To: Mr Pat Fannin,

Committee of Public Accounts,

Leinster House,

Dublin 2.

PAC – An Bord Pleanala - 3 October 2019

28 November 2019

Dear Mr Fannin,

I refer to my appearance before the Public Accounts Committee with An Bord Pleanala regarding the Board’s 2018 Financial Statements on 3 October last.

At the hearing, the issue of gender equality was raised by Deputy Kate O’Connell in relation to the appointment of Board Members to the Board of An Bord Pleanala. In response to her questions on the matter, I undertook to provide a breakdown of the numbers of male and female nominations received for the various Board vacancies that have arisen since 2017.

In this connection, I wish to advise that there have been 7 new Board members appointed to fill Board vacancies in the period since 2017. In total, 60 nominations were received from the prescribed nominating bodies to fill the vacancies concerned. Of these, 37 were in respect of male nominees with 23 being in respect of female nominees. The appointment processes to fill these 7 vacancies resulted in the appointment of 4 male and 3 female Board members by the Minister. The composition of the Board is now broken down into 7 males and 3 females, as against the pre-2017 position where there were 9 male Board members with 1 female, the former Chairperson of the Board.

The recent increase in the number of female Board members reflects the importance attached to gender equality in the appointment of Board members which it is intended will be continued in the future. However this is also somewhat dependent on both the number and quality of female nominations received whenever vacancies arise.
It should also be mentioned in this context that when seeking nominations, the Department specifically reminds the nominating bodies that in the selection of nominees, it is important to be aware of Government policy on gender equality policy for appointments to the Boards of State bodies which requires that there should be a minimum 40% of each gender represented on relevant Boards.

The delay in following up and providing the requested information is regretted.

Yours sincerely,

[Terry Sherridan's signature]

Terry Sherridan,

Principal,

Planning Policy and Legislation.