



Final Board Meeting

Minutes

Tuesday 9 December 2025 at 10.00 a.m.

Venue: Via Teams online platform

Attended by:

Chairperson: Michael McCarthy

Members: Ciarán Hayes John Byrne
Kathleen Holohan Anne Haugh
Miriam McDonald Brian Cawley

Secretariat: Claire Gavin Fergal Corcoran
John Goldrick Valerie Longmore

Apologies: Fiona Quinn Noel Harrington
Margaret Lane Declan Breathnach

1. Minutes and actions of previous meeting

The minutes of the meeting of 18 November were approved.

From a governance perspective, it was decided that from 2026 onwards, board meetings would be numbered and defined as being board meetings. This is to differentiate between such meetings and other meetings where board members are present.

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 Update

Scrutiny Process

The Secretariat advised that next year's Scrutiny meetings would take place in person at the Custom House. Save the dates notices for the first two scrutiny meetings in 2026 have issued to board members. The Secretariat will recommend which local authorities to invite to scrutiny meetings, to ensure that there is no overlap with validation visits.

WG1 (Lgger): Update

The Chair of WG1 advised that no Working Group meeting had taken place since the last board meeting. The Review of Implementation of Corporate Plans 2025- 2029 has recently been published to the NOAC website.

The Work Programme, along with a review of the data on other public bodies measuring the performance of local authorities will be discussed at the next Working Group meeting, which is scheduled for 11 December.

WG2 (Performance Indicators): Update

The Chair of WG2 reported that the Working Group met on 5 December where it discussed the publication of the 2024 Performance Indicator report, in conjunction with the work programme for the upcoming year. The Secretariat is seeking to arrange meetings to engage with various stakeholders regarding the performance indicators.

The WG2 Chair outlined the two proposals put forward by the WG3 Chair for Customer Service, to be included in the Performance Indicators report, which were:

- 1) Do you have a process to track query handling?
- 2) Do you have a process to track complaints?

The WG2 Chair stated that more precision is required in how this data is to be collected. The WG3 Chair had advised that this matter would be discussed at the next WG3 meeting, after which an update would be provided.

WG3 (Communications and Customer Service): Update

The WG3 Chair advised that the Working Group had last met in November. Recently, a change of date was recorded for the Good Practice Seminar, now to be held on 12 March. The main item of business for the WG is the work plan, which will reflect the details of the new Statement of Strategy 2026-2028.

WG4 (Financial Management Performance): Update

In the absence of the WG4 Chair, the head of the Secretariat gave an update to advise that the Working Group had not met since the last board meeting. The WG4 Chair had requested a site visit to MyPay, with an e-mail having issued to members to gauge their interest in attending. Prior to the next Working Group 4 meeting, the head of the Secretariat will meet with the WG4 Chair to discuss the new work programme.

5. NOAC Strategy 2026 – 2028

The Chair acknowledged the huge amount of work and input of the WG3 Chair on the NOAC Strategy, and advised that the members' comments had been taken on board. The Chair of WG3 acknowledged that it had been a significant challenge and brought to a conclusion with the assistance of the head of the Secretariat.

The Secretariat advised that the Strategy was agreed and approved on the 27 November, then sent to the Minister. It was noted that the Minister has 12 weeks to respond, but that in the meantime the Secretariat will request an update. The Secretariat advised that the Strategy document was desktop published and would issue to all members. The Work Programme to accompany the Strategy should be ready for the next board meeting in January.

It was recommended that all WG Chairs have as part of their WP input into the questions for the Scrutiny meetings and attendance at these meetings also to ensure that the priorities for the WG are raised at the meetings.

6. Local Democracy Taskforce – Update

The Chair advised that a meeting of the Taskforce was scheduled for later that day. The Chair advised that discussions had taken place on strengthening the strategic role of the Chief Executives and elected members. The Taskforce is to submit a report to government with recommendations and that, depending on the outcome of the government's decision, it is anticipated that NOAC and the LGAS will have a greater strategic role to play.

Legislation may be enacted which would affect the role of NOAC, perhaps moving to a full time status at board level. The Chief Executives will be required to report on their annual and rolling budgets, and therefore it would be expected that NOAC's role will increase, given the greater scrutiny of local government.

NOAC will meet at an away day to discuss the Taskforce findings, the government's course of action, the potential name change for NOAC, and the resources required to

enable NOAC to perform in this new role. The Chair advised that he would update the members with the outcome of today's taskforce meeting.

7. Changes and Website figures

The Secretariat introduced Fergal Corcoran, a new member of the Secretariat.

A summary of the website's monthly page views from January to November 2025 was provided by the Secretariat. The Homepage, Performance Indicator reports, Press Releases and the Board members page all saw monthly increases in page views. However, the page views might be slightly higher than reported as website visitors who reject cookies are only counted once in the monthly statistics.

Additionally, the Secretariat advised that work to improve the website is ongoing. The board members were asked to review their bios and advise if any changes were required to inform the Secretariat by 19th December in order to update these on the website and for use in the 2025 annual report. It was agreed that a copy of the monthly website statistics would be circulated to the board members.

The WG3 Chair advised that the revision of the website is in its work plan, thanked the Secretariat for its work on improving and driving the website, and advised that solely minimal updates may be required pending decisions from the Taskforce. Interactive performance data for local authorities will be considered as an update to the website format.

8. Proposed dates of meetings 2026 (online)

The Secretariat advised that save the dates for the 2026 board meetings have been issued to the members, and all board meetings with the exception of 21 January would be held online. Additionally, save the dates for two Scrutiny meetings, to be held in person in Custom House, were circulated to the members.

9. Update on correspondence received

The Secretariat advised on all correspondence received since the last meeting, none of which warranted the attention of the board.

10. AOB

The Secretariat stated that the NOAC name has gained recognition, which needs consideration, should there be a proposed change of name to NOAC. It outlined that the word Audit could ideally be changed to Accountability or some other word that might allow NOAC to remain, given the effort that has been made to promote awareness of NOAC.

Actions:

| Agenda item no. | Subject | Action |
|------------------------|--|---|
| 1. | Minutes of meeting on 18 November 2025 approved | The Secretariat to publish these minutes on the website. |
| 4. | Scrutiny Process | The Secretariat is to review the local authorities for Scrutiny meetings to ensure that there is no overlap with those for PI validation meetings. |
| 4. | Working Group 2 | The Secretariat is to arrange meetings with various stakeholders in relation to PIs. |
| 4. | Proposed Questions for inclusion in the Performance Indicator Report | The WG3 Chair is to discuss further at the next WG3 meeting the questions put forward for Customer Service for inclusion in the Performance Indicator report and revert to the WG2 Chair. |
| 5. | NOAC Strategy 2026-2028 | <p>The Secretariat is to follow up with the Minister's office in relation to an update.</p> <p>Desktop published copies of the Strategy will be issued to board members.</p> <p>Work Programme will be advanced and all WGs will have a reference including in relation to the Scrutiny meetings.</p> |
| 6. | Taskforce | The Chair is to update members in relation to the outcome of the Taskforce meetings. |
| 7. | Website | <p>Board members are to review their bios and revert to the Secretariat with any required updates.</p> <p>The Secretariat is to circulate the statistics for the website to the members.</p> |
| 9. | Next board meeting on 21 January | The next Board meeting on the 21 January will take place in person. Members are to confirm their availability. |