

**PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE**  
**MINUTES OF MEETING OF THURSDAY, 14 JANUARY 2021**

The Committee met in **Private** Session at 11:32 a.m. (online remotely), a quorum being present.

The following Members were present:

**Deputies:** Brian Stanley (Chairman); Colm Burke; Jennifer Carroll MacNeill; Matt Carthy; Cormac Devlin; Alan Dillon; Imelda Munster; Catherine Murphy; Verona Murphy; Seán Sherlock.

**Permanent**

**Witness:** Comptroller and Auditor General, Mr. Seamus McCarthy.

**Apologies:** Paul McAuliffe; Marc MacSharry.

**1. Minutes**

The minutes of the meetings on 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> of December were agreed.

**2. Business of the Committee**

**2.1 Private Correspondence dealt with:**

<b>Ref No.</b>	<b>Details</b>	<b>Decision</b>
R0259 PAC33	Correspondence dated 10/12/2020.	It was agreed that the correspondence was not within the remit of the Committee, to demote it, and inform the correspondent accordingly.

**2.2 Draft Report re Nursing Homes Support Scheme (Fair Deal)**

Following the publication of excerpts of the draft report in the media, the Chairman highlighted the fact that the draft report is a confidential document of the Committee which should only be shared with Members' parliamentary assistants.

The Committee considered the draft report and agreed to incorporate amendments and review the amended draft at the next engagement of the Committee.

Subject to that review, it was agreed that the final report will be laid in the Library, brought to the attention of the House, and included in the lottery for consideration on alternate Thursdays under Standing Order 102(2). It was also agreed to publish the final report on the website and circulate it to media outlets.

### 3. Financial Statements & Accounts Received

Ref	Body/main purpose	Accounting period/ turnover	Date certified	Date laid	Audit opinion/notes
1	<b>Health Research Board</b>	2019 €39 million	29 Oct 2020	8 Dec 2020	Qualified audit opinion  Accounts give a true and fair view, except that they account for costs of retirement benefit entitlements only as they become payable (standard for many health bodies)
2	<b>Environmental Protection Agency</b>	2019 €78 million	30 Jun 2020	9 Dec 2020	Clear audit opinion
3	<b>St. James's Hospital</b>	2019 €488 million	24 Nov 2020	10 Dec 2020	Clear audit opinion  Attention is drawn to significant non-compliant procurement
4	<b>Ireland-United States Educational Fund</b>	2019 €7,400	10 Dec 2020	14 Dec 2020	Clear audit opinion
5	<b>State Property (Miscellaneous Deposits) Account</b>	2019 €14.6 million	10 Dec 2020	14 Dec 2020	Clear audit opinion
6	<b>Donegal Education and Training Board</b>	2019 €76 million	30 Sep 2020	14 Dec 2020	Clear audit opinion  Attention is drawn to significant non-compliant procurement
7	<b>Arts Council of Ireland</b>	2019 €77 million	29 Jun 2020	15 Dec 2020	Clear audit opinion

The Accounts and Statements were noted.

It was agreed the Secretariat would continue its practice of following up with organisations in relation to non-compliant procurement and the late submission of accounts.

### 4. Work Programme

In light of the very high number of COVID-19 cases, it was agreed - subject to the outcome of the Business Committee meeting on 14 January 2020 - to defer the Committee's engagements for the month of January.

The Committee also agreed to a request from the HSE to defer meetings scheduled for 3 and 4 February 2021 until the Covid-19 situation stabilises.

## 5. Correspondence

It was agreed to defer consideration of correspondence flagged for discussion until the next meeting. It was also agreed that Members advise the Clerk which items of correspondence they would like to hold over for consideration in public session.

## 6. Any other business

It was agreed to write to the Acting Secretary General of the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform regarding the sanctioned increase in remuneration for the Secretary General of the Department of Health.

The Committee adjourned at 1:50 p.m. until 21 January 2021.



Brian Stanley, T.D.  
Chairman  
21 January 2021