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An Roghchoiste um
Airgeadas, Caiteachas Poiblí
agus Athchóiriú, agus an
Taoiseach

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Select Committee on
Finance, Public Expenditure,
and Reform, and Taoiseach

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23 March 2023

Ref: SCFPERT-I-042

Mr. Michael McGrath, TD
Minister for Finance
Department of Finance
Government Buildings
Upper Merrion Street
Dublin 2
D02 R583

Issued to: Minister@finance.gov.ie; Alex.Costello@finance.gov.ie

Dear Minister,

I am writing to you on behalf of the Select Committee on Finance, Public Expenditure and Reform, and Taoiseach to report on the Committee's consideration of the Revised Estimates and further Revised Estimates under the Committee's remit. A list of all twenty Estimates considered are listed in Appendix 1.

Consideration of Estimates by Committees:

As stated in the Standing Orders:

215A. (1) Subject to Standing Order 215(2) and unless the Dáil shall otherwise order, Committees shall complete their consideration of Estimates referred to them pursuant to that Standing Order not later than 60 days after such Estimates have been so referred.

(2) Any report that a Committee proposes to make arising from its consideration of an Estimate shall be made within a further period of 14 days.

Under SO215A(2), this letter summarises issues arising from the Committee's consideration and will be laid before the Dáil and sent to the Taoiseach and relevant Ministers for consideration.

To assist with an overall report the information is also being provided to the Committee on Budgetary Oversight.

Timeliness of Briefings provided

Cuirfear fáilte roimh chomhfhreagras i nGaeilge

The Select Committee wrote to the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform, the Department of Finance and the Department of Taoiseach on the 16 December 2023 and asked that it provide briefing on Revised Estimates.

The Committee received briefings on the following dates;

Dept	Votes	Date of receipt
Dept. of Taoiseach	1-6	12 January 2023
Dept. of Finance	7-10	1 February 2023
Dept. of Public Expenditure, NDP Delivery and Reform (DPER)	11,12, 14, 15, 17, 18, 19, 39 and 43	23 January 2023
DPER (OPW)	13	30 January

All briefings were provided at least 14 days in advance, allowing sufficient time to consider the details.

Scheduling of meetings

As noted, the Select Committee required four meetings to consider the Revised Estimates and Further Revised Estimate. However, due to the availability of the Select Committee and Ministers, it was not possible to schedule all meetings before the 8 February 2023 as is required under SO 215 (A).

The Committee requested additional time to complete its consideration of the REVS and a subsequent Dáil motion provided an extended deadline of 14 March 2023. Upon approval of an extended deadline to 14 March, the Select Committee was able to schedule all meetings ahead of the extended deadline.

The Select Committee welcomes the assistance of An Taoiseach, the Minister and their officials in ensuring that the Committee met the extended deadline.

The dates of meetings were as follows;

Date	Dept	Votes	Attended by
Wed, 8 Feb	DPER	11, ,12, 14, 15, 17, 18, 19, 39 and 43	Minister for Public Expenditure, NDP Delivery, and Reform, Pascal Donohoe Minister of State, Ossian Smyth,
Wed, 15 Feb	DFIN	7 to 10, inclusive	Minister for Finance, Michael McGrath
Wed, 22 Feb	OPW	13	Minister of State, Patrick O'Donovan
Thurs, 9 Mar	Dept Taoiseach	1-6, inclusive	An Taoiseach, Leo Varadkar Minister of State, Hildegard Naughton

The Committee subsequently sent a message confirming completion of its consideration to the Clerk of Dáil Éireann on each meeting date in accordance with Standing Order 101 of Dáil Éireann. Under Standing Order 100(2) of Dáil Éireann, this message is deemed to be the report of the Committee.

Adequacy of Briefing

As outlined above the briefing was received in four parts, reflecting the separation the consideration of the REV. These were provided to Members upon receipt and available to them at each public meeting. All briefings were considered adequate and no further information was requested from the respective

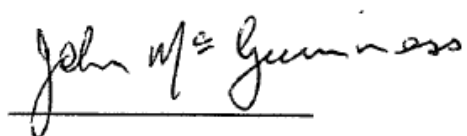
Departments in advance of the public meetings. In its letter of 16 December 2022, the Committee requested that Department provide a short, high-level and non -technical briefing note on the votes that the relevant Minister was responsible for.

Briefings that were most helpful provided a detailed explanation on the annual discrepancy between figures, this avoided time spent in public session discussing items that may have moved subheads, projects concluded or a defined reason as to the change in proposed expenditure. Briefing notes gave greater context to the funding proposed in the Vote particularly new initiatives or developments from the programme for government. Additionally, it was constructive for the briefing notes to reference estimates and outturn over the past three to five years to give a full picture of the trajectory of spending.

The briefing note of the Office of the Government of the Chief of Information Officer (OGCIO) provided a full background on their vote, included how their estimate was directly linked to their policy priorities delivery. It also included some infographics and additional detail about how this year's spend was being used in conjunction with EU funds to deliver the project.

The Committee intends to continue to undertake financial oversight of the Departments under its remit throughout the year.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "John McGuinness", written over a horizontal line.

John McGuinness T.D.

Cathaoirleach to the Committee

Appendix 1:

Vote 1, President's Establishment
Vote 2, Department of An Taoiseach
Vote 3, Office of the Attorney General
Vote 4, Central Statistics Office
Vote 5, Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions
Vote 6, Office of the Chief State Solicitor
Vote 7, Dept of Finance
Vote 8, C&AG
Vote 9, Office of the Revenue Commissioners
Vote 10, Tax Appeals Commission
Vote 12, Superannuation and Retired Allowances
Vote 14, State Laboratory
Vote 15, Secret Service
Vote 17, Public Appointments Service
Vote 18, NSSO
Vote 19, Office of the Ombudsman
Vote 39, Office of Government Procurement
Vote 43, Office of Government's Chief Information Officer
And the following further revised estimates
DPER Vote 11, Dept of Public Expenditure, and Reform.