



National Oversight and Audit Commission (NOAC)
Minutes of the Meeting – Tuesday 24th May 2022 at 10 a.m.

Venue: Remote Meeting via WebEx Meeting Platform

Attended by:

Chairperson: Michael McCarthy

Members: Niall Quinn Ciarán Hayes
Brian Cawley Declan Breathnach
Noel Harrington Philomena Poole

Secretariat: Claire Gavin Nason Fallon
Alan McDermott John Goldrick
Deirdre Byrne

By invite: Fiona Quinn

Apologies: Margaret Lane

1. Minutes & actions of previous meeting

The minutes of the NOAC main meeting from 5th April 2022 were approved.

2. Declaration of conflict of interest

No conflicts of interest were raised.

3. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

4. Work Programme Updates

Chair: Scrutiny Reports

Scrutiny visits are planned for Leitrim on 10th June and Cavan on 23rd June. It was proposed and agreed that a board meeting would take place possibly in October dedicated to carrying out formal Stage 2 meetings with a number of local authorities on that day.

Local Government Governance, Efficiency and Reform Working Group (1)

This Working Group (WG) last met on 13th April and it was advised that a questionnaire of the LEOs has been compiled. The questionnaire consists of (mostly) factual information to allow for a greater understanding of the work of the LEOs and additional work is being carried out to supplement the questionnaire prior to the next WG meeting of the 15th June. Padraic McElwee, the head of the LEO network, will be present at the June meeting and the group will discuss the approach to reviewing the LEOs with Mr McElwee.

A letter issued to the Minister in February 2022 in relation to NOAC's role under Section 25A of the Planning and Development Act 2000 and its functions to make recommendations on the monitoring report of the Midland and Eastern Regional Assembly. No response has been received and the NOAC Chair may follow up on this in due course.

Regarding engagement with elected members, the WG is proposing to arrange an online meeting with the chairs of the AILG and LAMA. An agenda can be developed in order to have a more detailed discussion with these representative groups and the intention is to invite both groups to a WG meeting in two meetings' time.

In connection with the Work Programme for the WG, this has been agreed for the year. Amongst items discussed were the Corporate Plans and the WG felt that it was beneficial to have input on best practice with regard to Corporate Plans in conjunction with the Good Practice seminar. The WG is considering how best that may be done and SLAs are an area which may be examined, towards the year end, but this would be confined to a limited area rather than reviewing SLAs in general.

Performance Indicators Working Group (2)

Validation visits on the Performance Indicators will be undertaken this year in person and over June and July. The six local authorities to be validated are Cork County, Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown, Kilkenny, Mayo, Longford and Wicklow. The six Performance Indicators to be validated are:

- Roads R3: Percentage of Motor Tax transactions conducted online.
- Planning P2: Number/percentage of planning decisions confirmed by An Bord Pleanála.
- Fire F3: Percentage attendance time at scenes.
- Youth/Community Y1: Participation in Comhairle na nÓg scheme.
- Economic Development J2: Trading Online Vouchers.
- Housing H4: Housing Maintenance Direct Costs.

It was decided to not choose long term homelessness as a Performance Indicator as it is already validated monthly. A workshop will be held for all members who are carrying out the validations and this is to be arranged by the Secretariat.

Financial Management and Performance Working Group (4)

This WG had its last meeting on 6th May and it was confirmed that the WG will be hosting an event with the Chairs of the Audit Committees in local government on either 29th, 30th or 31st August. It was highlighted that it is important to have a good outcome as it's the first such event with the Audit Committees. It was suggested that the Secretariat and WG chairs convene in advance to prepare for this meeting, to ensure that there is an agreed approach from NOAC in terms of what it will deliver

at the meeting and the outcomes required from it. One suggestion was that NOAC could explain its functions and the roles of its WGs, followed by a substantial discussion of the agenda items. The Chair and other members agreed that the 31st was the most suitable date and it would be held in Portlaoise. Other members will revert to the Secretariat to confirm their availability for 31st August.

5. NOAC attendance at the Joint Oireachtas Committee

The NOAC Chair attended a session of the Joint Oireachtas Committee on Housing, Local Government and Heritage on 17th May, accompanied by representation from the Board and Secretariat. The session explored NOAC's annual report for 2021.

On the day, the Chair explained the role of NOAC, noting that it does not have responsibility for setting policy. While some questions strayed from NOAC's specific remit, it was seen as a positive session. The role of the Secretariat in preparing for the session was acknowledged by the Board and it was confirmed that a link to view the debate would be forwarded to the Board.

6. Update on the Work Planning Day on 4th May

Dr Stafford's report on the Work Planning Day was recently circulated to the Board by the Secretariat. It summarises the events of the day and it was confirmed that the Secretariat would revert to Dr Stafford requesting more detail on recommendations arising from the event.

Some items which will be raised include:

- In section one, it stated that NOAC would arrange attendance at local authority meetings. Clarification on this matter was requested.
- The number of yearly meetings was listed as six, rather than eight. Clarification between WG meetings and board meetings was required.
- It was raised that among the recommendation it could include the point that NOAC needs to make itself known to other organisations.

It was also noted that the meeting may have devoted too much time to the section on the Secretariat, where it was felt the relationship was good.

7. Date of next meeting

10 a.m., 5th July 2022.

8. Any Other Business

No items were raised under this heading.

The meeting was brought to a close.

Agenda Item No:	Subject	Action
1.	Minutes & actions of previous meeting.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agreed and will be published on the website.
2.	Work Programme – Chair.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Several local authorities will be invited to a one day Stage 2 scrutiny meeting.
3.	Work Programme – LG Governance, Efficiency and Reform Working Group.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The NOAC Chair may be requested by the WG to follow up with the Minister’s Office on the letter regarding the Monitoring Reports of Regional Assemblies.
4.	Work Programme – Financial Management and Performance Working Group.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Members may revert with suggested topics for audit committee event and revert on availability for 31st August.
5.	NOAC attendance at the JOC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A link to the debate will be forwarded to the Board.
6.	Work Update on the Work Planning Day on 4th May	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Secretariat will revert to Dr Stafford with suggested amendments to his report of the event.