

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE
MINUTES OF MEETING OF THURSDAY, 26 MAY 2022

The Committee met in **Public** Session at 09.31 a.m., a quorum being present.

The following Members were present:

Deputies: Brian Stanley (Cathaoirleach), Colm Burke, Jennifer Carroll MacNeill, Cormac Devlin, Alan Dillon, Paul McAuliffe, Imelda Munster, Catherine Murphy (Leas-Chathaoirleach), Verona Murphy.

Apologies: Deputies Matt Carthy and Séan Sherlock.

Permanent

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

1. Witnesses Examined

Department of Health

- Mr. Robert Watt, Secretary General
- Mr. Kevin Coleman, Principal Officer
- Mr. John O’Grady, Principal Officer
- Ms Fiona Larthwell, Principal Officer
- Mr. Seamus Hempenstall, Principal Officer

Health Service Executive

- Mr. Paul Reid, Chief Executive Officer
- Ms Anne O’Connor, Chief Operations Officer
- Mr. Stephen Mulvany, Chief Financial Officer
- Mr. Liam Woods, National Director, Acute Operations
- Ms Mairead Dolan, Assistant Chief Financial Officer
- Ms Anne Marie Hoey, National Director, Human Resources

Department of Public Expenditure and Reform

- Mr. Daniel O’Callaghan, Principal Officer
- Mr. Eoin Dormer, Principal Officer

Matters for discussion

- **Appropriation Account 2020**
 - Vote 34 – Health (resumed)
- **Financial Statements 2020**
 - HSE (resumed)

The Committee suspended at 11.06.

The Committee resumed in **Public** Session at 11.16.

It was agreed that the Clerk would request any follow-up information and carry out any agreed actions arising from the meeting. It was also agreed to note and publish the opening statement and briefing documents provided to the Committee for the meeting.

The Committee suspended at 12.38.

The Committee resumed in **Private** Session at 13.36.

2. Private Session

| Sensitive correspondence | | Decision |
|--------------------------|--|---|
| R1245 PAC33 | Correspondence from an individual, dated 13 May 2022. | Note. It was agreed to advise the correspondent of the Committee's decision. |
| R1249 PAC33 | Correspondence from Kerstin Mey, President, University of Limerick, dated 14 May 2022. | Note. |

It was agreed to request the National Paediatric Hospital Development Board (NPHDB) to provide information in relation to contractual provisions and claims in respect of the National Paediatric Hospital in advance of the Committee's meeting with NPHDB on 16 June 2022.

In relation to the forthcoming meeting with the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage, it was agreed to request responses to a number of questions in advance of the Committee's meeting with the Department on 23 June 2022.

The Committee went into **Public** session at 14.28.

3. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 19 May 2022 were agreed.

4. Financial Statements and Accounts

There were no financial statements and accounts laid before the Dáil between 16 and 20 May 2022.

5. Correspondence

| Correspondence received | | |
|--|--|---|
| A – Briefing Documents and Opening Statements | | Decision |
| R1254 PAC33 | Correspondence received from Mr. Paul Reid, Chief Executive Officer, HSE, dated 20/05/2022 | Note and publish. |
| R1260 PAC33 | Correspondence received from Mr. Robert Watt, Secretary General, Department of Health, dated 24/05/2022 | Note and publish. |
| R1262 PAC33 | Correspondence received from Mr. Robert Watt, Secretary General, Department of Health, dated 24/05/2022 | Note and publish. |
| R1264 PAC33 | Correspondence received from Mr. Paul Reid, Chief Executive Officer, HSE, dated 24/05/2022 | Note and publish. |
| R1265 PAC33 | Correspondence received from Mr. Paul Reid, Chief Executive Officer, HSE, dated 24/05/2022 | Note and publish. |
| B – Correspondence from Accounting Officers and/or Ministers and follow up to PAC meetings | | Decision |
| R1230 PAC33 | Correspondence received from Ms Helen Hall, Chief Executive, Policing Authority, dated 05/05/2022 | Note and publish. It was agreed to request the Policing Authority to provide assurance that the information it provided to the Committee is accurate in the context of a related media article which includes a reference to the Homicide Investigation Review and the reliability of homicide data. |
| R1240 PAC33 | Correspondence received from Justice Rory MacCabe, Chairperson, An Garda Síochana Ombudsman Commission, dated 11/05/2022 | Note and publish. It was agreed to request GSOC to clarify: - the number of protected disclosures made against GSOC; and - if GSOC availed of the services of an independent or external consultant to assist in dealing with protected disclosures, and if so, the related costs. |
| R1242 PAC33 | Correspondence received from Ms Oonagh McPhillips, Secretary General, Department of Justice, dated 16/05/2022 | Note and publish. It was agreed to request the Department of Justice to provide comparative international data for section 102 referrals. |
| R1243 PAC33 | Correspondence received from Ms Katherine Licken, Secretary General, Department of Tourism, Culture Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media, dated 17/05/2022 | Note and publish. |

| Correspondence received | | |
|--------------------------------|---|--|
| R1246 PAC33 | Correspondence received from Mr. Pádraig Dalton, Director General, Central Statistics Office, dated 18/05/2022 | Note and publish. It was agreed to: - raise the matter of the discontinuance of public funding of the Benefacts' database with the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform; - request sight of the Department's initial business case for and subsequent value for money review of the Benefacts' database; and - to highlight this correspondence from the Central Statistics Office. CC: Secretary General |
| R1247 PAC33 | Correspondence received from Ms Mary Hurley, Secretary General, Department of Rural and Community Development, dated 18/05/2022 | Note and publish. |
| R1250 PAC33 | Correspondence received from Mr. Robert Watt, Secretary General, Department of Health, dated 16/05/2022 | Note and publish. |
| R1256 PAC33 | Correspondence received from Ms Niamh Larkin, Director of Audit, Local Government Audit Service, dated 23/05/2022 | Note and publish. |
| R1259 PAC33 | Correspondence received from Ms Claire Gavin, Principal Officer, Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage, dated 23/05/2022 | Note and publish. |

| C - Correspondence from and related to private individuals and any other correspondence | | Decision |
|--|---|---|
| R1239 PAC33 | Correspondence received from Deputy Catherine Murphy, dated 19/05/2022 | Note. |
| R1239 PAC33 | Correspondence received from Catherine Murphy, T.D., Houses of the Oireachtas, dated 20/05/2022 | Note. Consider under the work programme agenda item. |

6. Work Programme

It was agreed to proceed with the work programme circulated for the meeting.

7. Any Other Business

There was no other business.

The Committee adjourned at 15.00 until Thursday 2 June 2022.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Brian Stanley". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above a horizontal line.

Brian Stanley, T.D.
Cathaoirleach
2 June 2022