

**PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE**  
**MINUTES OF MEETING OF THURSDAY, 6 JULY 2023**

The Committee met in **Public** Session at 09:31 a.m., a quorum being present.

The following Members were present:

**Deputies:** Brian Stanley (Cathaoirleach), John Brady, Colm Burke, Cormac Devlin, Alan Dillon, Paul McAuliffe, Catherine Murphy, Verona Murphy, Marc Ó Cathasaigh.

**Apologies:** Deputy Imelda Munster

**Permanent**

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

The Committee went into **Private** Session at 09:32 a.m.

The Committee agreed the following:

- It was agreed to invite Mr. Ryan Tubridy and Mr. Noel Kelly to a public meeting at 11am on Tuesday 11th July. It was agreed to hold a private meeting beforehand at 10:30am.
- It was agreed to defer the meeting with the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment scheduled at 9.30 am on Thursday 13th July 2023 and meet with representatives of RTÉ at that time instead.
- It was agreed to write to the Joint Committee on Tourism, Culture, Arts, Sport and Media to request the Committee to share the documentation it received from RTÉ.

The Committee went into **Public** Session at 09:52 a.m.

**1. Witnesses Examined:**

**Inland Fisheries Ireland**

- Mr. Francis O'Donnell, Chief Executive Officer
- Mr. Barry Fox, Head of Operations
- Ms. Suzanne Campion, Head of Finance & Corporate Services
- Mr. Cathal Gallagher, Head of Research & Development
- Ms. Roisin Bradley, Head of Human Resources

**Department of Environment, Climate and Communications**

- Mr. Denis Maher, Principal Officer

**Matters for discussion:**

- **Financial Statements 2021**
  - Inland Fisheries Ireland

The Committee suspended at 11:12

The Committee resumed in **Public** Session at 11:35.

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 12:48.

The Committee resumed in **Private** Session at 13:36.

Sensitive - for consideration in Private session		Decision
R1937 PAC33	Correspondence received from an individual, dated 14/06/2023	It was agreed to advise the correspondent of the Committee's decision.
R1948 PAC33	Correspondence received from an individual, dated 21/06/2023	It was agreed to advise the correspondent of the Committee's decision.
R1962 PAC33	Correspondence received from an individual, dated 23/06/2023	See R1948 PAC33.
R1973 PAC33	Correspondence received from an individual, dated 27/06/2023	It was agreed to respond to the correspondent.

The Committee went into **Public** Session at 14:48.

## 2. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 22 June, 26 June and 29 June 2023 were agreed.

## 3. Financial Statements and Accounts

There were twelve sets of financial statements and accounts laid before the Dáil between 19 and 30 June 2023.

Ref	Body/fund	Accounting period/turnover	Date certified	Date presented	Audit opinion/notes
1	<b>Charities Regulatory Authority</b> ( <a href="#">click here to view accounts</a> )	2022 €4.4 million	29 May 2023	19 Jun 2023	Clear audit opinion
2	<b>Charity Funds</b> ( <a href="#">click here to view accounts</a> )	2022 €1 million	29 May 2023	19 Jun 2023	Clear audit opinion
3	<b>Motor Tax Account</b> ( <a href="#">click here to view accounts</a> )	2022 €904 million	9 Jun 2023	19 Jun 2023	Clear audit opinion
4	<b>Export Guarantee Account</b> ( <a href="#">click here to view accounts</a> ) <i>Account is now effectively dormant.</i>	2022 €nil	17 May 2023	20 Jun 2023	Clear audit opinion
5	<b>National Asset Management Agency</b> ( <a href="#">click here to view accounts</a> )	2022 €128 million	28 Apr 2023	22 Jun 2023	Clear audit opinion
6	<b>Enterprise Ireland</b> ( <a href="#">click here to view accounts</a> )	2022 €438 million	16 Jun 2023	27 Jun 2023	Clear audit opinion
7	<b>Irish Auditing and Accounting Supervisory Authority</b> ( <a href="#">click here to view accounts</a> )	2022 €4.3 million	15 Jun 2023	28 Jun 2023	Clear audit opinion
8	<b>Loughs Agency</b> ( <a href="#">click here to view accounts</a> ) <i>This is one of the North/South bodies jointly audited by the C&amp;AG and the NI C&amp;AG</i>	2021 €9.3 million	27 Mar 2023	28 Jun 2023	Clear audit opinion  By law, the annual corporate business plans of the North/South bodies require the approval of the North South Ministerial Council. Because the Council has not met for some time, a budget increase of £422,840 [€491,902] that the Loughs Agency received in 2021 has not received the Council's approval. The additional funding, provided on a 50:50 basis by the relevant funding departments (North and South), is legal, but because it does not conform to the statutory authority, is considered irregular. This is outside the control of the Agency.  ( <a href="#">click here for further information</a> )
9	<b>Inland Fisheries Ireland</b> ( <a href="#">click here to view accounts</a> )	2021 €37 million	29 Mar 2023	29 Jun 2023	Clear audit opinion  The audit report draws attention to a number of administration, management and control

Ref	Body/fund	Accounting period/turnover	Date certified	Date presented	Audit opinion/notes
					<p>issues i.e.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>resignations of Board members in 2022 and a consequential loss of quorum for Board meetings</li> <li>the requirement for investigation of a number of disclosures made during 2022 to IFI and its parent Department</li> <li>reporting of a potential fraud to An Garda Síochána</li> <li>a number of vehicles used by IFI staff members being uninsured for a period due to an administrative error</li> <li>absence of evidence of the Board's approval of a change of the Chief Executive's work base.</li> </ul> <p><a href="#">(click here for further information)</a></p>
10	<b>Residential Institutions Redress Special Account</b> <a href="#">(click here to view accounts)</a>	2022 €nil	13 Jun 2023	29 Jun 2023	Clear audit opinion
11	<b>Marine Casualty Investigation Board</b> <a href="#">(click here to view accounts)</a>	2022 €390,000	15 Jun 2023	30 Jun 2023	Clear audit opinion
12	<b>Houses of the Oireachtas Commission</b> <a href="#">(click here to view accounts)</a>	2022 €141 million	28 Jun 2023	30 Jun 2023	Clear audit opinion

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

The Committee has a standing agreement to request explanations for any significant non-compliant procurement or delays in laying accounts before the Houses of the Oireachtas.

#### 4. Correspondence

Correspondence received		
A – Briefing Documents and Opening Statements		Decision
R1992 PAC33	Correspondence received from Mr. Francis O'Donnell, Chief Executive Officer, Inland Fisheries Ireland dated 30/06/2023	Note and publish.

Correspondence received		
R2007 PAC33	Correspondence received from Mr. Francis O'Donnell, Chief Executive Officer, Inland Fisheries Ireland dated 05/07/2023	Note and publish.
<b>B – Correspondence from Accounting Officers and/or Ministers and follow up to PAC meetings</b>		<b>Decision</b>
R1939 PAC33	Correspondence received from Mr. Robert Watt, Secretary General, Department of Health, dated 16/06/2023	Note and publish.
R1940 PAC33	Correspondence received from Mr. Graham Doyle, Secretary General, Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage, dated 16/06/2023	Note and publish.
R1943 PAC33	Correspondence received from Ms Kerstin Mey, President, University of Limerick, dated 19/06/2023	Note and publish.  It was agreed to seek a statutory direction to compel the McKenna report from the University of Limerick.
R1949 PAC33	Correspondence received from Mr. Brendan Gleeson, Secretary General, Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, dated 22/06/2023	Note and publish.  Agreed to request the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine for the following information: - the timeline for the proposed review of the governance arrangements around the Horse and Greyhound Fund; and -the terms of reference for the review, requested by the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine, of the service level agreement between Horse Racing Ireland and the Irish Horseracing Regulatory Board.
R1951 PAC33	Correspondence received from Mr. Robert Watt, Secretary General, Department of Health, dated 22/06/2023	Note and publish.
R1960 PAC33	Correspondence received from Ms Úna May, Chief Executive Officer, Sport Ireland, dated 26/06/2023	Note and publish.  It was agreed to accept the invitation to visit the Sport Ireland campus, and to visit the Football Association of Ireland, based on the same campus.
R1969 PAC33	Correspondence received from Mr. Robert Watt, Secretary General, Department of Health, dated 27/06/2023	Note and publish.

<b>Correspondence received</b>		
R1970 PAC33	Correspondence received from Mr. David Moloney, Secretary General, Department of Public Expenditure, National Development Plan Delivery and Reform, dated 28/06/2023	Note and publish.
R1971 PAC33	Correspondence received from Ms Sorcha Fitzpatrick, Chief Superintendent, An Garda Síochána, dated 27/06/2023	Note and publish.
R1972 PAC33	Correspondence received from Ms Oonagh McPhillips, Secretary General, Department of Justice, dated 27/06/2023	Note and publish.
R1975 PAC33	Correspondence received from Ms Deirdre Keyes, Chief Executive, Kildare and Wicklow Education and Training Board, dated 28/06/2023	Note and publish.
R1977 PAC33	Correspondence received from Mr. John Hogan, Secretary General, Department of Finance, dated 28/06/2023	Note and publish.
R1986 PAC33	Correspondence received from Mr. Kevin McCarthy, Secretary General, Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth, dated 29/06/2023	Note and publish.
<b>C - Correspondence from and related to private individuals and any other correspondence</b>		<b>Decision</b>
R1931 PAC33	Correspondence received from Verona Murphy, T.D., Houses of the Oireachtas, dated 12/06/2023	It was agreed to hold over until the following week.
R1947 PAC33	Correspondence received an individual, dated 21/06/2023	It was agreed to write to the correspondent to reiterate that the Committee have written to the Department in relation to the matter.
R1950 PAC33	Correspondence received from Catherine Murphy, T.D., Houses of the Oireachtas, dated 22/06/2023	Note.
R1952 PAC33	Correspondence received from Catherine Murphy, T.D., Houses of the Oireachtas, dated 23/06/2023	Note.
R1954 PAC33	Correspondence received from Catherine Murphy, T.D., Houses of the Oireachtas, dated 23/06/2023	Note.
R1955 PAC33	Correspondence received from Marc O'Cathasaigh, T.D., Houses of the Oireachtas, dated 23/06/2023	Note.

Correspondence received		
R1956 PAC33	Correspondence received from John Brady, T.D., Houses of the Oireachtas, dated 23/06/2023	Note.
R1957 PAC33	Correspondence received from Alan Dillon, T.D., Houses of the Oireachtas, dated 23/06/2023	Note.
R1958 PAC33	Correspondence received from an individual, dated 23/06/2023	Note.
R1959 PAC33	Correspondence received from an individual, dated 26/06/2023	Note.
R1963 PAC33	Correspondence received from an individual, dated 26/06/2023	No action agreed.
R1964 PAC33	Correspondence received from an individual, dated 27/06/2023	Note.
R1965 PAC33	Correspondence received from an individual, dated 26/06/2023	Note.
R1966 PAC33	Correspondence received from Catherine Murphy, T.D., Houses of the Oireachtas, dated 27/06/2023	Note.  It was agreed to forward to the Arts Council for a response to the matters raised.
R1967 PAC33	Correspondence received from an individual, dated 27/06/2023	Note.
R1968 PAC33	Correspondence received from Elaine Muldoon, Clerk to the Committee, Committee on Remit Oversight, dated 28/06/2023	Note.
R1974 PAC33	Correspondence received from an individual, dated 27/06/2023	Note.
R1976 PAC33	Correspondence received from an individual, dated 28/06/2023	No action agreed.
R1982 PAC33	Correspondence received from an individual, dated 28/08/2023	Note.
R1983 PAC33	Correspondence received from Richard Drumm, Junior Clerk, Journal Office, dated 28/06/2023	Note.
R1984 PAC33	Correspondence received from an individual, dated 29/06/2023	Note.
R1985 PAC33	Correspondence received from Niamh Smith, Cathaoirleach, Joint Committee on Tourism, Culture, Arts, Sport and Media, dated 29/06/2023	Note.
R1987 PAC33	Correspondence received from an individual, dated 29/06/2023	Note.

Correspondence received		
R1988 PAC33	Correspondence received from Paul Ng, Clerk to the Committee, Joint Committee on Finance, Public Expenditure and Reform, and Taoiseach, dated 29/06/2023	Note.  It was agreed to notify the Joint Committee on Finance, Public Expenditure and Reform, and Taoiseach should any issues arise in engagements with RTÉ that the Committee considers to be more properly dealt with by the Joint Committee.
R1989 PAC33	Correspondence received from Marc Ó Cathasaigh, T.D., Houses of the Oireachtas, dated 30/06/2023	It was agreed to write to RTÉ to request the following: - clear statement of RTÉ's policy in relation to the receipt of gifts; - confirmation that RTÉ maintains a gifts register log; and - a copy of the gifts register log for previous years.
R1991 PAC33	Correspondence received from Brian Stanley, T.D., Houses of the Oireachtas, dated 30/06/2023	Note.
R2006 PAC33	Correspondence received from an individual, dated 05/07/2023	Note.
R2008 PAC33	Correspondence received from Alan Dillon, T.D., Houses of the Oireachtas, dated 05/07/2023	Note.

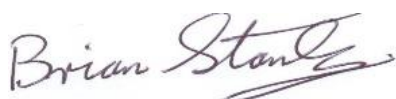
## 5. Work Programme

It was agreed to defer discussion of the work programme until next week.

## 6. Any Other Business

There was no other business.

The Committee **adjourned** at 15:20 until Tuesday 11 July 2023.




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Brian Stanley, T.D.  
Cathaoirleach  
21 September 2023