



An Roinn Turasóireachta, Cultúir,
Ealaíon, Gaeltachta, Spóirt agus Meán
Department of Tourism, Culture,
Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media

Oifig an Ard-Rúnaí
Office of the Secretary General

Martin Hughes
Clerk to the Committee of Public Accounts
Leinster House
Dublin 2 D02 XR20

17 January 2023

Ref - S1085 PAC33

Dear Martin,

I refer to your letter dated 22 November 2022 regarding the meeting of the Committee of Public Accounts on 27 October 2022, and in particular the Committee's consideration of the Minute of the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform in relation to the Committee's report regarding its examination of Vote 29: Environment, Climate and Communications: Programme B - Broadcasting (2019) and Vote 33: Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media (2020).

I believe that it is important to reiterate, as set out in the Minister's Minute, that in accordance with the Broadcasting Act, 2009, RTÉ is fully independent in the achievement of its public service objects (which are also set out in the Act). This independence extends not only to programming and editorial decision-making, but also to its day to day activities, operations and management.

Given this statutory independence, and in light of the fact that the Minister for Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media has no role to play in RTÉ's day to day activities, this Department found that it was not possible to either accept or reject the recommendations made by the Committee, as to have done so would have exceeded this Department's, and the Minister's, authority and role with regard to RTÉ.

With regard to the Committee's recommendations related to the Future of Media Commission, as set out in the Minister's Minute, Government published the Commission's Report shortly after the Committee had published its report. Following its consideration of the Commission's recommendations, Government set out its policy with regard to addressing the future funding of RTÉ.

I understand that the Department of Public Expenditure of Reform has also submitted further clarification to the Committee in this regard.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "Katherine Licken". The script is cursive and fluid, with the first name and last name clearly distinguishable.

Katherine Licken
Secretary General