

**National Oversight and Audit Commission (NOAC)**  
**Minutes of the Meeting –Tuesday 23 June 2020 at 10:00 am**

Venue: Remote Meeting via WebEx Meeting Platform

Attended by:

Chairperson: Michael McCarthy

Members:	Sharon O'Connor	Martina Moloney
	Constance Hanniffy	Tara Buckley
	Michael McGreal	David Holohan

Secretariat:	John F McCarthy	Claire Gavin
	Neill Dalton	Colin Flood
	John Goldrick	Darren Browne

Apologies: Barry Quinlan

**1. Minutes & actions of previous meeting;**

The minutes of the last main meeting held on 19 May 2020 were agreed.

**2. Declaration of any conflict of interest;**

There were no conflicts of interests.

**3. Matters arising;**

No matters arising.

**4. NOAC Membership;**

The Chair and members expressed their thanks and gratitude to Tara Buckley for her contribution to NOAC in light of her current term expiring at the end of June. Tara Buckley thanked the members and expressed her delight in the progress of the Local Authority Satisfaction Survey.

The secretariat updated the members on matters relating to terms and the Public Appointments Service.

**5. Work Programme:**

**a) WG1 – Local Government Governance, Efficiency & Reform (LGGER);**

A WG meeting was held on 13<sup>th</sup> May that discussed the actions in the work programme.

On Corporate Plans, the secretariat has started to receive completed cover letters and completed reviews for the 2015-2019 period. For the 2020 to 2024 period the Secretariat has been monitoring the submitted plans to date and engaged with stakeholders to develop an approach to review the new plans. This approach will be set out for agreement by the WG in the first incidence.

On Regional Assemblies, a draft scoping note has been prepared for circulation to WG members. The next WG meeting is planned for July 13,2020

**b) WG2 – Performance Indicators (PI);**

A WG meeting was held on 3<sup>rd</sup> June at which a meeting was held with Seán Ó'Riordáin and Associates. At the meeting a workshop was agreed to be held following the main NOAC meeting on 23 June (today). This will include the WG2 Members, representatives of the CCMA, secretariat and LGMA and Seán Ó'Riordáin and Associates. It is expected the work to develop 'Economic Indicators' will take approximately 2 months.

A review was carried out on the relevant actions from the multi Annual work program for which an agreed approach has been agreed for each.

**c) WG3 – Communications and Customer Service**

The Local Authority Satisfaction Survey 2020 and the associated infographics have been circulated to the members. The members will consider the infographics and will return to the secretariat with any suggestions.

The members discussed the potential future of the survey with previous discussions having occurred regarding the LGMA possibly taking future control. The members agreed to have NOAC continue to organise the survey thus ensuring the same commitment and independence levels.

The members discussed the possibility using the report to help measure 'value for money' of local authorities and how often the survey should be carried out in the future. The issue of 'deep dive' surveys was also discussed. Expert advice may be sought with one option to survey small, medium and large local authorities every year with a final survey report every 3 years. Using a 'qualitative' data approach with those local authorities with higher engagement with citizens may provide an option to assess 'value for money'.

The members discussed the PR approach for the survey report release. They expressed their desire to ensure an experienced service provider was engaged. The members agreed to publish the report in a co-ordinated manner once a new Minister was appointed and with the PR work and the new NOAC Logo and website which is nearly complete. The secretariat will discuss dates with the appointed PR company, will look at the use of videos and radio interviews and will return to the members. The secretariat will draft correspondence to the Minister with regards to the survey and the plan for the survey in general going forward.

**d) WG4 – Financial Management and Performance;**

The secretariat confirmed it is looking at ways to advance the work on the MyPay payroll Shared Service review particularly as activity had commenced on the report.

Contact has been made by the Local Government Audit Service regarding VFM suggestions. It was suggested that representatives of the LGAS could be invited to a future meeting of NOAC to discuss their reports and future plans. The members suggested it would be useful to acquire the LGAS work plan. Topics raised in the Local Authority Satisfaction survey could help inform which areas to examine.

**e) CHAIR;**

The secretariat will examine how to continue this year's local authority Scrutiny visit program. In addition, following scrutiny visits, representatives of local authorities will likely be required to attend the remaining NOAC meetings this year. The use of technology in carrying out these meetings was discussed and the members agreed that it is not to be a barrier to them occurring. It was suggested

that meetings could occur at venues large enough to maintain social distancing as some larger local authorities have carried out meetings off-campus.

A progress report is being prepared covering all the Local Authority scrutiny visits to date. The draft note will also look at reporting options and will be circulated to the members for the next meeting.

The current draft of the Annual Report is with the desktop publisher who are also adding the new NOAC branding. Martina Moloney suggested a few amendments to the report and will be in contact with the secretariat. The secretariat will recirculate the text of the report by email over the next few days for approval. The members suggested that the report highlights the need for photos of NOAC events to be taken in future.

**6. Update on engagements and meetings with other bodies/organisations;**

- The secretariat is engaging again with Audit Scotland to look at the work, practices and resourcing of other bodies similar to NOAC to as to produce an advice note for consideration by the members.
- The secretariat will also contact the Local Government Management Agency (LGMA) and the Local Government Audit Service (LGAS) with regards attendance at future NOAC meetings.

**7. Future Meetings;**

The members agreed to hold the next NOAC meeting on 10am, 21 July.

**8. Any Other Business;**

- Ahead of the today's meeting with Clare County Council, the members and secretariat discussed a discrepancy between the figures NOAC and the council report for performance indicator E4 "Green Flag Status". This will be raised in today's meeting.
- The members discussed the new program for government.

**Meeting was brought to a close**

<b>Agenda Item No:</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Decision</b>
5(c).	Local Authority Satisfaction Survey 2020 and the associated infographics.	The members will consider the infographics and will return to the secretariat with any suggestions.
5(c).	PR approach for the survey report release.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Members emphasised the importance to engage an appropriately experienced PR company.</li> <li>• Publish the report in co-ordination with the PR work and when the new NOAC website has been completed.</li> <li>• The secretariat will discuss dates with PR companies and will revert to the members.</li> <li>• The secretariat will draft correspondence to the Minister with regards to the survey and the plan for NOAC in general going forward.</li> </ul>
5(e).	NOAC Annual Report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The secretariat will recirculate the text of the report by email over the next few days for approval.</li> <li>• Future NOAC events to have photos taken.</li> </ul>
6.	Engagement with other bodies/organisations	The secretariat will seek to engage with Audit Scotland to look at the work, practices and resourcing of other bodies similar to NOAC to as to produce an advice note for consideration by the members.
7.	Next Meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The members agreed to hold the next NOAC meeting on 10am, 21 July.</li> <li>• The secretariat will look at the possibility of hosting the meeting in person.</li> </ul>