

**Draft Minutes of the National Oversight and Audit Commission (NOAC) Meeting
Tuesday 25 September 2018**

Venue: Main Conference Room, Custom House, Dublin 1

Attended by:

Chairman Michael McCarthy

Members Tara Buckley
Paul Lemass
Martina Moloney
Colleen Savage
Connie Hanniffy
Sharon O'Connor
John Buckley
Michael McGreal

Secretariat: Claire Gavin
Neill Dalton
Jason Kennedy

Apologies: Dave Holohan

Minutes of last meeting and matters arising

The minutes of the last meeting were accepted by the committee.

Declaration of any conflicts of interest

There were no declarations of conflicts of interest from the group.

Performance indicators report

The Chair of the subcommittee provided an overview of the report and thanked the other subcommittee members, secretariat and LGMA and other entities who contributed to the report.

The members confirmed they had reviewed the report and acknowledged the work that had gone into the report and praised the overall quality of the publication.

The members raised various queries and comments including:

- Limerick administers HAP and might require a note;
- why 5 authorities have no new builds;
- clarity that the report was circulated to other government departments and if not delay publishing the report until such time;
- PPN figure of 2365 does not appear correct;
- ensure there is clarity around the long term homelessness figure;
- do housing inspections include repeat inspections;
- for next report the customer satisfaction report should be compared;
- LEO resulted should be reviewed and fire safety certificates results show the inconsistency between LAs.
- poor take up on 3 bin;

- spending rates declining which shows the indicators are working.

The Chair of the subcommittee addressed each of the above.

The secretariat clarified what data was verified with various section in the DHPLG.

The Chair called for the report to be approved and it was approved.

Public Spending Code Report 2017

The secretariat provided an overview of the PSC Report 2017.

The members had a discussion about the report and mentioned recent stories in the media regarding senior officials criticising the procurement process. It was agreed that a discussion around procurement should take place with LGMA and CCMA, and perhaps it should be made part of a best practice sharing exercise.

Some members raised concerns that clearer instructions should be provided to LAs for completing the returns and discussed whose responsibility it was to follow up when LAs did not submit certain figures.

It was clarified that the onus is on DPER and NOAC just collate the information in a composite report.

Some members asked if the PSC report should be completed by NOAC and asked if there was any way the responsibility for preparing the report could be given to DPER.

The Chair called for the report to be approved and it was approved.

Customer Service Report Feedback

The Chair of the subcommittee provided an overview of feedback received from the Customer Service Report Survey. There was one letter and one email received from the public.

The members discussed what the best procedure would be in replying to correspondence from the public and it was agreed that the secretariat should reply. A member mentioned that the LGMA and CCMA felt that the sample size of 100 was too small. The members were advised that the sample size was limited by cost.

It was suggested that a workshop should be set up and customer service employees of the LAs should be invited. Going forward, a new tender should be set up for the next survey and the survey should be promoted in the media. It was felt that the true value of the Report would be felt over time and not in the short term. It was suggested to look for a quote to see how much it would cost to change the sample size. A discussion would also be held to see what LA's will be surveyed next.

NOAC follow up on recommendations of previous reports

The secretariat has written to LGMA and will follow up with them.

Profile meetings with Local Authorities

It was suggested that the LAs validated as part of the PI report should be invited.

Secretariat is to email the CEs to arrange meetings. Kerry are to be invited, with Westmeath as a back-up. It is scheduled for 23 October 2018.

Sub- Committee Work Programme

The secretariat provided a summary document detailing suggestions provided by the members.

The group discussed the Community and Economic Development sub-committee. It was felt that LEOs and development are overriding issues and that the group should be called the Community and Development Group. As there is a massive scope it was suggested that a scoping document be developed to see how the activities will be managed. It was put forward that an outside party could be commissioned to develop it.

The group also discussed the next stage of the performance indicators. It was felt that output indicators that allow a forward looking process. Also the PIs should be scrutinised more to see why they produce the results that they do and what drives them. ICT expenditure was one area suggested for consideration.

The group noted areas which are important for next year. These included finance, shared services and corporate plans.

The members discussed HAP and whether it is feasible to analyse data relating to it in a more comprehensive matter, and if it is in NOACs remit to do so. It was mentioned that NOAC may not have the capacity to dedicate further resources and it may be more suitable to bring in an outside consultant. It was also stated that HAP will be studied by other interested groups.

Good Practice Event

The Good Practice Event was received a positive response from the surveys, which went to 26 LAs and was completed by 47 people. Some of the barriers that were mentioned were resources and staffing. Suggestions for topics for the next event are welcomed. There were several options of location put forward, and the group agreed to respond to the secretariat with their preference. The group then discussed what date would be suitable. It was agreed to host it early 2019 as the LGMA wouldn't be available until then and there would be less pressure on local authorities than there would be towards the end of 2018.

AOB

It was agreed that when responding to correspondence, the chair of the subcommittee to sign off on the letter. In response to the letter regarding the Customer Survey report the group decided not to forward the letter to the LA in question, but instead advise the author of how they can contact the LA.

It was agreed to keep the same text for the IPA annual report, with a change of Chair noted.

A discussion began over changing a report after publication after a LA complained that their Head of Internal Audit was not represented fairly in the document, despite them having 40 years of experience. It was decided not to change the document as it is factually correct.

A suggestion was put to the chair to plan board dates 6 months ahead, and to be sent as diary dates.

A member asked was it possible for certain members of the DHPLG to have sight of the PI Report before publication in order to prepare them for incoming queries. The subcommittee Chair stated the figures come from the LAs themselves and are verified with relevant sections of the DHPLG, so it would not be necessary to provide them with the report before it got published.

The secretariat confirmed it is waiting for validation of data from some sections in the DHPLG, and once that is cleared the report will be published when instructed to by the Chair of the subcommittee.

The next meeting date was agreed as 23 October 2018.