

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE
MINUTES OF MEETING OF THURSDAY, 10 November 2022

The Committee met in **Public** Session at 09:34 a.m., a quorum being present.

The following Members were present:

Deputies: Brian Stanley (Cathaoirleach), Colm Burke, Matt Carthy, Cormac Devlin, Alan Dillon, Neasa Hourigan, Alan Kelly, Paul McAuliffe, Verona Murphy, James O'Connor.

Apologies: Deputies Catherine Murphy (Leas-Chathaoirleach), Jennifer Carroll MacNeill, Imelda Munster.

Permanent

Witness: Mr. Andrew Harkness, Director of Audit, Office of the Comptroller and Auditor General (in place of the Comptroller and Auditor General, Mr. Seamus McCarthy).

1. Witnesses Examined:

Rasaíocht Con Éireann/Greyhound Racing Ireland

- Mr. John Tuohey, Interim CEO and CFO
- Mr. Frank Nyhan, Chairman
- Mr. Patrick Herbert, Director of Regulation
- Mr. William Fitzgerald, Veterinary Director

Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine

- Mr. Gordon Conroy, Assistant Secretary General
- Ms Caroline Ball, Principal Officer
- Ms Louise McAlavey, Assistant Principal

Matters for discussion:

Financial Statements 2021

Rasaíocht Con Éireann

The Committee suspended at 10:58.

The Committee resumed in **Public** Session at 11:10.

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 12:32.

The Committee resumed in **Public** Session at 13:33.

2. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 27 October 2022 were agreed.

3. Financial Statements and Accounts

There were three sets of financial statements and accounts laid before the Dáil between 24 and 31 October 2022.

Ref	Body/main purpose	Accounting period/turnover	Date certified	Date laid	Audit opinion/notes
1	National Concert Hall (click here to view accounts)	2021 €7 million	30 Jun 2022	25 Oct 2022	Clear audit opinion Attention is drawn to note 23(b) of the financial statements in relation to recognition of a deferred pension funding asset. (click here for further information)
2	Insurance Compensation Fund (click here to view accounts)	2021 €93 million	29 Sep 2022	27 Oct 2022	Clear audit opinion
3	Social Insurance Fund (click here to view accounts)	2021 €15.7 billion	28 Sep 2022	28 Oct 2022	Clear audit opinion Attention is drawn to <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Chapter 10 of the <i>Report on the Accounts of the Public Services 2021</i>, which refers to welfare payments in excess of entitlement under Social Insurance Fund schemes. (click here to view the chapter)• Chapter 11 of the <i>Report on the Accounts of the Public Services 2021</i>, which examines the Department of Social Protection's processes to recover social welfare payments from compensation awards made to claimants as a result of personal injuries claims. (click here to view the chapter)• Chapter 14 of the <i>Report on the Accounts of the Public Services 2021</i>, which examines the classification of workers for PRSI purposes, and related matters. (click here to view the chapter)

It was agreed to note the listings of the accounts and statements and return to Item 3 (Social Insurance Fund) at the meeting scheduled for 17 November 2022.

4. Correspondence

Correspondence received		
A – Briefing Documents and Opening Statements		Decision
R1557 PAC33	Correspondence received from Mr. John Touhey, Interim CEO Rásaíocht Con Éireann/Greyhound Racing Ireland, dated 02/11/2022	Note and publish.
R1563 PAC33	Correspondence received from Mr. John Tuohey, Interim CEO, Greyhound Racing Ireland, dated 07/11/2022	Note and publish.
R1567 PAC33	Correspondence received from Mr. John Tuohey, Interim CEO, Greyhound Racing Ireland, dated 08/11/2022	Note and publish.
B – Correspondence from Accounting Officers and/or Ministers and follow up to PAC meetings		Decision
R1529 PAC33	Correspondence received from Mr. Andrew Deeks, President, University College Dublin, dated 20/10/2022	Note and publish.
R1530 PAC33	Correspondence received from Mr. Paddy Lavelle, General Secretary, ETBI, dated 20/10/2022	Note and publish.
R1532 PAC33	Correspondence received from Ms Kerstin Mey, President, University of Limerick, dated 20/10/2022	Note and publish. It was agreed to request further details in relation to the following procurements, including why the projects were not previously tendered, what is meant by “under review”, and what is the current status of the respective procurement processes: - website hosting; - occupational health assessments; and - seeds, turf and other landscaping suppliers.
R1533 PAC33	Correspondence received from Dr. Orlaigh Quinn, Secretary General, Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment, dated 20/10/2022	Note and publish.

Correspondence received		
R1534 PAC33	Correspondence received from Mr. Noel Gorman, Interim CEO, St. James's Hospital, dated 19/10/2022	<p>Note and publish.</p> <p>It was agreed to request further details regarding all procurement deemed to be non-complaint with procurement rules and guidelines (i.e. 14% of €207m of non-compliant procurement noted in the C&AG's audit certificate) as well as the reason that only €395,000 was addressed in the correspondence.</p>
R1535 PAC33	Correspondence received from Ms Vivienne Flood, Head of Public Affairs, RTÉ, dated 21/10/2022	Note and publish.
R1536 PAC33	Correspondence received from Mr. Bernard Gloster, Chief Executive, Túsla, dated 21/10/2022	<p>Note and publish.</p> <p>It was agreed to request further information regarding the "significant resource constraints" in the Office of Government Procurement and the HSE.</p>
R1538 PAC33	Correspondence received from Mr. Tom Grady, Chief Executive, Mayo, Sligo and Leitrim Education and Training Board, dated 21/10/2022	Note and publish.
R1540 PAC33	Correspondence received from Mr. Michael Keane, Vice President Administration and Finance, Mary Immaculate College, dated 21/10/2022	Note and publish.
R1541 PAC33	Correspondence received from Mr. Brendan Gleeson, Secretary General, Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, dated 24/10/2022	Note and publish.
R1543 PAC33	Correspondence received from Mr. Robert Watt, Secretary General, Department of Health, dated 23/10/2022	Note and publish.
R1544 PAC33	Correspondence received from Mr. Graham Doyle, Secretary General, Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage, dated 25/10/2022	Note and publish.
R1546 PAC33	Correspondence received from Mr. Kevin McCarthy, Secretary General, Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth, dated 26/10/2022	Note and publish.
R1550 PAC33	Correspondence received from Mr. John Hogan, Secretary General, Department of Finance, dated 28/10/2022	Note and publish.

Correspondence received		
R1551 PAC33	Correspondence received from Mr. Garrett Blaney, Commissioner, Commission for Communications Regulation, dated 27/10/2022	Note and publish.
R1552 PAC33	Correspondence received from Mr. Peter Meany, Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, Assistant Principal, dated 28/10/2022	Note and publish.
R1553 PAC33	Correspondence received from Mr. Brendan Gleeson, Secretary General, Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, dated 28/10/2022	Note and publish.
R1554 PAC33	Correspondence received from Mr. Brendan Gleeson, Secretary General, Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, dated 28/10/2022	Note and publish.
R1555 PAC33	Correspondence received from Ms Bernie McNally, Secretary General, Department of Education, dated 28/10/2022	Note and publish.
C - Correspondence from and related to private individuals and any other correspondence		Decision
R1542 PAC33	Correspondence received from an individual, dated 24/10/2022	Note.
R1548 PAC33	Correspondence received from an individual, dated 27/10/2022	Note.
R1549 PAC33	Correspondence received from an individual, dated 27/10/2022	<p>Note.</p> <p>It was agreed to request the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform to provide an information note in respect of former public and civil servants taking up roles in the private sector to include details regarding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - cooling-off periods and any related governance arrangements; and - whether any distinction is drawn between employment and consultancy arrangements.
R1556 PAC33	Correspondence received from an individual, dated 01/11/2022	Note.

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 13:47.

Sensitive - for consideration in Private session		Decision
R1539 PAC33	Correspondence received from an individual, dated 01/11/2022	Note.

The Committee **adjourned** at 14:03 until Thursday 17 November 2022.



Brian Stanley, T.D.
Cathaoirleach
17 November 2022