

**PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE**  
**MINUTES OF MEETING OF THURSDAY, 27 October 2022**

The Committee met in **Public** Session at 09:35 a.m., a quorum being present.

The following Members were present:

**Deputies:** Brian Stanley (Cathaoirleach), Colm Burke, Matt Carthy, Cormac Devlin, Alan Dillon, Alan Kelly, Paul McAuliffe, Catherine Murphy (Leas-Chathaoirleach), Verona Murphy, James O'Connor.

**Apologies:** Deputy Imelda Munster

**Permanent**

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

**1. Witnesses Examined:**

**Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth**

- Mr. Kevin McCarthy, Secretary General
- Ms Carol Baxter, Assistant Secretary
- Ms Anne-Marie Brooks, Assistant Secretary
- Ms Lara Hynes, Assistant Secretary
- Ms Sheenagh Rooney, Assistant Secretary

**Tusla**

- Mr. Bernard Gloster, Chief Executive Officer
- Ms Kate Duggan, Deputy CEO, National Director of Services & Integration

**Department of Public Expenditure and Reform**

- Ms Jessica Lawless, Principal Officer
- Mr. Fionn Jenkinson, Assistant Principal

**Matters for discussion:**

**Appropriation Account 2021**

- Vote 40 - Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth

**Report on the Accounts of the Public Services 2021**

- Chapter 13 – Guardian ad Litem service – follow up report

The Committee suspended at 11:06.

The Committee resumed in **Public** Session at 11:17.

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 statements and briefing documents provided to the Committee for the meeting.

The Committee suspended at 13:00.

The Committee resumed in **Public** Session at 13:37.

## 2. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 20 October 2022 were agreed.

## 3. Financial Statements and Accounts

There were six sets of financial statements and accounts laid before the Dáil between 17 and 21 October 2022.

Ref	Body/main purpose	Accounting period/turnover	Date certified	Date laid	Audit opinion/notes
1	<b>Irish Fiscal Advisory Council</b> <a href="#">(click here to view accounts)</a>	2021 €836,000	13 Sep 2022	17 Oct 2022	Clear audit opinion
2	<b>National Lottery Fund</b> <a href="#">(click here to view accounts)</a>	2021 €682 million	23 Jun 2022	17 Oct 2022	Clear audit opinion
3	<b>Regulator of the National Lottery</b> <a href="#">(click here to view accounts)</a>	2021 €1.5 million	24 Jun 2022	17 Oct 2022	Clear audit opinion  Attention is drawn to Note 10 pension provision. This discloses the reason why accumulated pension liabilities totalling €3.2 million have not been recognised in the financial statements, and that the Regulator is awaiting a decision of the Department of Public Expenditure about pension proposals submitted in 2015. <a href="#">(click here for further information)</a>
4	<b>Medical Bureau of Road Safety</b> <a href="#">(click here to view accounts)</a>	2021 €6.3 million	17 Jun 2022	18 Oct 2022	Clear audit opinion
5	<b>Local Loans Fund</b> <a href="#">(click here to view accounts)</a> <i>Fund is now effectively dormant.</i>	2021 Nil	18 Oct 2022	19 Oct 2022	Clear audit opinion
6	<b>Land Bond (Winding Up) Account</b> <a href="#">(click here to view accounts)</a> <i>Balance in fund: €137,000</i>	2021 Nil	19 Oct 2022	21 Oct 2022	Clear audit opinion

It was agreed to request the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform to provide an information note regarding accumulated pension liabilities totalling €3.2 million which have not been recognised in the 2021 financial statements of the Regulator of the National Lottery (item 5).

It was agreed to request the Department of Finance for an information note to include details regarding arrangements and plans to wind up the following:

- Local Loans Fund (item 5)
- Land Bond (Winding Up) Account (item 6)

It was agreed to note the listings of the accounts and statements.

#### 4. Correspondence

Correspondence received		
A – Briefing Documents and Opening Statements		Decision
R1531 PAC33	Correspondence received from Mr. Bernard Gloster, Chief Executive Officer, Tusla, dated 20/10/2022	Note and publish.
R1537 PAC33	Correspondence received from Mr. Kevin McCarthy, Secretary General, Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth, dated 21/10/2022	Note and publish.
R1545 PAC33	Correspondence received from Mr. Kevin McCarthy, Secretary General, Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth, dated 21/10/2022	Note and publish.
B – Correspondence from Accounting Officers and/or Ministers and follow up to PAC meetings		Decision
R1497 PAC33	Correspondence received from Mr. David Moloney, Secretary General, Department of Public Expenditure and Reform, dated 06/10/2022	Note.
R1498 PAC33	Correspondence received from Mr. David Moloney, Secretary General, Department of Public Expenditure and Reform, dated 07/10/2022	Note and publish.  It was agreed to raise non-compliance with Circular 1 of 2011: Revised Instructions for Preparing Material for Inclusion in Minutes of the Minister for Finance on Reports of the Committee of Public Accounts, with the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform and the Accounting Officer of the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media.
R1507 PAC33	Correspondence received from Mr. Graham Doyle, Secretary General, Department of Local Government and Heritage, dated 13/10/2022	Note and publish.

Correspondence received		
R1508 PAC33	Correspondence received from Mr. David Moloney, Secretary General, Department of Public Expenditure and Reform, dated 13/10/2022	Note and publish.
R1509 PAC33	Correspondence received from Mr. Alan McDermott, National Oversight and Audit Commission Secretariat, NOAC, dated 13/10/2022	Note and publish.  It was agreed to accede to the request for an extended timeframe to respond to the Committee's request.
R1511 PAC33	Correspondence received from Ms Hilary Murphy Fagan, Accounting Officer, National Shared Services Office, dated 14/10/2022	Note and publish.
R1513 PAC33	Correspondence received from Mr. David Moloney, Secretary General, Department of Public Expenditure and Reform, dated 14/10/2022	Note and publish.  It was agreed to write to the Department of Health to express the Committee's dissatisfaction with the response. It was also agreed to reiterate the Committee's requests to both the Department of Health and the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform for detailed information regarding the likely final costs of the National Children's Hospital, and if it is known to either Department.  It was also agreed to request clarification regarding the timeline for dealing with claims arising under the contract and to provide an estimate of the overall cost of construction inflation for the Hospital.
R1514 PAC33	Correspondence received from Mr. Graham Doyle, Secretary General, Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage, dated 14/10/2022	Note and publish.
R1515 PAC33	Correspondence received from Mr. Joe Healy, Finance Officer, Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media, dated 14/10/2022	Note and publish.

<b>Correspondence received</b>		
R1519 PAC33	Correspondence received from Mr. David Moloney, Secretary General, Department of Public Expenditure and Reform, dated 18/10/2022	<p>Note and publish.</p> <p>It was agreed to provide the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform with a response it compiled for the previous Committee of Public Accounts and to request a similarly detailed update of costs in respect of tribunals and commissions of investigation since 1997.</p> <p>It was also agreed to request clarification regarding discrepancies in information provided by the Department of the Taoiseach (in R1526 PAC33) and the aforementioned information provided to the previous committee in 2019 by the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform.</p> <p>It was further agreed to request the State Claims Agency for an information note to include details of pending claims and third-party costs in respect of tribunals and commissions of investigation since 1997.</p>
R1526 PAC33	Correspondence received from Mr. John Callinan, Secretary General, Department of the Taoiseach, dated 19/10/2022	Note and publish.
R1527 PAC33	Correspondence received from Mr. John Hogan, Secretary General, Department of Finance, dated 19/10/2022	Note and publish.
R1528 PAC33	Correspondence received from Mr. Ciarán Ó hÓbáin, Assistant Secretary, Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications, dated 18/10/2022	<p>Note and publish.</p> <p>It was agreed to request the Department for an information note to include further detail in respect of the change of ownership regarding the national broadband plan including clawbacks and shareholdings, details regarding the composition of the Board, and if there will be any proceeds to the State.</p>
<b>C - Correspondence from and related to private individuals and any other correspondence</b>		<b>Decision</b>
R1516 PAC33	Correspondence received from an individual, dated 16/10/2022	It was agreed to advise the correspondent of the Committee's decision.
R1517 PAC33	Correspondence received from an individual, dated 16/10/2022	<p>Note.</p> <p>See R1516 PAC33.</p>
R1518 PAC33	Correspondence received from an individual, dated 17/10/2022	Note.
R1520 PAC33	Correspondence received from an individual, dated 17/10/2022	It was agreed to advise the correspondent of the Committee's decision.

Correspondence received		
R1521 PAC33	Correspondence received from an individual, dated 18/10/2022	It was agreed to advise the correspondent of the Committee's decision.
R1522 PAC33	Correspondence received from an individual, dated 19/10/2022	It was agreed to advise the correspondent of the Committee's decision.
R1525 PAC33	Correspondence received from an individual, dated 19/10/2022	See R1528 PAC33.

## 5. Work Programme

It was agreed to proceed with the engagements detailed in the draft work programme which had been circulated in advance of the meeting.

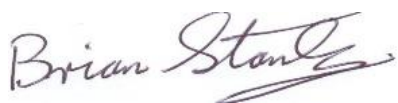
## 6. Any Other Business

There was no other business.

The Committee went into **private** session at 14:28.

Sensitive - for consideration in Private session		Decision
R1523 PAC33	Correspondence received from an individual, dated 19/10/2022	It was agreed to advise the correspondent of the Committee's decision.

The Committee **adjourned** at 14:46 until Thursday 10 November 2022.




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Brian Stanley, T.D.  
Cathaoirleach  
10 November 2022