

Your Ref: PAC32-I-1102

15 October 2018

Ms. Margaret Falsey
Committee Secretariat
Committee of Public Accounts
Leinster House
Dublin 2

Dear Ms Falsey

Re: Publication of Post Project Reviews

I refer to your letter of 11 October seeking an update on implementation of DPER Circular 06/2018 on the Public Spending Code: Publication of Post Project Reviews.

As you know, Circular 06/2018 issued to all Departments on 26 March 2018, delivering on a commitment given to the Committee at the meeting of 22 March in relation to the recommendation that all Post Project Reviews of PPPs should be published.

The Circular reminded Departments of the obligation under the Public Spending Code to conduct Post Project Reviews in respect of all major investment projects undertaken, including PPPs. The Circular also advised Departments that the requirements in relation to Post Project Reviews in the Public Spending Code, and in PPP Guidance, were being reviewed and that the updated guidance, when published, would, inter alia, include a requirement that in future all post project reviews should be published (subject to redaction of any commercially sensitive information) at the earliest possible opportunity. This applied to both PPPs and traditionally procured projects.

However, in advance of completion and publication of the updated Public Spending Code and PPP Guidance, the Circular 06/2018 notified Departments that this policy on publication of Post Project Reviews for all public investment projects was being implemented with immediate effect. Accordingly, any post project reviews undertaken from the date of the circular are now required to be published at the earliest possible opportunity, following completion.

Furthermore, the Circular indicated that in the case of PPPs, this requirement to publish Post Project Reviews was being introduced with retrospective effect, and accordingly any existing Post Project Reviews already undertaken in respect of PPP projects were to be published as soon as possible.

The requirement to publish Post Project Reviews has therefore now been in force since the issue of DPER Circular 06/2018 on 26 March. TII published all of its completed Post Project Reviews of its PPP projects in July (which I understand were also sent directly to the PAC in advance of publication), while the completed Post Project Review of the Dublin Criminal

Courts Complex had already previously been published. The Department of Education is currently undertaking its Post Project Review of the Pilot Schools bundle, which I understand is due to be completed in 2019. An important output of the Pilot Schools Review will be a methodology for use by that Department in other (mid-term) Post Project Reviews of PPPs in the education sector.

In terms of the Review of the Public Spending Code, work is progressing within my Department on this task – which is now a key priority for the new Investment Projects and Programmes Office established within DPER as part of the new arrangements introduced to oversee implementation of Project Ireland 2040 and also the recommendations of the IMF's PIMA study undertaken in 2017. When completed, the updated Public Spending Code will include the requirement to publish Post Project Reviews – which, as outlined above, is already required under DPER Circular 06/2018.

In relation to updating the guidance on PPPs, my Department recently (1st October) circulated a draft of the Department's proposed updated PPP guidance to the members of the Inter-Departmental PPP Steering Group for consideration and observations. This updated guidance is required to reflect developments and policy changes since the current guidance was issued in 2006, including changes in Ministerial responsibilities, the publication of the Public Spending Code (in 2013) and the new Procurement Directives, and most lately the findings of the IMF's PIMA Study and 2017 PPP Review, and the new approach to PPPs as published in the National Development Plan 2018-2027. It is hoped to finalise this updated PPP guidance for issue by the end of 2018.

I hope the above update will be of assistance to the Committee.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Robert Watt". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Robert Watt
Secretary General