

**Minutes of the CITB Board meeting held at 9am on 27 February 2025 at NCC, Bircham
and remotely via Microsoft Teams**

FOI Notice

Where asterisks (*) appear, these sections have been excluded from the minutes before placing on the website as the subject under discussion falls within one or more of the exemptions contained in Part II of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and can be reasonably withheld.

PRESENT

Peter Lauener	Board Chair
Rachael Cunningham	Board Trustee
Stephen Gray	Board Trustee
Michael Green	Board Trustee
Owain Jones	Board Trustee
Kevin McLoughlin	Board Trustee
Holly Price	Board Trustee
Nikki Davis	Board Trustee – <i>remote</i> – items 5-17
Julia Heap	Board Trustee – <i>remote</i>
Herman Kok	Board Trustee – <i>remote</i> – items 1–9

STAFF INVITEES

Tim Balcon	CEO
Adrian Beckingham	Executive Director, Strategy & Policy
Kirsty Evans	Executive Principal for NCC & CITB Apprenticeships Scotland
Nick Payne	Chief Financial Officer
Martina Doyle-Turner	People Director
Hannah Stroud	Corporate Governance Manager
Deborah Madden	Executive Director, Nations Engagement – <i>remote</i>
Nadine Pemberton Jn Baptiste	Executive Director, Legal, Governance & Compliance – <i>remote</i>
Adedoyin Fajemisin	Corporate Governance Manager – <i>remote</i>

STAFF INVITEES FOR SPECIFIC AGENDA ITEMS

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IN ATTENDANCE

Angela Forbes	Scotland Nation Council Chair
Lynda Armstrong	ECITB Chair

GOVERNMENT OBSERVERS

Gladys Mugugu	Department of Education (DfE)
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APOLOGIES

Sophie Seddon	Board Trustee
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ITEM 1: WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

1.1 Peter Lauener (PL) welcomed all to the meeting, including Lynda Armstrong (LA), the Chair of ECITB. It was explained that discussions would be recorded to aid minute-taking only, and the recording would be deleted once these minutes had been approved. All attendees were comfortable with this arrangement.

1.2 Apologies were received and accepted from Sophie Seddon (SS). It was noted that Herman Kok (HK) would need to leave part way through the meeting, and Nikki Davis (ND) would join the meeting late.

1.3 PL shared that he, LA and Angela Forbes (AF) had toured NCC Bircham Newton the day before to see the College's facilities and had spoken to instructors and apprentices who were enthusiastic about their training. PL also shared that Andrew Hockey (ECITB CEO), and David Nash (ECITB Director of Strategy and Policy) had attended the Board Dinner the evening before, for a discussion regarding an ECITB/CITB Strategic Collaboration Plan.

1.4 ACTION: HS to circulate the ECITB/CITB Strategic Collaboration Plan document which had been presented at the Board Dinner on 26 February to all Trustees.

ITEM 2: DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

2.1 There were no declarations of interests declared over and above those noted on the Board's Register of Interests.

ITEM 3: MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETING, ACTIONS AND MATTERS ARISING

3.1 The minutes of the Board meeting held on 26 November were reviewed. It was highlighted that paragraph 15.4 should be amended to state 'Scotland' rather than 'Wales'. With this amendment, the Board approved the minutes as an accurate record of the meeting. The minutes of the Extraordinary Board meeting held on 6 December 2024 were also reviewed and approved as an accurate record of the meeting. It was highlighted that confidential aspects of the Board minutes would be redacted before being published on the CITB website.

3.2 ACTION: HS to update the 26 November 2024 Board minutes at paragraph 15.4, to change the word 'Wales', to 'Scotland'.

3.3 Trustees reviewed the Summary of Board Actions. The following actions from the meeting held on 26 November 2024 had been completed: 3.5, 3.7, 5.10, 5.12, 5.17, 5.18, 6.6, 6.7, 7.4, and actions 5.8 and 10.3 were on track. The following actions had also been closed: 5.15 (from the meeting held on 13 September 2024), 12.4 (from the meeting held on 4 June 2024), and 8.3 (from the meeting held on 5 December 2023).

ITEM 4: KEY AIMS OF THE MEETING

4.1 PL gave an overview of the key aims of the meeting's agenda items.

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ITEM 5: CEO REPORT, PERFORMANCE & STRATEGIC RISKS Q3

5.1. Trustees noted the supporting reports.

CEO Report

5.2 Tim Balcon (TB) highlighted the good work that the New Entrant Support Team (NEST) and wider Engagement Team had achieved in the success of the Employer Networks, particularly in using the extra £3m previously approved by the Board, for Employer Networks. The Board congratulated the team on this.

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5.6 Trustees took assurance that the Levy Strategy Committee (LSC) were still seeking to find a way to receive data on payments to Labour Suppliers (through the Levy Return form or another avenue), to ensure that we had the data needed to ascertain whether it would be appropriate in future to use this in setting levy rates. Adrian Beckingham (AB) added that CITB had also received overwhelming support from employers through its roadshows to collect this data.

Performance Report

5.7 The Board considered CITB's Q3 financial and operational performance, the national Apprenticeship position, and noted the actions taken to correct under-performing interventions and exploit over-performing interventions.

5.8 Deborah Madden (DM) shared that there had been an increase in training following the additional funds being provided to Employer Networks, specifically Leadership & Management (L&M) training, and that an evaluation on this would be conducted. She also offered to circulate interim data on the take up of training through the Employer Networks to Trustees.

5.9 ACTION: DM to circulate to Trustees the interim data on the work of the Employer Networks.

5.10 Trustees questioned if CITB's roles were being advertised effectively. The Board took assurance that the Nomination, Appointments & Remuneration Committee (NARCO) would continue to review CITB's recruitment. *

Strategic and Key Operational Risks

5.11 The Board noted the Strategic Risks currently assessed as above the tolerance levels set by the Board, considered the actions in progress to bring the risks to within or towards tolerance, and took assurance that risks were being managed.

Training Provider Network

5.12 The Board received an update on the Training Provider Network (TPN) and considered the proposed structure and governance of the TPN. Trustees emphasised the importance of evidencing the added value and benefits that being part of the TPN would bring to Training Providers. The Board requested to have a more detailed discussion on TPN at its next meeting in June. *

5.13 ACTION: A detailed discussion on the Training Provider Network to be included as an agenda item at the June Board meeting, and Sue Guest to be invited to present on TPN's value proposition, the cost and return on investment, and plans on how to develop the TPN over time. HS to add this to the Board's Forward Work Plan (FWP).

5.14 DECISION: The Board supported setting up a TPN Strategic Steering Group in April 2025, and the launch of the TPN in July 2025.

PF left the meeting.

ITEM 6: 2025-26 BUSINESS PLAN

6.1 The Board considered the supporting papers and appendices. The Board noted the position of the draft DfE Priorities Letter.

6.2 To support Trustees in their understanding of how the Board's KPIs were monitored by management, Trustees proposed that an online training seminar on the Performance Hub be scheduled ahead of the next Board meeting in June. It was agreed that the DfE Sponsorship Team be invited to the session as well. It was also agreed that the Financial Performance Forecast table in future Board reports should be updated to include the % variance to the target, as well as the amount in £, to give greater clarity to the Board.

6.3 ACTION: RB to run an online training seminar on the Performance Hub, for Trustees and the DfE Sponsorship Team to attend, ahead of the June Board meeting. The Corporate Governance (CG) Team to help set up the session.

6.4 ACTION: NP and DD to update the Financial Performance Forecast table in future Board reports, to include the % variance to the target, as well as the amount in £.

6.5 It was proposed that the detailed reports on performance which were presented to the Industry Funding Committee (IFC), and other reports of interest, which were presented to Committees rather than the Board, should be made available to Trustees on Convene.

6.6 ACTION: The CG Team to set up a Knowledge Bank in the Document Library of Convene, to include performance and other reports of interest from Committees, for all Trustees to access.

6.7 DECISION: The Board **approved** the key content of the Business Plan 2025-26 and **agreed** to publish a financial plan up to 2028-29, to align with the Strategic Plan 2025-29.

6.8 DECISION: The Board **agreed** that final sign off for the wording in the published version of the Business Plan 2025-26 should be given by PL and Holly Price (HP).

6.9 DECISION: The Board **approved** the Business Plan Board KPIs for 2025-26 (the same three indicators as 2024-25), namely:

- 5% increase in the number of new entrants to the industry
- 6% increase in the number of employers supported to train and upskill their workforce
- 2% increase in the number of individuals supported to train and upskill

6.10 The Board noted the Reserves and Cash position.

6.11 DECISION: The Board **approved** the revised Capital Expenditure proposals.

Headcount

6.12 The Board discussed how one of the recommendations from the ITB Review was to meet a 5% efficiency saving in line with Cabinet Office Guidelines. * It was noted that 2024-25 efficiency outcomes would be considered at the June Board meeting, and it was agreed that a discussion on CITB's efficiency and headcount should be tabled for the Strategic Performance Review meeting with the DfE following the June Board meeting.

6.13 ACTION: An agenda item on efficiency and headcount to be requested to be included in the DfE & CITB Strategic Performance Review meeting following the June Board meeting.

6.14 DECISION: The Board **endorsed** the key drivers for change in the Headcount Plan that would support the delivery of CITB's 2025-26 Business Plan and 2025-29 Strategic Plan, namely:

- Growth in added value activity
- Derisking stretched functions and building back capabilities
- The DAWN Programme

6.15 DECISION: The Board **approved** the proposed Headcount Plan for 2025-26.

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ITEM 7: ANNUAL PRESENTATION FROM COLLEAGUE AMBASSADORS

7.1 PL welcomed HC and DD as Colleague Ambassador representatives.

7.2 HC and DD presented the supporting slide giving an overview of the Colleague Ambassadors, their key achievements from 2024, and priorities for 2025 and beyond.

7.3 In response to questions from the Board, HC and DD shared that the ability to have online meetings, and live online presentations and Q&A sessions for all colleagues with the Executive and Senior Leadership Team had improved colleagues' cohesiveness across GB.

7.4 HC and DD also proposed that colleagues would appreciate receiving recognition from the Board for outstanding achievements, such as the current work of the Engagement Team through Employer

Networks. Trustees agreed, and it was agreed that PL would send a note of thanks to the Employer Network Administration Team and wider Engagement Team for their hard work in the success of the Employer Networks.

7.5 ACTION: PL to write a note of appreciation to the NEST Team, wider Engagement Team and Employer Network Administration Team for their hard work in the success of the Employer Networks. Deb Madden agreed to circulate the note on PL's behalf.

7.6 Trustees thanked HC and DD for their input and offered an invitation that Colleague Ambassadors were always welcome to bring particular topics to the Board's attention.

DD & HC left the meeting.

7.7 ACTION: Nadine Pemberton Jn Baptiste (NPJB) & Martina Doyle-Turner (MDT) to consider how good news stories from the Colleague Ambassadors could be disseminated to Trustees.

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ITEM 8: ITB REVIEW REPORT

8.1 CC and RB presented slides on the anticipated timeline and next steps for scoping and implementation of the recommendations from the ITB Review.

8.2 PL invited Gladys Magugu (GM) to provide an update on the DfE's plans for oversight of the scoping and implementation of the recommendations from the ITB Review. GM responded that the DfE would be seeking outcomes, rather than directing how to achieve those outcomes, and that an initial reporting table would be circulated to CITB and ECITB colleagues shortly.

8.3 It was agreed that a standing agenda item on the progress of the work against the ITB Review's recommendations to be included at every Board meeting, and that consideration should be given to the possibility of organising a joint meeting, ideally for autumn 2025, between the CITB & ECITB Boards, to further discuss the Strategic Collaboration between the ITBs.

8.4 ACTION: A standing agenda item on the progress of the work against the ITB Review's recommendations to be included at every Board meeting. The CG team to add this to the FWP.

8.5 ACTION: Consideration should be given to organising a joint meeting ideally for autumn 2025, between the CITB & ECITB Boards, to further discuss the Strategic Collaboration between the ITBs. The CG Team to liaise with PL and LA to arrange and consider also whether it should be face-to-face or online.

8.6 The Board supported the next steps outlined in the supporting paper, namely for the Levy Strategy and Reviews team to:

- Continue to attend fortnightly keep-in-touch meetings with the DfE Sponsorship Team
- Prepare an action plan for agreed recommendations and seek Executive and DfE approval regarding actions and milestones
- Identify appropriate attendees to support steering group and subgroup meetings
- Support the preparation of an approved 12-month Communications Plan to ensure regular progress updates were provided to all relevant Stakeholders
- Conduct a comprehensive Lessons Learnt exercise into the role CITB played in the review process and consider how this could be improved for the next Review

CC & RG left the meeting.

ITEM 9: ENGAGEMENT WITH SCHOOLS – ITA LEGAL BOUNDS

9.1 The Board noted the legal advice within the supporting paper.

HK left the meeting.

9.2 The Board discussed the importance of secondary school age and primary school age children exploring Construction as a future career possibility, as well as parents/carers and teachers being influential in the career paths school leavers take. The Board considered the opportunity that Training Providers could have in engaging with young people.

9.3 The Board welcomed the legal advice presented by NPJB regarding the legal bounds of the Industry Training Act on engagement with schools, and agreed to discuss the strategic role that CITB could play regarding promoting construction careers in schools, at a future Board meeting.

9.4 ACTION: The strategic role that CITB could play regarding promoting construction careers in schools, to be added to a future Board meeting agenda. The CG Team to follow up with TB and PL on a date for this.

ITEM 10: POLICY APPROVAL

10.1 The Board reviewed the Risk Management Policy, and the Fairness, Inclusion and Respect Policy.

10.2 DECISION: The Board **approved** the Risk Management Policy recommended by Audit and Risk Committee.

10.3 DECISION: The Board **approved** the Fairness, Inclusion and Respect Policy recommended by the Nomination, Appointments & Remuneration Committee.

ITEM 11: NATION COUNCILS – UPDATE REPORTS AND BOARD CONSOLIDATED RESPONSES

11.1 It was agreed that PL would make final amendments to the proposed responses to Nation Councils feedback before the responses were shared with the Nation Council Chairs.

11.2 AF provided an update on the recent Scotland Nation Council meeting. The Board noted that Nation Council members had covered the following:

- Productivity and retention challenges
- 2025-26 Nation Plan
- An apprentice attended the meeting to share his experience, and the Council discussed how the apprenticeship process could be improved
- Grants and Funding projects

11.3 It was noted that a paper on Adult Pathways into Industry would be circulated to all Nation Council members and not only the Scotland Nation Council members.

11.4 Kevin McLoughlin (KM) provided an update on the recent England Nation Council meeting. The Board noted that Nation Council members had covered the following:

- Productivity and retention challenges
- 2025-26 Nation Plan
- Grenfell Inquiry
- Building Safety Act
- Skills England
- Industry Impact Fund

11.5 Owain Jones (OJ) provided an update on the recent Wales Nation Council meeting. The Board noted that Nation Council members had covered the following:

- Productivity and retention challenges
- 2025-26 Nation Plan
- Building Safety Act
- Challenges within the skills system in Wales and across GB, including the risk of apprenticeship displacement

11.6 ACTION: LA agreed to send details of ECITB's connection with offshore wind apprenticeships in Aberdeen to the CG Team to pass onto OJ, for his consideration for possibilities at the Celtic Freeport in Wales.

11.7 It was agreed that a discussion on how CITB could support improving industry's productivity, should be considered as a Board Dinner discussion topic or Board meeting agenda item for the June or September 2025 Board meetings.

11.8 ACTION: How CITB's interventions could support improving industry's productivity to be considered as a Board Dinner discussion topic or Board meeting agenda item for the June or September 2025 Board meetings.

11.9 ACTION: The letter that PL recently sent to Skills England, to be circulated to Trustees and Nation Council members, with a covering note from PL.

ITEM 12: COMMITTEE CHAIRS' REPORTS

12.1 Julia Heap (JH) provided an update on the recent Audit & Risk Committee (ARC) meeting. The Board noted that the meeting had covered the following areas:

- Strategic and significant operational risks
- Recommended the Risk Management policy to the Board for approval
- DAWN programme
- Q3 Health, Safety and Wellbeing report
- Business Ethics and Counter Fraud annual report
- Internal Audit for Q3
- New Global Internal Audit Standards
- Draft Internal Audit Plan for 2025-26
- NAO's initial planning for the 2024-25 Financial Statements Audit
- Management Letter actions

12.2 JH also invited Trustees to share within their networks CITB's advert for recruiting a new independent member for ARC, which had a deadline for applications of 30 April.

12.3 ACTION: Trustees to share the advert for a new Audit & Risk Committee member amongst their networks.

12.4 HP provided an update on the recent Industry Funding Committee (IFC) meeting. The Board noted the meeting had covered the following areas:

- ITB Review
- Business Plan investment
- Investment Group; and changes to Funds working well
- Policy briefing from Ben Hardy (Policy & Government Relations Manager)
- Deep dive on Plant grants
- Sarah Garry and Mike Wharton had recently joined the Committee as independent members

12.5 MDT provided an update on the recent NARCO meeting. The Board noted that the meeting had covered the following areas:

- People Strategy status and 2025 HR priorities
- Executive Team Succession Planning
- Total Reward Framework
- Recruitment challenges
- Gender Pay Gap
- Executive Directors' mid-year performance reviews
- Wales Nation Council Chair recruitment
- Louisa Finlay was thanked for her contributions to the Board and NARCO, before she stepped down as a Trustee and NARCO Chair from the end of January 2025

12.6 The Board was invited to approve the appointment of Nikki Davis as the new NARCO Chair.

12.7 DECISION: The Board **approved** the appointment of Nikki Davis (ND) as Chair of the Nomination, Appointments and Remuneration Committee (NARCO), following Louisa Finlay stepping down as Trustee and NARCO Chair from the end of January 2025.

12.8 Michael Green (MG) provided an update on the recent National Construction Colleges and Apprenticeships Committee (NCC&AC) meeting. The Board noted that the meeting had covered the following areas:

- Policy briefing from Ben Hardy, including how changes in the external policy environment could have an impact on NCC
- Q3 Health, Safety and Safeguarding report
- Performance review
- Quality update; NCC was still awaiting a re-inspection by Ofsted, but its self-assessment was a result of 'good'.
- 2025/26 Business Plan for NCC
- Recruitment challenges for NCC
- NCC Business Development update, including that facilities were under-utilised, but a Business Development colleague had recently been recruited.
- Estates update
- Advert was live to recruit two more independent members to the Committee

12.9 ACTION: It was agreed that Ian Woodcroft (Head of Policy and Government Relations) and/or Ben Hardy (Policy & Government Relations Manager) should present a Policy Update at the June Board Meeting.

12.10 Rachael Cunningham (RC) provided an update on the recent Levy Strategy Committee (LSC) meeting. The Board noted the meeting had covered the following areas:

- ITB Review
- Consensus
- 2025 Levy Return
- Levy avoidance
- Future Levy strategy

ITEM 13: GOVERNANCE MATTERS

13.1 The Board reviewed the proposed amendment to the Board's Standing Orders, namely that the Chair of the NCC&AC (currently MG) be designated as the Trustee Safeguard Lead.

13.2 DECISION: The Board **approved** the amendment to the Board Standing Orders.

13.3 The Board endorsed MG as the Board's Trustee Safeguard Lead.

ITEM 14: APPROVAL OF THE LEVY RETURN

14.1 Trustees noted the supporting paper and draft Levy Return form.

14.2 The Board recognised the good work done by the LSC to pursue a way to include data on registered employers' annual payments to Labour Suppliers in future Levy Return forms and endorsed the ambition to include this in the 2026 Levy Return.

14.3 DECISION: The Board **approved** the 2025 Levy Return form.

ITEM 15: FORWARD WORK PLAN

15.1 Trustees reviewed the Forward Work Plan (FWP). Areas that had been raised in today's meeting that would be added to the FWP were:

- A detailed discussion on the Training Provider Network – June meeting
- A Policy update – June meeting
- Progress of the work against the ITB Review's recommendations – all future meetings for the foreseeable future
- How CITB's interventions could support improving industry's productivity – June or September meeting or dinner the evening before (to be confirmed with PL and TB)
- The strategic role that CITB could play regarding promoting construction careers in schools – meeting date to be confirmed with PL and TB

15.2 ACTION: AB to liaise with the CG Team, to request agenda items from the Strategy and Policy Directorate to be added to the Board's FWP.

ITEM 16: MEETING EVALUATION

16.1 It was agreed that the meeting had covered all its key aims, with some very useful discussions. PL thanked LA for attending and contributing.

ITEM 17: CHAIR'S ANY OTHER BUSINESS

17.1 It was confirmed that the next Board meeting would be held on Thursday 5 June in Glasgow, with a Board dinner the evening before as usual.

17.2 There being no other business the meeting ended at 1.10pm followed by lunch.