

Board Bulletin

Bulletin for Staff on the Board of Management Meeting held on Thursday 3rd July 2025.

1.	Priority Agenda Items	<p>The Board discussed the following priority items at length:</p> <p>Culture Review – The final report on the Culture Review, with updated management responses, was approved by the Board. The report had previously been considered by the Audit & Risk Committee, the People & Culture Committee and the Performance Committee. The next steps were agreed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recommendation # 11 to be considered by the Sustainability Committee. • Report to be issued to all staff with a cover note from the Chair and Director. • Further engagement with staff as part of the Director’s quarterly updates. <p>Implementation plan for the recommendations to be developed with staff. The People & Culture Committee will monitor this and report regularly to the Board.</p> <p>Budget Submission 2026: The Finance Officers presented the draft Budget Submission for 2026 to the Board prior to formal submission to the Department. Subject to some clarifications including staffing numbers, the Board approved the Budget Submission.</p>
2.	Board Committees	<p>Audit & Risk Committee: The minutes of the Audit & Risk Committee meeting of 12th June 2025 were noted with the following highlighted by the Chair of the committee:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The committee reviewed the progress of the development of operational risk registers which is part of the overall risk management improvement framework. • The Committee reviewed the Risk Register before it came to the Board for review and some amendments to controls were identified in respect of risks no 2 (add new role- RSCW Assistant), No 3(add Code of Conduct and CORU), 4 (reflect findings from Culture review). • The Committee reviewed the report on the Culture Review. • The Committee reviewed chapter 9 of the updated Governance Handbook and the Code of Practice Compliance Checklist.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Board reviewed the Management Accounts April 2025 • The Board approved the Policy on Travel & Subsistence bringing together staff and Board under the one policy.
3.	Director's Business	<p>Director, Damien Hernon, presented his report to the Board, in his presentation he highlighted:</p> <p>The Director and Senior Managers briefed the Board on recent assaults on staff and how staff are being supported emphasising that the welfare of staff is a priority. The Board was given assurance by senior management that the concerns of staff are being listened to and acted upon.</p> <p>The Director updated the Board on the release of a media statement from Forsa, without prior consultation or verification from Oberstown and which contained inaccuracies (concerning number of assaults that resulted with hospitalisation and staff recruitment and retention).</p> <p>There was significant negative attention in light of this on the campus that failed to recognise the stellar performance of staff teams over the years and within the current context.</p> <p>A copy of an assurance report provided to HIQA as a result of this was also provided. The Board was also provided with an overview of management on-going engagement with the unions.</p> <p>Occupancy: As of May 31, there were 39 young people on site, with 25 on detention and 14 on remand, comprising of 38 males and 1 female creating a very busy, demanding working environment relative to Oberstown's rights based principles.</p> <p>Stakeholder Engagement: The Board received an update on stakeholder engagement in June 2025, including engagement with the President of the District Court regarding capacity/occupancy, trends and detention as a last resort.</p> <p>DECDE Monthly Meeting: The Board received an overview of the priority issues discussed at the monthly meeting between DCEDIY and Oberstown.</p>
4.	Young People Matters	<p>The Young People Matters Report was taken as read with the following highlighted by the Principal Officer - Care:</p> <p>Occupancy: Overall, May was busy with high levels of activity on the campus and a population of 54 young people. There were 5 new admissions and 8 re-admissions in May. There were 12 young people discharged. There were 11 bed referrals unavailable to the Courts during May, due to full occupancy.</p> <p>While challenges arose particularly around behaviour issues and capacity pressures there was a notable focus on reintegration and</p>

		<p>positive transitions reflecting the intensive support for the young people.</p> <p>Single Separation: There were 48 Single Separations involving 25 young people in May, a decrease of 16 separations on the previous month.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 38 were resolved within a 6 hour period • 10 were resolved in 7-12 hours <p>Safety Interventions: 1 High level CPI Safety intervention recorded for May.</p> <p>Advocacy Officer Report July 2025 The Board noted the outline of advocacy and complaint activity for the young people on campus for the month of May 2025.</p> <p>Minutes of the Meeting of the Young People Committee 24th June 2025 The Board noted the minutes of the Young People Committee meeting of 24th June 2025 with the following highlighted by the chair of the committee (JG):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The committee was updated on the development of an action plan to implement the finding out of the Review of Participation completed in 2023. • Relevant actions from the Business Plan 2025 were reviewed by the committee. • The committee was updated on the progress of the review of the ratings system. This is due to complete in autumn 2025. <p>Young People Committee – Terms of Reference The Board approved the updated Young People Committee Terms of Reference.</p>
5.	People Matters	<p>People Matters Report July 2025 The Board noted, without discussion, the People Matters Report July 2025 which provided an update on HR and IR/ER matters for June 2025.</p>
6.	Review of the Children's Rights Policy Framework	<p>JMcD, Chair of the Review Group, presented an overview of the process and a summary of the findings from the review of the Children's Rights Policy Framework.</p> <p>In his presentation he described:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Terms of Reference for the review • Group composition • Approach to the review and consultation with young people, staff and the Board of Management. <p>Findings were summarised as follows:</p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The general view was that the Rules are a good framework for ensuring a rights-based and child-centred approach to the care of young persons remanded or detained in Oberstown and that they have served the organisation well to date. • No one identified a major gap in the Rules themselves and any gaps that were called out were in relation to their implementation. Thus, the Group endorses the existing 12 Rules and sees no reason to make any fundamental changes to the Rules themselves. • One theme that was strongly articulated and where there was significant consensus, was concern in relation to preparation for leaving. Instructive feedback in this regard came from both young people and staff. Young people were keen that there would be Oberstown-led support after release (potentially early release). They noted that supports for those released were particularly poor outside of the Dublin / metropolitan areas. Most of the staff feedback did not suggest that Oberstown was not preparing young people to leave, it was more focused on young people returning to communities or living arrangements where the progress they had made while in detention was likely to be significantly undermined by the environment they were returning to. While regard must be had to Oberstown's limited legislative remit, there was emphasis on continuing to work with the wider network of stakeholders with a responsibility for children, around supports for young people after they are released. • Revised document will go to the Department for comment and approval. <p>JMcD thanked all those involved in the review for their work. He noted that the framework was a ground-breaking document and that the review had not changed its essence.</p> <p>The Chair thanked JMcD for overseeing the project.</p>
7.	Board Membership	<p>John McDaid's term as a Board Member expired on 30th June 2025. The Chair paid tribute to his impressive contribution to the Board since 2019 and thanked him for all he has done for Oberstown particularly in the area of governance and for the very valuable perspective of a CEO within the public sector.</p>

Koulla Yiasouma
Chairperson