases for 2026 along with the impact of the 2025 increases, this is estimated to be in the region of 2.43%, which has been included in the indicative budget. A Finance Working Group is being established to plan and support the emerging budgetary situation.

The Director of Further Education and Training thanked the Finance team who are in the process of developing a budget monitoring process aligned to the five funding pots and will work closely with SOLAS on this process. The Internal Audit Unit (IAU) have published a Sectoral Report on Further Education and Training Management and Accounting processes and budgetary control audit. This report will guide us in improving the budgetary processes and will be referred to the Finance and Audit & Risk Committees in the first instance. Further updates will be provided to the Board.

The Chief Executive acknowledged it appears that there is a difference between what the Government is saying regarding investment in Apprenticeships and what is then being provided in funding.

The Chairperson suggested writing to the Minister with a proposal to meet to discuss this matter.

Members agreed to writing to Minister James Lawless to invite him to visit one of the Campus in the ETB.

The correspondence is included in members packs circulated prior to the meeting for their information.

## **3.1 and 3.2 Parliamentary Questions - Limerick Youth Service 2026 Budget.**

There was one Parliamentary Question.

The correspondence is included in members packs circulated prior to the meeting for their information.

The Chief Executive informed members that she had been contacted by local TDs and Councillors regarding the funding of Limerick Youth Service (LYS), and had also received correspondence from the Chairperson of LYS on the matter. She reported that she met with both the Chairperson and the Chief Executive Officer of LYS in December to discuss the funding position. Members were advised that the funding reduction for 2026 will be 10 percent, rather than the originally indicated 20 percent.

The Chief Executive further noted that the number of young people availing of the service is declining nationally, as DEIS supports within schools are increasingly utilised, leading to improved retention rates and fewer early school leavers. The Director of Further Education and Training confirmed that a comparison of usage figures from 2020 to 2025 reflects this reduction.

The Chairperson acknowledged the funding cut but requested that the Board continue to support LYS as much as possible.

Cllr. Gaberial Keating told members that he recently had a meeting in Clare Youth Service and acknowledged the excellent work there but the building requires attention and repairs.

The Director of Further Education and Training advised the Board that we are restricted with Capital Funding of buildings the ETB does not own or lease.

The Director of Schools and Youth confirmed that some money may be made available under Youth Capital Grants.

#### **4.1 Key operational matters update**

The Reports from the Executive (Chief Executive, Directors of Organisation Support & Development, Director Schools and Youth, Director of Further Education and Training) were circulated to all members prior to the meeting for their consideration. All reports were taken as read and are held on file for record purposes.

a. The Chief Executive informed members that The Department of Education and Youth has launched the Convention on Education - the first such national assembly in over thirty years, designed to set a shared vision for education that will inform a new long-term government strategy. Prior to the formal Convention sessions, a National Conversation will launch in January 2026. As a key statutory partner, Limerick and Clare ETB has a dual role in this process;

- Online surveys and formal submissions (closing February 28, 2026).
- School-led "local conversations" and regional engagement events.
- The themes identified during this phase will directly form the agenda for the Convention's weekend deliberations.

c. The Director of Schools and Youth informed members that consultation sessions with Boards of Management have been set up for the 23 February for all Clare Schools and on 25 February for Limerick Schools. More sessions will be rolled out to include Students, Youth and the Board.

d. Report from Director of Further Education and Training - Overview of FET College Ennis Campus.

The Director of Further Education and Training gave an overview and the history of the development of the Ennis Campus.

The presentation is included in members packs circulated prior to the meeting for their information.

Ms. Ann Norton asked if the Campus belonged to the ETB and if not is there an option to purchase the building.

The Director of Further Education and Training confirmed that the ETB lease the building and if there was an option to purchase same from the owner, funding would be sought from Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science (DFHERIS).

The Executive report is included in members packs circulated prior to the meeting for their information.

## **4.2 Financial Matters**

### **(a) Finance Report**

Ms. Columba Glavin, APO Finance presented the preliminary financial report for the period from 1 January to 31 December 2025, which was circulated to all prior to the meeting. This report detailed the cash position, receipts and payments for the year ended 31 December 2025.

Following due consideration the Finance Report was adopted.

Proposed by: Cllr. Antoinette Baker Bashua    Seconded by: Cllr. Gaberial Keating

### **b. Audit Update Report**

Ms. Columba Glavin, APO Finance presented an audit update report, which was circulated to all prior to the meeting. Ms. Glavin advised the meeting that the Comptroller and Auditor General audit of the 2024 Financial Statements had concluded and the audit certificate and management letter have been received.

Ms. Glavin further advised the meeting that the Finance Section are currently working on the 2025 Financial Statements, due for submission on 1 April 2026. Ms. Glavin also advised the meeting that audit planning will commence on 13 April 2026 with SUMER NI, with the audit to commence in Q3 2026.

Ms. Glavin advised the meeting that the Internal Audit Unit (IAU) audits of (i) Rental of Temporary Accommodation, Travel & Subsistence and Hospitality & Gifts; (ii) Music Generation; had concluded and that opinions of Effective systems of internal control had been received, following the audits. Ms. Glavin further advised the meeting that the IAU review of previous audit findings was on-going and an IAU audit of Shared Services Learner and Apprentice Payroll has just commenced.

Ms. Glavin also noted that an ESF is ongoing.

### **c. Report from Audit and Risk Committee 28 November, 2025**

Mr. Eamon Murphy, Director of Organisation Support & Development advised the members that this report was included for information purposes.

**d. Report from Finance Committee 3 December, 2025**

Mr. Eamon Murphy, Director of Organisation Support & Development advised the members that this report was included for information purposes.

**e. Education Shared Business Services (ESBS)/Other Finance Projects including Travel & Subsistence (T&S) payments**

Ms. Glavin, APO Finance presented a report on ESBS/Other Finance Projects, which was circulated to all prior to the meeting. Ms. Glavin advised the meeting that a demo on the Purchasing Card module had recently been held by ESBS and that expressions of interest had been requested by ESBS. Ms. Glavin also advised the meeting that the Voucher Power App process was in the final stages of development with expectation that this process would go live shortly.

**f. 2024 Annual Financial Statements including Comptroller and Auditor General Audit**

Ms. Glavin, APO Finance advised members that the 2024 Financial Statements had been include in the meeting pack for information purposes.

**5.1 Minutes from Audit and Risk Committee meeting 23 October 2025**

Mr. Eamon Murphy, Director of Organisation Support & Development advised members that the minutes of the Audit and Risk Committee meeting held on 23 October 2025, as circulate prior to the meeting, were for approval.

Proposed by: Ms. Ann Norton

Seconded by: Mr. Conal Kelly

**5.2 Minutes from Finance Committee meeting 23 October 2025**

Mr. Murphy advised members that the minutes of the Finance Committee meeting held on 23 October 2025, as circulate prior to the meeting, were for approval.

Proposed by: Cllr. Michael Begley

Seconded by: Ms Kate Hehir

**6.1 Risk Management - Overview of Key Risks**

No new risks were added to the risk register.

**6.2 New legislation and circulars as per schedule circulated (for adoption)**

Proposed by: Cllr. Antoinette Baker Bashua

Seconded by: Cllr. Gaberial Keating

**7.1 Update on Lease**

None.

**7.2 Confirmation of Appointment of Chief Executive**

Proposed by: Cllr. Gaberial Keating

Seconded by: Ms. Ann Norton

### **8.1 Board Self-Assessment Questionnaire 2025**

The Chief Executive informed members that currently only eight members have completed the survey. Ms. Caroline Hayes will issue a new link with a reminder to all members. The survey enables the Executive to consider how to better support the Board in their role.

### **8.2 Gabriel Keating Ministers Question re-funding for proposed new Gael Scoil for Kilrush.**

Cllr. Gabriel Keating advised the board that he had written to Minister for Education and Youth following on from a conversation with her at a meeting in Ennis, with regard to funding for the proposed new Gael Scoil for Kilrush requesting her support for the project.

Cllr. Michael Begley asked if there were any plans for a new school in Sixmilebridge. The Director of Schools and Youth confirmed that he was not aware of any plans and that the Department would notify of requirement for any additional capacity at post-primary.

### **9 AOB with the permission of the Chairperson**

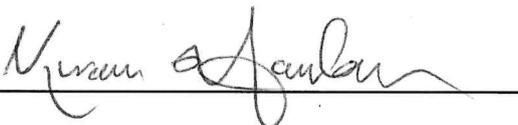
The Chief Executive reminded all Members to complete their Ethics in Public Office Acts 1995 and 2001, statements of Interest forms no later than Friday, 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2026.

For Disclosure of Registerable Interests, Where, no registerable interest or interests exist, a nil return must be made. For a Disclosure of Interests by Persons Employed in Designated posts in LCETB Additional Requirements as per letter issued, the Designated Directorships form must be completed.

### **10 Date and Time of Next meeting**

Thursday, 19 February, 2026 at 4:30 pm in Marshal House.

Signed



Chairperson at Meeting 19 February, 2026