



Tithe an
Oireachtais
Houses of the
Oireachtas

TITHE AN OIREACHTAIS

**AN COMHCHOISTE UM THITHÍOCHT, PLEANÁIL AGUS
RIALTAS ÁITIÚIL**

Clár Oibre

Eanáir - Nollaig 2019

HOUSES OF THE OIREACHTAS

**JOINT COMMITTEE ON HOUSING, PLANNING & LOCAL
GOVERNMENT**

Work Programme

January - December 2019

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Joint Committee on Housing, Planning & Local Government

Work Programme January-December 2019

1. INTRODUCTION

The Joint Committee on Housing, Planning & Local Government was established following Orders of Dáil Éireann on 16 June 2016 and of Seanad Éireann on 20 July 2016. Standing Orders 89(4) (Dáil Éireann) and Seanad Éireann 76(4) require that “as soon as may be following its appointment and thereafter at annual intervals, each Committee shall prepare a work programme and shall lay such programme before [Dáil/Seanad] Éireann”.

2. SELECT COMMITTEE

The Dáil Select Committee was established by Order of Dáil Éireann of the 16 June 2016, to consider Bills, Estimates for Public Services, Motions and any other business which relates to the Housing, Planning & Local Government. The Select Committee may also consider Annual Output Statements, Value for Money Reviews and Policy Reviews prepared by the relevant Government Department.

(a) Legislation (Bills)[See 3 (c) also]

The Select Committee will consider any Bills referred to it by Dáil Éireann, relevant to the Department of Housing, Planning & Local Government during the period covered by this Work Programme.

(b) Estimates and other Financial Matters

Select Committees are tasked with consideration of annual Estimates for Public Services that fall within their remit. The Estimates are Ministers’ spending plans for the coming financial year. When the Estimates are referred to Select Committee for consideration, the Committee has a valuable opportunity to question the Minister for Housing, Planning & Local Government about financial allocations and associated output targets for the coming year.

Note: The Select Committee is required to **consider** the estimates but is **not** empowered to amend them.

The Estimates which the Select Committee on Housing, Planning & Local Government must deal with in 2019 are: Estimates for Public Services 2019; Vote 16 – Valuation Office Vote; Vote 23 – Property Registration Authority; and, Vote 34 - Housing, Planning, & Local Government.

A Supplementary Estimate may be considered in December if additional monies are required by the relevant Government Department.

As part of the introduction of a new system in which the Estimates have been presented under the Comprehensive Expenditure Review Report published in November 2011, it is the Committee's intention to focus on –

- what the Department has committed to achieving
- how moneys are allocated between services and
- in addition to explore the policy issues underpinning the various spending provisions as well as to consider these matters as fully as possible.

The proposed approach presents Departmental Estimates on a Strategic Programme basis, consistent with the presentation of the respective Annual Output Statements and Statements of Strategy. These Estimates have been supplemented with certain performance information regarding the outputs and impacts of Programme expenditure.

In addition, the examination of the Annual Output Statements (AOS) and Value for Money (VFM) Reviews is another important part of scrutinising Government expenditure.

(c) Referrals of Motions and Other Matters

From time to time, matters may arise and may be referred to the Select Committee by the Dáil. It is not possible to say in advance what those matters might be or when they might arise.

3. JOINT COMMITTEE

The duties of the Joint Committee are discharged in two ways (1) there will be items of business referred to it by one or both Houses and (2) it can select business for consideration itself, from the areas within its terms of reference. In practice, the Joint Committee's core work will comprise the examination of EU business, key policy and governance priorities and pre-legislative scrutiny.

(a) EU business

Scrutiny of EU Legislative Proposals

The scrutiny of draft EU legislative proposals will continue to be a standing agenda item of the Joint Committee. Draft proposals will be brought to the attention of the Joint Committee in line with the 2013 mainstreaming model as agreed by the Working Group of Committee Chairs (WGCC) by setting out priority (Schedule A) and non-priority (Schedule B) items. The Joint Committee will consider all proposals as they arise during the period covered by this Work Programme.

Engagement with Ministers

Irish Ministers attend Council meetings in their relevant policy areas, and it is intended that the Joint Committee will engage with the Minister for Housing, Planning & Local Government [or relevant Minister of State] in advance of and following his attendance at Environment Council meetings.

Engagement on the Statutory Departmental Scrutiny Report

There is a requirement under Section 2(5) of the European Union (Scrutiny) Act 2002 for Ministers to report twice yearly to both Houses on the measures, proposed measures and

other developments in relation to the European Communities and the European Union in relation to which he/she performs functions. The Joint Committee intends to consider these reports with the Secretary-General of the Department.

Engagement with European Bodies

The Committee will continue to further its engagement with European bodies such as the EU Commission and the EU Parliament and its committees during 2019, including delegation visits where appropriate.

(b) Key policy priorities

The Joint Committee is empowered to consider such other policy issues as it may select within its terms of reference. In the period January to December 2019, in addition to core business such as legislation etc., it should be possible to focus on one or two major topics within the remit of the Department, with the aim of producing a report to the Houses.

The following is a list of some of the key policy issues the Joint Committee may wish to select from to focus on in the period covered by this work programme: -

1. Engagement on Rebuilding Ireland - Action Plan on Housing & Homelessness
2. Engagement with Local Authorities
3. Engagement on Water Services
4. The Provision of Traveller Accommodation
5. Reclassification and future output of Approved Housing Bodies
6. Housing Management Agencies
7. Child and Family Homelessness
8. Housing First
9. Review of all Current Expenditure on Social Housing
10. Serviced Site Fund
11. Engagement with An Bord Pleanála
12. Marine Spatial Planning
13. Energy Efficient Housing
14. Cost Rental Housing
15. Consideration of the DPER/IGEES Report; Analysis of Current Expenditure on Housing Supports
16. Consideration of the ESRI Report; Exploring Affordability in the Irish Housing Market
17. Consideration of the IBEC Report; Better Planning: reforms for sustainable development
18. Engagement with the National Emergency Coordination Group
19. Consideration of the National Planning Framework

The Joint Committee has agreed to prioritise the following items for consideration until the Summer Recess with the aim of producing a report to the Houses –

1. **Electoral and Referendum Reform** – The Committee will seek to examine the current election processes including the responsibility of local authorities, regulations regarding political donations and the potential for outside interference in elections.

2. **Examining the Process of Purchasing and Renting a Home in Ireland** – The Committee will seek to examine the logistical and administrative challenges that people face when viewing and bidding on property and the possible improvements that could be made in this area.
3. **Implementation and incentivising the development of homes for older people** - The Committee will seek to examine any restrictions relating to the development of homes for older people and seek to propose possible improvements in this area.
4. **Affordable Housing** - The Committee will seek to examine the topic of Affordable Housing with a view to highlighting any possible improvements that could be made in this area.

Issues not considered by the end of 2019 can be brought forward for consideration as part of the Work Programme for 2020.

Engagement with Department

The Joint Committee will engage with the Department of Housing, Planning & Local Government on a regular basis (most likely quarterly) regarding progress relating to the Rebuilding Ireland - Action Plan for Housing and Homelessness (No.1).

(c) Pre Legislative Consideration

The Government Legislative Programme makes provision for the publication of a number of Bills. In accordance with Standing Order 146A Ministers are now required, save in exceptional circumstances and with the permission of the Business Committee, to bring the general scheme or draft heads of a Bill to a Joint Committee for consideration. Committees are empowered to consider the draft heads of Bills but can decide in relation to a particular Bill that such consideration is not necessary. The Committee will examine all referrals by the Minister for Housing, Planning & Local Government on a case by case basis and will carry out pre-legislative scrutiny on all Bills where it deems it necessary.

(d) Post-enactment Consideration

In accordance with Standing Order 164A, twelve months following the enactment of a Bill, save in the case of the Finance Bill and the Appropriation Bill, the member of the Government or Minister of State who is officially responsible for implementation of the Act shall provide a report which shall review the functioning of the Act and which shall be laid in the Parliamentary Library. The Committee is empowered to require the Minister/Minister of State to attend before the Committee in relation to the consideration of the report [Standing Order 85(6C)].

(e) Chairpersons Designate of State Boards

In accordance with Standing Order 85 (6B) the Joint Committee is empowered to engage with the Chairpersons Designate of a body or agency under the aegis of the Department of Housing, Planning & Local Government prior to their appointment to discuss their strategic

priorities for the role. It is an opportunity for Chairpersons Designate to discuss with the Committee the approach they will take as Chairperson and to give their views as to what contribution they can make to the agency or body to which they are proposed to be appointed. The Joint Committee will meet with the Chairpersons designate as the nominations arise during the year.

(f) Travel

In accordance with Standing Order 85(9) the Joint Committee may decide, subject to financial, administrative and procedural constraints, to undertake travel as it considers necessary to further progress the Work Programme. Such travel may include attendance at conferences or meetings, or study visits related to issues within its remit. The Working Group of Committee Chairs will make recommendations in relation to apportionment of moneys available for travel subject to the consent of the Houses of the Oireachtas Commission [DSO108].

(g) Number and Frequency of Meetings

It is anticipated that the Committee will meet on a weekly basis.

4. AGREEMENT OF WORK PROGRAMME

This Work Programme of the Joint Committee on Housing, Planning & Local Government for 2019 was agreed by the Committee at its meeting on 17th January. In accordance with the Standing Orders of Dáil Éireann and Seanad Éireann, it was agreed that the Work Programme be laid before both Houses of the Oireachtas.



Maria Bailey TD
Chair
24 January 2019

APPENDIX 1: ORDERS OF REFERENCE

a. Functions of the Committee – derived from Standing Orders [DSO 84A; SSO 70A]

(1) The Select Committee shall consider and report to the Dáil on—

(a) such aspects of the expenditure, administration and policy of a Government Department or Departments and associated public bodies as the Committee may select, and

(b) European Union matters within the remit of the relevant Department or Departments.

(2) The Select Committee appointed pursuant to this Standing Order may be joined with a Select Committee appointed by Seanad Éireann for the purposes of the functions set out in this Standing Order, other than at paragraph (3), and to report thereon to both Houses of the Oireachtas.

(3) Without prejudice to the generality of paragraph (1), the Select Committee appointed pursuant to this Standing Order shall consider, in respect of the relevant Department or Departments, such—

(a) Bills,

(b) proposals contained in any motion, including any motion within the meaning of Standing Order 187,

(c) Estimates for Public Services, and

(d) other matters

as shall be referred to the Select Committee by the Dáil, and

(e) Annual Output Statements including performance, efficiency and effectiveness in the use of public monies, and

(f) such Value for Money and Policy Reviews as the Select Committee may select.

(4) The Joint Committee may consider the following matters in respect of the relevant Department or Departments and associated public bodies:

(a) matters of policy and governance for which the Minister is officially responsible,

(b) public affairs administered by the Department,

(c) policy issues arising from Value for Money and Policy Reviews conducted or commissioned by the Department,

(d) Government policy and governance in respect of bodies under the aegis of the Department,

(e) policy and governance issues concerning bodies which are partly or wholly funded by the State or which are established or appointed by a member of the Government or the Oireachtas,

(f) the general scheme or draft heads of any Bill,

(g) any post-enactment report laid before either House or both Houses by a member of the Government or Minister of State on any Bill enacted by the Houses of the Oireachtas,

- (h) statutory instruments, including those laid or laid in draft before either House or both Houses and those made under the European Communities Acts 1972 to 2009,
 - (i) strategy statements laid before either or both Houses of the Oireachtas pursuant to the Public Service Management Act 1997,
 - (j) annual reports or annual reports and accounts, required by law, and laid before either or both Houses of the Oireachtas, of the Department or bodies referred to in subparagraphs (d) and (e) and the overall performance and operational results, statements of strategy and corporate plans of such bodies, and
 - (k) such other matters as may be referred to it by the Dáil from time to time.
- (5) Without prejudice to the generality of paragraph (1), the Joint Committee appointed pursuant to this Standing Order shall consider, in respect of the relevant Department or Departments—
- (a) EU draft legislative acts standing referred to the Select Committee under Standing Order 114, including the compliance of such acts with the principle of subsidiarity,
 - (b) other proposals for EU legislation and related policy issues, including programmes and guidelines prepared by the European Commission as a basis of possible legislative action,
 - (c) non-legislative documents published by any EU institution in relation to EU policy matters, and
 - (d) matters listed for consideration on the agenda for meetings of the relevant EU Council of Ministers and the outcome of such meetings.
- (6) The Chairman of the Joint Committee appointed pursuant to this Standing Order, who shall be a member of Dáil Éireann, shall also be the Chairman of the Select Committee.
- (7) The following may attend meetings of the Select or Joint Committee appointed pursuant to this Standing Order, for the purposes of the functions set out in paragraph (5) and may take part in proceedings without having a right to vote or to move motions and amendments:
- (a) Members of the European Parliament elected from constituencies in Ireland, including Northern Ireland,
 - (b) Members of the Irish delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, and
 - (c) at the invitation of the Committee, other Members of the European Parliament.

b. Scope and Context of Activities of Committees (as derived from Standing Orders) [DSO 84; SSO 70]

- (1) The Joint Committee may only consider such matters, engage in such activities, exercise such powers and discharge such functions as are specifically authorised under its orders of reference and under Standing Orders.
- (2) Such matters, activities, powers and functions shall be relevant to, and shall arise only in the context of, the preparation of a report to the Dáil and/or Seanad.
- (3) The Joint Committee shall not consider any matter which is being considered, or of which notice has been given of a proposal to consider, by the Committee of Public Accounts pursuant to Standing Order 186 and/or the Comptroller and Auditor General (Amendment) Act 1993.
- (4) The Joint Committee shall refrain from inquiring into in public session or publishing confidential information regarding any matter if so requested, for stated reasons given in writing, by—
 - (a) a member of the Government or a Minister of State, or
 - (b) the principal office-holder of a body under the aegis of a Department or which is partly or wholly funded by the State or established or appointed by a member of the Government or by the Oireachtas:

Provided that the Chairman may appeal any such request made to the Ceann Comhairle / Cathaoirleach whose decision shall be final.

- (5) It shall be an instruction to all Select Committees to which Bills are referred that they shall ensure that not more than two Select Committees shall meet to consider a Bill on any given day, unless the Dáil, after due notice given by the Chairman of the Select Committee, waives this instruction on motion made by the Taoiseach pursuant to Dáil Standing Order 28. The Chairmen of Select Committees shall have responsibility for compliance with this instruction.

APPENDIX 2: Membership

Deputies: Maria Bailey – Chair (FG)
Pat Casey – Vice - Chair (FF)
Mick D. Barry (Solidarity-PBP)
Barry Cowen (FF)
Mattie McGrath (IND) – Rural Independent Technical Group
Eoin O Broin (SF)
Fergus O'Dowd (FG)

Senators: Victor Boyhan (IND)
Martin Conway (FG)
Jennifer Murnane O'Connor (FF)
Grace O'Sullivan (GP)

Notes:

1. Deputies nominated by the Dáil Committee of Selection and appointed by Order of the Dáil of 16 June 2016.
2. Senators nominated by the Seanad Committee of Selection and appointed by Order of the Seanad on 21 July 2016.
3. Pat Casey Elected Vice Chair on 24 May 2017