

PUBLIC SERVICE PERFORMANCE REPORT

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL PROTECTION

OPENING STATEMENT

by

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to the

**JOINT OIREACHTAS COMMITTEE
ON SOCIAL PROTECTION, COMMUNITY AND RURAL
DEVELOPMENT AND THE ISLANDS**

Wednesday 18th October 2023

Introduction

I thank the Chairman and members of the Committee for their invitation to discuss the Department's preparation for its input into the Public Service Performance Report 2023.

I have responsibility for Corporate Affairs in the Department, and this morning I am joined by my colleagues Ms. Saidhbhin Hardiman, Assistant Principal Officer from the Budget and Estimates Unit and Ms. Sinead Goodwin, Assistant Principal Officer from the Department's Community Welfare Service.

At the Committee's meeting on the 5th July we discussed in detail the Department of Social Protection's performance as contained in the Public Service Performance Report 2022, which is prepared by colleagues in the Department of Public Expenditure, NDP Delivery and Reform. The structure of the report provides a high level overview of performance across all Government Departments and is based on a common framework to present key statistics in a clear, consistent and concise manner.

This framework focuses on core performance budgeting such as financial metrics, key output measures and also places a significant focus on outcome indicators. In addition, in recent years the Department of Public Expenditure, National Development Plan Delivery and Reform has expanded the report's framework to include

new sections, which the Department of Social Protection have contributed to including Equality Budgeting and Green Budgeting. It is important that each Department adheres to the common framework to ensure a consistent cross Government approach.

Performance Reporting in the Department of Social Protection

Performance reporting was originally introduced in 2012 with a view to providing analysis of the type and quality of performance information of each Government Department and the impact of their respective public policies. From the Department of Social Protection's perspective, the performance report is built around the Department's overarching goal "To promote active participation and inclusion in society through the provision of income supports, employment services and other services". Central to the achievement of this overarching policy objective is ensuring the Department places the client at the centre of its services and policies. The Department's input into the annual DPENDPR Public Service Performance reporting process is therefore framed around these objectives.

It is the Department's intention that its input into the Public Service Performance Report for 2023 will be framed around its existing approach in accordance with the DPENDPR framework, namely financial metrics and overarching output and impact indicators of the

Department as a whole, followed by specific output and impact indicators delivered across 5 key pillars of support namely;

- 1) Pensions;
- 2) Working Age Income and Employment Supports;
- 3) Illness and Disability and Carers Income Supports;
- 4) Income Supports for Children; and
- 5) Supplementary Payments

Critical to performance reporting under each of these areas are key output indicators relating to payment related metrics. These indicators enable a high level review of the performance of the Department's operational areas. The impact indicators are largely derived from poverty related performance metrics as these represent the best indicators available relating to the effect social transfers play in mitigating poverty. The impact indicators are linked to independently published statistics by the Central Statistics Office, largely derived from the Survey on Income and Living Conditions.

The Department's targets for inclusion in the Public Service Performance Report for 2023 are also likely to be informed by the Mid-Term Review of the Pathways to Work Strategy, which is currently at an advanced stage and will be presented to the Minister for her consideration next month. The Department has this year completed its Mid-Term Review of the Roadmap for Social Inclusion and in that context will be shortly submitting to the Committee its annual Progress Report and the Report Card on achieving the commitments contained

in the Roadmap for Social Inclusion. The Department also intends to publish its Social Inclusion Monitor before the end of the year. The Department's input into the 2023 Public Service Performance Report will therefore be informed by these respective reports and publications.

The PSPR is one part of a broad range of reports and publications all of which provide an important and valuable insight into the Department's performance and the impact of the range of its supports and services have across Irish society. Other important publications, include the Department's Annual Report, the Annual Statistics Report, its Quarterly Statistics reports, the annual progress reports for both Pathways to Work and the Roadmap for Social Inclusion. The Department undertakes extensive independent customer satisfaction surveys across a range of its schemes and also has a wide-ranging research programme, which analyses its schemes to assess their effectiveness.

Conclusion

The Department's Management Board will approve the Department's 2023 input into the PSPR at the time of the Revised Estimates process, which is likely to be in December.

As was stated at our last appearance and in subsequent correspondence to the Committee, the Department is willing to work with the members of the Committee in framing the Department's input and would welcome any suggestions for inclusion in next year's Public Service

Performance Report. I can assure the Committee that any of your suggestions will be seriously considered by the Department when it is framing its input into the Public Service Performance Report for 2023.

I therefore look forward to hearing the Committee's suggestions and welcome any questions members have for my colleagues and I this morning.

Thank you.

ENDS