

Public Accounts Committee Briefing Note

Fisheries Harbour Centres

Background

- The Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine owns, operates and maintains six designated State-owned Fishery Harbour Centres, located at Castletownbere, Dingle, Dunmore East, Howth, Killybegs and Ros An Mhíl under statute. The Fishery Harbour Centres are strategically important infrastructure which underpins Government Strategy to further develop a modern offshore Irish fishing fleet, attract the large offshore fishing vessels of other Member States to increasingly land into our Fishery Harbour Centres and drive the development of a modern on shore processing industry.
- The utilisation of the Fishery Harbour Centres' facilities for its primary function of underpinning the fisheries and sector has increased substantially in recent years. **Around 88% of all fish landed into Ireland is now landed at the six Centres.**
- Approx €96m has been invested in capital works at the Fishery Harbour Centres between 2010 and 2018.
- Valued by the Valuation Office at €647m at the end of 2014, the Fishery Harbour Centres require ongoing funds for safety and maintenance, with further investment required to continue to develop the strategic infrastructure to international best standards, providing opportunities for further economic opportunities for coastal communities.
- A valuation of the Department's property assets at the 6 Fishery Harbour Centres has been provided to the Department by the Valuation Office. A new valuation exercise to provide an updated valuation for 2019 is underway by the Valuation Office and is expected to be completed in the coming months

Income and Expenditure of the Fishery Harbour Centres 2012-2018

Income							
INCOME	*2018 (Receipts)	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012
	€	€	€	€	€	€	€
Harbour Dues	4,622,117	4,480,770	4,351,460	4,564,258	4,467,724	3,998,564	3,766,593
Rents	1,126,613	1,083,543	977,743	948,760	1,002,722	1,001,181	997,111
Sundry Receipts	72,519	95,471	108,058	139,489	130,064	197,280	193,833
Sale of Assets	1,400	337,334		2,350		5,800	1,060
Sale of Properties							
TOTAL €	5,822,649	5,997,118	5,437,261	5,654,857	5,600,510	5,202,825	4,958,597

Expenditure

Expenditure	* 2018 (Payments)	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012
	€	€	€	€	€	€	€
Salaries & Wages	2,634,011	2,532,312	2,487,641	2,335,375	2,450,898	1,570,621	1,569,598
Light, Heat & Power	507,928	514,180	474,326	506,089	441,994	460,077	438,987
Maintenance	946,395	1,071,499	830,956	900,415	623,296	635,613	645,729
Telephone	19,967	20,649	18,490	19,879	21,096	21,815	28,920
Water Rates	235,350	147,511	250,249	216,639	319,455	293,485	255,047
Provision for costs & damages					-	-	-
Sundry Expenses	87,181	101,159	239,914	43,276	17,873	52,890	79,626
Bad Debt Expense		722,620	235,777	1,687,981	22,466	53,026	-
Bad Debt Provision		(637,861)	43,999	(1,524,293)	157,537	95,956	(136,695)
TOTAL €	4,430,832	4,472,069	4,581,352	4,185,776	4,054,615	3,183,483	2,881,212

Surplus/(Deficit)	1,391,817	1,525,049	855,909	1,469,081	1,545,895	2,019,342	2,077,385
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*Figures for 2018 are Receipts and Payments

Fishery Harbour Centres Fund

All income generated in the FHCs is lodged to the Fishery Harbour Centres Fund, which was established under the Fishery Harbour Centres Act, 1968. Each of the six Harbours generates its own income as set out in the FHC financial statements. All outlays in relation to the operation and management of the Fishery Harbour Centres are paid out of this Fund. (Funding for significant Capital Expenditure is provided by the Exchequer in the form of the Annual Fishery Harbour and Coastal Infrastructure Capital Programme).

Debt

Table 2 details the level of total debt from 2013-2018.

Table 2

Year	Debt at 31 st Dec
2013	5,528,695
2014	5,550,499
2015	3,669,732
2016	3,373,525
2017	2,575,841
2018	*2,203,195

- *Estimated and unaudited.

The particularly significant reduction in debt levels shown in 2015 is partially due to the 'voiding' by the Supreme Court of the Island Ferries debt. This involved a disputed passenger charge and a sum of approx €1.6 million.

Fishery Harbour Centre Property

There are 234 properties/sites in the Fishery Harbour Centre (FHC) property portfolio. This portfolio contains a diverse range of properties reflecting the FHCs' role as working fishery harbours and as the location for a broad range of other marine activities.

The majority of FHC properties are leased by the Department (DAFM) to a variety of public and private sector tenants which support this range of activities, which is vital economically and socially, to the remote and coastal communities the FHCs serve.

The Department works closely with the Chief State Solicitor's Office to increase the legal capacity resource for progressing the often complex and protracted legal aspects relating to outstanding property cases. A solicitor is employed by the CSSO at the Department's request to deal solely with the property portfolio, the cost of which is being met from the Department's Fishery Harbour Centre Fund.

The Department is continuing to develop its property management function and is part of an OPW led public service-wide initiative relating to Property Asset Management.