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Bord Oideachais agus Oiliúna
Mhaigh Eo, Shligigh agus Liatroma
Mayo, Sligo and Leitrim
Education and Training Board

Climate Action Roadmap 2025

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Organisational context

Mayo, Sligo and Leitrim Education and Training Board (MSLETB) delivers a broad spectrum of educational services to more than 18,000 students and learners each year across the counties of Mayo, Sligo and Leitrim. Our educational and training offerings span second-level schools, further education colleges, and a variety of adult and further education centres. These include Post Leaving Certificate courses, Youthreach programmes, Outdoor Education, Youth Services, Music Generation, Apprenticeships, and Traineeships.

As part of our strong commitment to a sustainable and climate-resilient future, MSLETB is dedicated to aligning its climate action initiatives with the Irish Government’s Climate Action Roadmap. This roadmap outlines a comprehensive strategy to tackle climate change, reflecting a national commitment to building a low-carbon, climate-resilient Ireland. It represents a shared vision and a collective call to action in the face of environmental challenges.

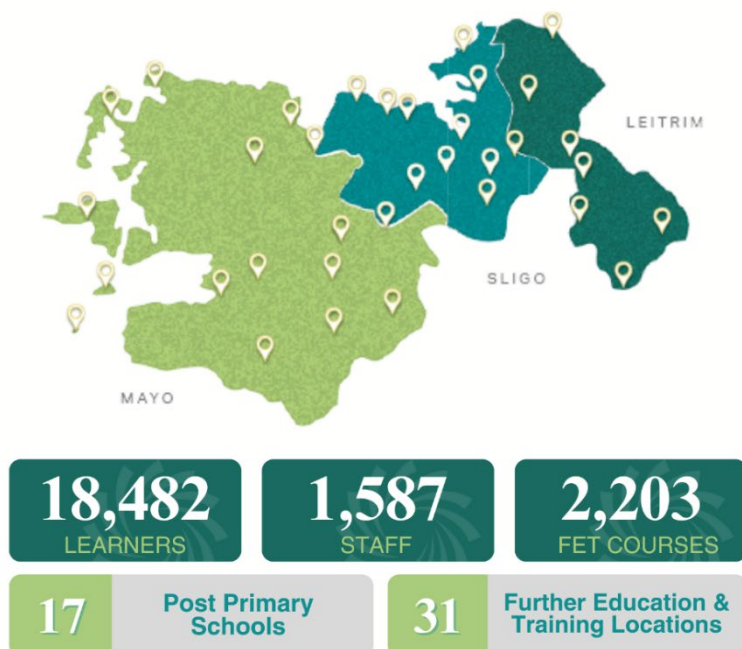


Figure 1.1 Map of Mayo, Sligo and Leitrim Education and Training locations

1.2 Progress to Date

We continue to make progress in delivering on our Roadmaps objectives. In 2025, we have carried out SI 426 Energy Audits on our Further Education and Training (FET) building stock and have worked with the Department of Education and Youth (DEY) in facilitating their Energy Audits of our schools in Mayo. A number of energy and carbon reduction initiatives are being identified and planned in respect of our FET buildings stock, and we look forward to the delivery of same. The DEY have confirmed that they will share their results on our school's side and we will continue to work with them to achieve more savings across the three counties.

Our current Gap To Target results (GTT) are encouraging and suggests we are on track to achieve a 50% reduction within the set timeframe, with expectations for continued improvement. The 2024 data showed no significant reduction, and we anticipate a similar trend for 2025. However, we expect a substantial decrease in emissions by 2026 as projects begin to deliver results.

MSLETB is committed to environmental sustainability through initiatives aligned with the *Green Public Procurement Strategy 2024–2027*, incorporating green and social criteria in procurement. Efforts to reduce food waste include improved meal planning, banning single-use plastics, promoting compostable materials, and enhancing waste education in schools. A single waste provider now services three counties, enabling better data collection and waste reduction. Paper use is being minimised through digitisation and recycled alternatives, with print quotas piloted in schools. Water conservation is supported by installing refill stations and planned audits, while upcoming cleaning contracts will adhere to Green Public Procurement (GPP) criteria to ensure environmentally responsible services.

MSLETB is committed to sustainability through responsible ICT procurement and operations, focusing on energy efficiency, resource sharing, and reduced environmental impact. Key initiatives include energy-saving device settings, a single-device policy for staff, expanded managed print services, and a shift to serverless and cloud-first infrastructure. The organisation also promotes reuse and circular economy practices by procuring remanufactured laptops, repurposing existing equipment, and consolidating systems like SharePoint to support paperless workflows. Additionally, MSLETB ensures that 80% of ICT equipment meets GPP standards. Further details on our way of working are set out in Section 5 below.

2. Our Targets

2.1 Energy Efficiency

Our strategy for achieving a 50% energy reduction based on our baseline years, is being guided by all information currently to hand, including the outcomes of recent energy audits. This goal will be advanced through staff engagement, collaboration with Green Teams, clear communication, and data-driven feedback from Display Energy Certificates.

The audit findings have already provided valuable insights, particularly in relation to excessive out-of-hours energy consumption and a high baseline during non-operational periods. We will continue to investigate further, to create solutions to reduce this consumption. We have also identified several legacy systems with inefficient energy performance, which are now being targeted for improvement.

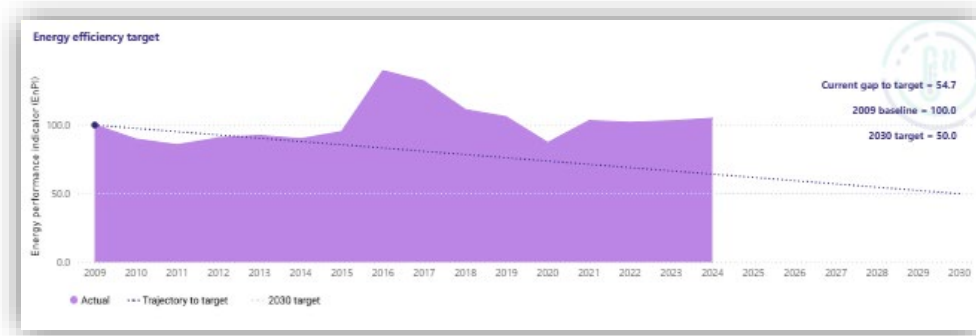


Figure 2.1 Current Energy Glide Path

2.2 Emissions Reduction

A significant proportion of our emissions is attributed to thermal heating, and achieving our reduction targets will be challenging without substantial retrofitting of our aging building stock. We will continue to work with our funding partners in DEY and Department of Further and Higher, Research, Innovation and Science (DFHERIS) to progress applications for building improvements.

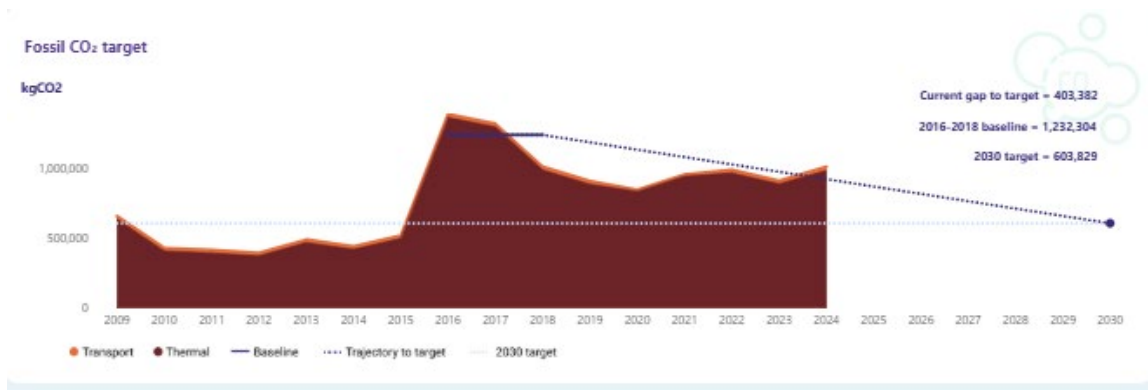


Figure 2.2 Fossil Fuel Glide Path

In 2026, we hope to have two biomass heating systems fully operational, one in our largest school and the other in our principal FET centre, which will result in a meaningful reduction in emissions.

Our Green Transition Target (GTT) has also identified several further opportunities that will contribute to achieving our emissions reduction goals, to include Insulation, Biomass Boilers, building management systems (BMS's) / building automation and control systems (BACS), and Airtightness which we will consider in planning our works projects for 2026.

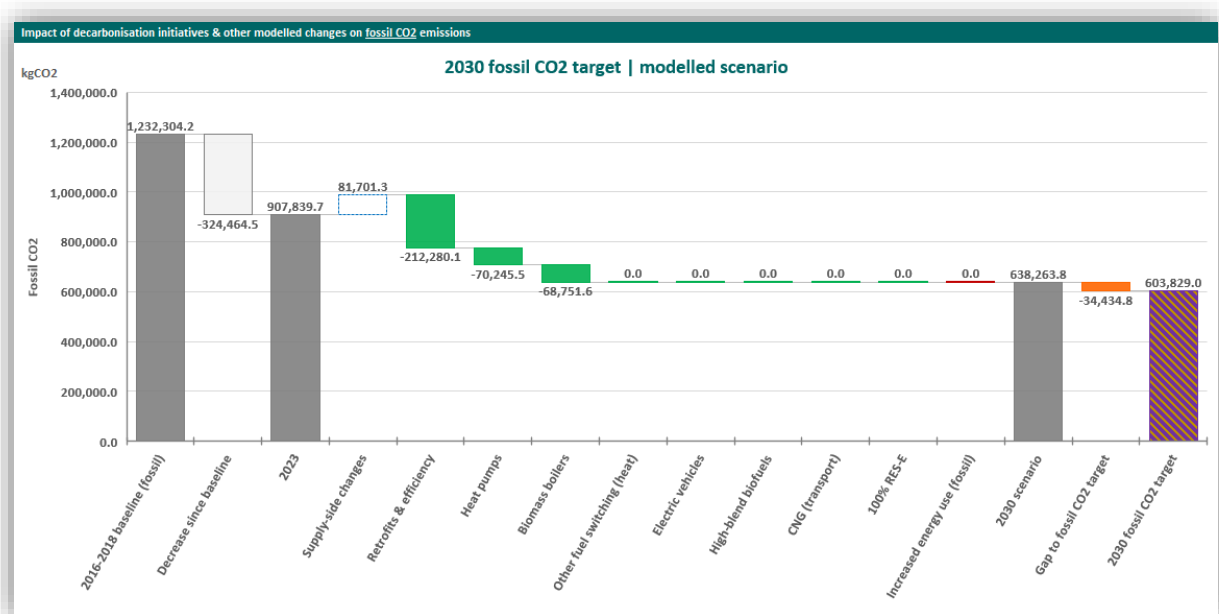


Figure 2.3 2030 Fossil Fuel CO₂ Target

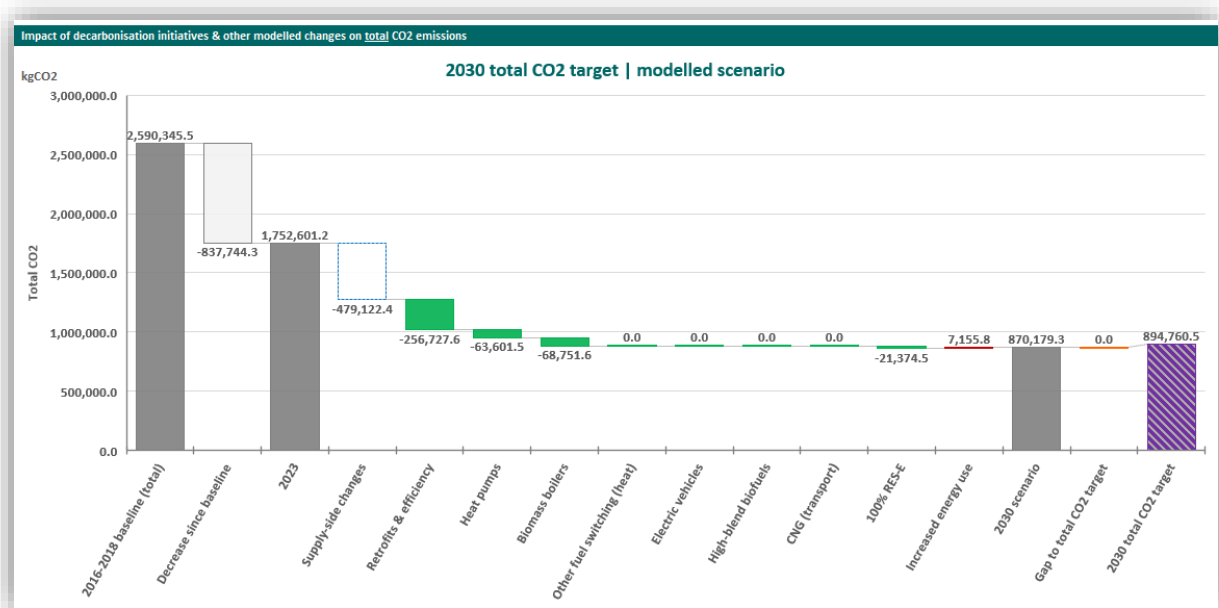


Figure 2.3 2030 2030 Total CO2 Target

3. Our People

3.1 Statement Demonstrating Senior Management commitment.

We recognise that meaningful reductions in carbon emissions require sustained and adequate investment from our governmental funding partners, including DFHERIS and the DEY. Accordingly, we are committed to actively pursuing the necessary funding by submitting comprehensive works projects for their consideration and approval. At the same time, we will endeavour to achieve the maximum possible reductions through low cost, high impact initiatives targeting low hanging fruit that can be addressed without external funding.

3.2 Nominated climate and sustainability champion.

Our nominated Climate and Sustainability Champion, and Energy Performance Officer is the Director of Services for Organisation, Support and Development. In 2025, MSLETB appointed a dedicated Head of Procurement, Property and Sustainability who will work closely with the Climate and Sustainability Champion to deliver on our goals.

Furthermore, we have assigned our Buildings Improvements and Energy Officer to assist the organisation in the day-to-day requirements to plan and report on our energy position. This role includes reporting our energy consumption, advising staff on energy savings, and offering insights into potential works projects to improve our overall energy consumption.

3.3 Green team

We have established a Corporate Green Team consisting of members from our Sustainability, Procurement, Information Technology and Communications Teams. We are committed to establishing more green teams throughout our organisation, with many already established through various learning paths. Local leaders assist us in promoting our climate action mandate and help us embed a culture of change and improvement in delivery on this mandate. Our green teams will be made up of members from our schools, centres, and administration offices. As an educational provider, we have several sustainability initiatives ongoing through teaching and learning, our central green teams will allow to collate all this work, learn from each other and plan for future projects.

Sustainability in our Schools: Students in our schools are increasingly embracing the green and sustainability agenda by integrating environmental consciousness into their studies, program development, and projects. Through subjects such as science, geography, and social studies, they explore climate change, renewable energy, and sustainable living. Many schools now encourage students to take the lead in designing eco-friendly initiatives—such as recycling campaigns, school gardens, and energy audits—that promote sustainable practices within their communities. Additionally, student-led projects often focus on innovative solutions like reducing plastic use,

promoting biodiversity, and advocating for green policies. This hands-on engagement not only deepens their understanding of environmental issues but also empowers them to become active agents of change for a more sustainable future.

For instance, Davitt College in Castlebar, County Mayo is actively enhancing biodiversity within its green spaces through a range of student-led initiatives. One key project is the development of a polytunnel, overseen by the Leaving Certificate Applied group and their teacher, which includes the construction of raised flower beds in collaboration with the woodwork department. These beds will support both horticulture activities and Transition Year projects. In addition, the school is establishing a dedicated Wildflower/No-Mow Zone and an insect hotel initiative. This involves setting aside a section at the rear of the school to encourage the growth of native wildflowers and support local insect populations. Transition Year students will prepare the area, with the caretaker assisting in grass cutting. The students will then turn the soil, plant indigenous wildflower seeds, and apply compost, allowing the space to grow naturally without mowing throughout the year. To complement this, eight insect hotels will be installed nearby, creating a welcoming habitat for pollinators and other beneficial insects.

Coláiste Pobail Acla, Achill, County Mayo is actively advancing its commitment to sustainability through a range of targeted initiatives. To improve recycling efficiency and reduce the improper disposal of waste, an orange return bottle bin has been introduced for bottles and cans. The Green Schools Committee continues to play a central role in driving environmental initiatives and encouraging sustainable practices across the school community. Staff are also engaged, with selected teachers participating in weekly online training as part of the *Composting & Recycling for Schools Programme*, aimed at strengthening the school's waste management practices. These teachers are working closely with Civic Social and Political Education classes, where 3rd year students are responsible for collecting recyclable materials from classrooms each week. Sustainability is also being embedded into the curriculum, with 2nd year Business students undertaking a project to explore ways the school and its wider community can become more environmentally conscious. Together, these efforts reflect Coláiste Pobail Acla's strong and ongoing dedication to environmental awareness and sustainable development.

Coláiste Iascaigh in Easkey, County Sligo is proud to be an active participant in the Green Schools programme, currently embarking on our first year of the *Global Citizenship: Food and Biodiversity* theme. This marks an exciting milestone as the school works toward achieving our tenth Green Flag. The theme encourages students to explore the vital connections between food systems and biodiversity, while promoting sustainable practices both within the school and in the wider community.

Their commitment to environmental education is further strengthened through the introduction of a new Transition Year module, *Environmental Protection*. This hands-on course empowers students to critically engage with environmental challenges and take meaningful action locally. Transition Year students also have the opportunity to participate in a cross-border initiative, collaborating with peers from schools across Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. This programme includes both online and in-person workshops, fostering shared learning and cooperation.

As part of the Shared Education for Positive Innovation (SEPI) programme, our students will engage in climate action and peacebuilding projects alongside over 4,000 students from 500 schools across the island. This initiative aims to build stronger community ties, promote mutual understanding, and develop key skills in citizenship, employability, and personal growth. Students will also benefit from expert-led sessions, gaining insights from professionals in business and other sectors with a focus on sustainability and collaboration.

Sustainability in our Further Education and Training Centres:

MSLETB is currently leading the development in Sligo of a Nearly Zero Energy Building (NZEB) & Retrofit Centre of Excellence, which will serve as an important regional hub for training in energy-efficient construction and retrofit practices. This centre, which will open in early 2026, is aligned with Ireland's climate action goals and will provide learners with the advanced technical skills required to meet evolving industry standards in sustainable building.

In addition to this critical infrastructure development, MSLETB is actively contributing to the national suite of Green Skills programmes being developed through SOLAS. These programmes aim to embed sustainability across all sectors of the economy by equipping learners with the knowledge and competencies needed for the green transition. MSLETB is working to ensure these offerings are accessible, relevant, and responsive to local and regional needs.

MSLETB is also a key partner in the GRASP programme (Green Accelerator Skills Programme), which is being delivered in collaboration with eight other organisations under the PEACEPLUS programme. GRASP focuses on promoting cross-border cooperation and community resilience through education and training in sustainability and social inclusion. This initiative reflects MSLETB's broader commitment to inclusive education and regional collaboration.

At Achill Outdoor Education and Training Centre (Achill OETC), environmental education and the green agenda are at the forefront of everything they do. Achill OETC have partnered with many government organisations on their green initiatives, including the sand dunes restoration project with Caro, University of Galway, and Leave No Trace. We work closely with LAWPRO on river restoration and protection works, specifically under

the Water Framework Directive. Additionally, we collaborate with the Health Service Executive (HSE) and the Healthy Communities Program to link mental health and well-being to positive time spent in nature. This approach is woven through all our modules and programs. Achill OETC is embedded in environmental and climate education at the local and community levels. They recently hosted Mountaineering Ireland's annual Environmental Weekend and work closely with other National Governing Bodies (NGBs).

Together, these initiatives demonstrate MSLETB's strategic leadership in advancing sustainability, skills development, and community engagement across the region.

4. Engaging our Staff

The Education and Training Boards of Ireland (ETBI) is the national representative body of Education and Training Boards in Ireland. Since 2022, ETBI in conjunction with Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI) have facilitated Climate Action Conferences which were attended by all relevant MSLETB staff including the Chief Executive and Director of Organisation Support and Development. This is an annual event, and we will look forward to continued collaboration and participation.

4.1 Staff Training Plans

Many of our Principals and Caretakers have completed the SEAI programme '*Energy in Education*.' We are currently working on an all-staff Energy and Sustainability Workshop which we hope will be delivered late 2025 or early 2026.

4.2 Plans for climate action and sustainability workshops

Now more than ever, education plays a vital role in addressing climate change. Our Education and Training Board is committed to driving sustainability through targeted campaigns and initiatives across our schools. Climate Action and Sustainability workshops will be delivered to all staff in Q1 2026.

Central to this effort is the Green Schools initiative, which promotes environmental awareness and action among students. We aim to expand its reach, embedding sustainability as a core value in every school within our ETB.

With schools contributing significantly to Ireland's carbon footprint, we are prioritising energy efficiency and sustainable practices across the sector. Through educational tools and partnerships with industry leaders, we will equip schools to lead in energy conservation and the use of renewables.

Our campaigns will also focus on carbon literacy—making the science of emissions accessible and showing how individual and collective choices impact the environment. By fostering environmental responsibility, we aim to build a generation of students ready to lead Ireland toward a carbon-neutral future.

The journey to sustainability begins in the classroom. Together, we can educate, empower, and inspire change.

4.3 Planned Senior Management Training

In 2025, members of the Executive Management Team, together with senior leaders from Governance and Compliance, Procurement, Property and Sustainability, and the Training Centres, completed Climate Action Leadership training. The objectives of the course were to increase awareness of what Climate Action means for Ireland and the organisation, support understanding of global, EU, national and sectoral climate action targets and policies. It also encouraged the reflect on the attributes needed to lead a

transformative change, as well as understanding the principles of Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) reporting.

The participants included leaders from locations with the highest energy consumption, ensuring that those with the greatest operational impact are equipped to drive meaningful change. This training has strengthened the organisation's capacity to integrate sustainability and energy efficiency into strategic and operational decision making.

5. Our Way of Working

5.1 Energy and environmental management systems

In 2025, MSLETB will report on the following in our Annual Report: GHG omissions, implementation of the mandate, sustainability activities and compliance with *Circular 1/2020- Procedures for offsetting the emissions associated with official air travel*.

We will continue to work towards SEAI's implement energy management programmes as per SEAI's energy management guidance (S.I. 426 of 2014) and report to SEAI annually on Monitoring and Reporting (M & R) for all buildings.

5.2 Green Public Procurement

We are in accordance with the *Green Public Procurement Strategy and Action Plan 2024-2027* including green and social considerations were mandated and possible, adhering to all new circulars in our procurement competitions.

5.3 Food Waste

a. School Meals – we have engaged in an active reduction in food and general waste, through management of numbers and uptake of the meals. MSLETB does not permit single use plastic, any receptacles must at the least be bio compostable if not reusable. Food should be sourced sustainably, for example, in season vegetables.

b. Waste Removal – we have prioritised an education focused and active engagement with schools regarding the correct use of bins, introduction of food waste bins and ensuring that there is clear signposting on bin deposits. School Principals and Centre Managers have access to days with the contracted waste provider for education sessions as required. In 2022, we moved our waste management from multiple providers to a single provider across three counties, allowing us to begin to collate data on our waste use and work towards waste reduction across the organisation.

c. Equipment and goods – we have for a number of years sought reduction in carbon around deliveries and packaging subject to agreement with suppliers.

d. We will endeavour to implement some methodology for capturing the volume of food waste that we both procure and make throughout our schools and centres.

5.4 Single Use Plastic items

All staff have been notified to cease from purchasing any single use plastic (SUP) in 2025, this was implemented for all schools' meals providers in 2023/2024.

5.5 Paper and Paper based processes

MSLETB is constantly reviewing its paper-based processes and evaluate the possibilities for digitisation, so it becomes the default approach where practicable. Due to the nature of the services provided in schools and centres, this is not always

possible, however, the education model is embracing part of the digital landscape. We endeavour to eliminate paper-based process subject to Departmental funding and approval. Where paper must be procured, we will ensure that recycled paper is the default. In 2024/2025 we piloted the implementation of print quotas in selected schools. MSLETB will monitor its usage of paper on an annual basis to measure the success of our digitalisation.

5.6 Water

Many of our schools and centres have drinking water refill points, we are working towards installing refill points to all locations. We hope to collaborate with our supply partners to measure the amount of water consumed per annum. In addition, as part of our energy audits, we are hoping to concentrate on water conservation, mainly in toilet blocks.

5.7 Procurement of ICT equipment

MSLETB is committed to advancing sustainability through strategic ICT procurement, infrastructure design, and operational practices. The following initiatives reflect our ongoing efforts to reduce environmental impact and support the national green agenda:

a. Energy-Efficient Device Management

All MSLETB devices are configured with power-saving settings to minimise energy consumption during periods of inactivity.

b. Single-Device Strategy for Staff

A standardised laptop and docking station configuration has been adopted for all staff, significantly reducing the overall number of devices and associated energy usage.

c. Managed Print Service Expansion

The Managed Print Service has been deployed across all MSLETB sites, consolidating printing infrastructure and enabling strict power-saving configurations. Print quotas have been introduced at seven sites, limiting printing for both staff and students and reducing paper and toner consumption.

d. Transition to Serverless Infrastructure

MSLETB has retired over 30 physical servers as part of its move to a serverless architecture. This has reduced energy demand and eliminated the need for dedicated cooling systems.

e. Efficient Device Use in Learning Centres

Laptop trolleys have been introduced across learning centres, allowing devices to be shared across multiple classrooms. This reduces the need for dedicated

computer labs and supports more flexible, energy-efficient learning environments.

f. Cloud-First Digital Strategy

MSLETB continues to implement a cloud-first approach, reducing reliance on onsite infrastructure. A key example is the migration of legacy phone systems to cloud-based solutions, with 22 new systems deployed. Where feasible, software-based phone clients have replaced physical handsets, further reducing hardware requirements.

g. Procurement of Remanufactured Devices

In 2024, MSLETB procured over 500 remanufactured laptops, supporting circular economy principles and significantly lowering the environmental footprint associated with new device production.

h. SharePoint Consolidation Project

A major upgrade of SharePoint across second-level schools has streamlined digital resource management, reduced reliance on local storage, and supported a transition to paperless workflows.

i. Reuse of Existing Infrastructure

MSLETB continues to repurpose ICT equipment where appropriate. For example, firewalls and other network devices have been redeployed to new locations, reducing procurement needs and supporting sustainability goals.

j. Monitoring Under Green Public Procurement (GPP)

MSLETB will ensure that 80% of all ICT equipment procured meets the EPEAT standard or equivalent, in line with GPP requirements.

5.8 Construction

Where possible we will request low carbon construction methods and low carbon cement be used on all projects as far as practicable as per guidance issued by Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment for directly procured or supported construction projects from 2024. In 2024 and 2025, we delivered a number of modular units on sites, all of which have a high energy rating.

We will endeavour to adhere to the best practice guidelines for the preparation of Resource and Waste Management Plans for construction and demolition projects for directly procured or supported construction projects.

We note that a minimum proportion of construction materials procured by public bodies under new contract arrangements to comprise recycled materials, that is

informed by a Circularity Roadmap for the Construction Sector and the 2nd Whole of Government Circular Economy Strategy to be published in 2025.

6. Our Buildings and Vehicles

6.1 Vehicles

MSLETB have a small vehicle fleet, and we are currently investigating if any of those vehicles are biodiesel compatible. When replacing these vehicles, we endeavour to purchase or lease under the clean vehicle's directive zero emissions vehicles, subject to Departmental approval and funding.

6.2 Promoting Cycling and shared mobility

MSLETB promotes the bike to work scheme, and since 2013 we have granted 325 to staff members across the organisation.

6.3 Phasing out parking

We understand the difficulties in encouraging options other than using cars, primarily because of the rural settings of many of our schools and centres, as well as the scattered layout of our sites across the three counties. Many of our locations lack public transportation access, a factor we anticipate will enhance to support our efforts in promoting alternatives to car usage.

6.4 Plans to install charging stations

MSLETB has installed EV parking stations in our Training Centre in Sligo and intends to continue the roll out of EV charging stations when our fleet become electrified, subject to Departmental approval and funding. All new school extensions are making provision through infrastructure to be able to provide EV charging stations as sanction is received by the relevant Department.

6.5 Buildings

6.5.1 Fossil Fuel Heating Systems

We are working towards reducing the installation of fuel-burning systems for space heating. These systems will only be installed when necessary for backup, peak use, or emergencies. Such installations will not exceed 10% of our total space heating requirements unless they qualify for one of the exemptions.

6.5.2 Display an up-to-date Display Energy Certificate (DEC)

In 2025, we will undertake a review of all buildings to ascertain the DEC status. We will procure DEC certification for all FET owned buildings and hope to have this completed by year end.

6.5.3 Procurement of cleaning services

In 2026, the new organisational wide Cleaning Services contracts will be procured using the Central Purchasing Arrangement, the arrangement has considered the GPP Criteria for Indoor Cleaning Services.

6.5.4 Stage 1 building stock plan

MSLETB's latest Building Stock Plan is complete and has been submitted via the SEAI's M & R submission. We will work closely with our parent Departments to support our strategy in line with our objectives in providing appropriate facilities for all students, learners and staff. We are endeavouring to deliver both new and retrofitted buildings under our Plan that achieve high standards of energy efficiency, contributing to reduced carbon emissions and long-term sustainability across our estate.

7. Conclusion

MSLETB reaffirms its strong commitment to climate action by aligning our emission reduction targets with the Irish Government's Climate Action Roadmap. As an Educational and Training Board, we recognise our pivotal role in supporting national efforts to build a low-carbon, climate-resilient future. Guided by the principles of fairness, shared responsibility, and collective action, we will work in partnership with our students, staff, parents, and the wider community to drive meaningful change. By integrating climate awareness into our practices and empowering future generations, we aim to contribute meaningfully to Ireland's climate objectives and inspire a more sustainable and resilient society for all.



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