



Board Meeting

Minutes

Tuesday 24 June 2025 at 10 a.m.

Venue: Via online platform

Attended by:

Chairperson: Michael McCarthy

Members: Ciarán Hayes Fiona Quinn
Kathleen Holohan Anne Haugh
Noel Harrington Miriam McDonald
John Byrne Margaret Lane
Declan Breathnach

Secretariat: Claire Gavin Joan Comiskey
Alan McDermott John Goldrick

Apologies: Brian Cawley

1. Minutes and actions of previous meeting

The minutes of the meeting on 20 May were approved.

2. Declaration of any conflict of interest

There was no declaration of any conflict of interest.

3. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

4. Work Programme

WG1 (Local Government Governance, Efficiency and Reform): Update

The Secretariat provided an update on the latest work of the working group. It gave an outline of the ongoing work of the tender for a review of local authority on the Corporate Plans 2025-2029, with submissions to be provided by the end of June.

Further, the OPR presented NOAC with a draft report on the review of the Regional Assembly Monitoring Reports, which will be discussed at the WG1 meeting on the 9 July, with representatives of the OPR in attendance. WG1 will publish a report on the Monitoring Reports, similar to the first tranche of Monitoring Reports published in 2024. It is also expected that the responsibility for the Monitoring Reports will move from NOAC to the OPR, as provided for in the Planning and Development Act 2024.

In addition, there are updates underway on the information being gathered on the performance of local government recorded by other statutory bodies, which WG1 will examine further in the coming months.

WG2 (Performance Indicators): Update

The WG2 Chair advised that the latest validation meeting took place yesterday with Cavan County Council. The Secretariat was thanked for its continued assistance in the validation process.

The WG2 Chair highlighted that NOAC should decide what data it examines with regards to social housing retrofits, and questioned the board as to this opinion as to whether NOAC should consider the national target from the Climate Action Plan or the targets set for each local authority by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage (DHLGH).

He highlighted that he was of the opinion that the national target would not be met but that targets set by DHLGH for each local authority will be met. The WG2 Chair provided examples of ongoing local authority work under this measure and noted that some authorities are targeting housing units rather than flat complexes, due to associated costs. It was also noted that in validation meetings that some local authorities highlighted the difficulties in more complex retrofitting, which might require decanting of tenants during the work. The WG had met with Department officials at the last WG meeting and the concerns of NOAC was raised at that meeting.

The NOAC board had a discussion and points included that NOAC has a role of holding local authorities to account, but those authorities cannot be criticised for not achieving national targets, which are not their targets or not within their gift. It was noted that the decision rests with central government as to the level of funding provided to different schemes and departments are held to account through other avenues.

It was also noted that if NOAC waited until the publication of its Performance Indicator report to highlight concerns, the issue's relevance might not be noted, along with the fact that it would be too late for potential increases to local authority budgets in order to increase the level of retrofitting. It was suggested that NOAC could write to the Department or Minister regarding the issue. However, it should also be recognised that, for consistency, NOAC has not measured its other indicators to national targets. This could set a precedent but the Chair of the WG believed that questions could be asked of NOAC if national targets are not met.

The Chair listened to the various points raised and wanted time to reflect and before reaching a decision. He agreed to come back to this matter at a future date.

WG3 (Communications and Customer Service): Update

The WG3 Chair noted that a meeting was held with the LGMA prior to the last board meeting where the issue of not receiving granular detail within the Customer Survey was discussed.

The LGMA subsequently wrote to the WG3 Chair providing a number of proposals for the survey going forward, however, it was felt that the proposals did not address the main request of NOAC or fulfil its role in relation to Customer Service. The WG3 Chair also met with a representative of an organisation with experience carrying out surveys to assist in WG3 better understanding the process.

A WG3 meeting was later held and the WG3 Chair requested that the board consider its proposal to respond to the LGMA with a further request for more granular detail for the 2024 and 2025 surveys. The board agreed to this request.

An update was also given on the Customer Service Workshop, which is being held on the 22 October 2025 in Kilkenny. Currently, WG3 is awaiting proposals from local authorities and noted if sufficient examples of good practice are not received, it may need to reconsider the event. The Secretariat will engage with WG3 further regarding proposals.

WG4 (Financial Management Performance): Update

The WG4 Chair noted that WG4 met last week, where the Public Spending Code (PSC) was discussed, amongst other topics. WG4 is currently awaiting two local authority returns to start the work on this report and it is hoped that the report being published by September.

An update on MyPay was also brought up at the WG4 meeting, with substantial progress under this heading. All local authorities, with the exception of Dublin City Council, were onboard with payroll and it is transitioning over to the system at present.

The audit committee workshop will take place on 4th or 5th November and WG4 will revert to the board, seeking agenda item suggestions. WG4 has also written to the CCMA Corporate Committee regarding the implementation on the recommendations contained within the NOAC Internal Audit report.

5. Scrutiny Programme

The next Scrutiny meeting will take place on the 26th of June with Kerry County Council, with questions and information packs having been previously issued to board members. A further two scrutiny meetings are proposed, to be held in September and October, dependent on availability. Future meetings may be held at the later time of 11:30 a.m., to facilitate attendance of members and local authority personnel for travelling purposes.

6. Local Democracy Taskforce – Update and Submissions

A proposal document was prepared by the Secretariat in advance of the first meeting of this taskforce, and was circulated to members. It was agreed that a reference to NOAC's role on customer service will be inserted under the statutory functions of NOAC. A minor amendment will also be made to the wording of one of the paragraphs of this document, which refers to the legislation. It was further noted that the paper prepared was a guide for the NOAC Chair during his attendance at the Local Democracy Taskforce meetings.

It was noted that at a recent validation meeting with Meath County Council, it was stated that there has been discussions regarding the establishment of a body to monitor the electoral commission. A suggestion was noted that NOAC may take this role, however, it was highlighted that the electoral commission was statutorily set up with outlined functions. Meath county council have agreed to report back to NOAC in due course on this matter

7. NOAC Strategy Away Day

This meeting will take place on Monday 14 July.

8. Update on correspondence received including media query

A media query was recently received, which was responded to by the Secretariat with input from the NOAC Chair. The NOAC Chair thanked the Secretariat for the high quality work at short notice on this piece.

9. Date of next meeting

Tuesday, 23rd September (online)

10. AOB

There was no other business discussed.

Actions:

Agenda item no.	Subject	Action
4.	Work Programme: (WG1)	Additional updates will be finalised on the performance of local government bodies from secondary sources.
4.	Work Programme: (WG2)	NOAC Chair will further consider the issue of retrofitting targets for local authorities.
4.	Work Programme: (WG3)	WG3 will respond to the LGMA's letter regarding the Customer Survey in due course.
6.	Local Democracy Taskforce – Update and Submissions	Minor amendments will be made to this document by the Secretariat.
8.	Date of next meeting	Tuesday, 23 September (online) via Teams.