



Board Meeting (no. 3 of 2026)

Final Minutes

Wednesday 15th April 2026 at 10:30 a.m.

Venue: Via Teams online platform

Attended by:

Chairperson: Michael McCarthy

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

Secretariat:	Claire Gavin	Alan McDermott
	John Goldrick	Deirdre Byrne
	Valerie Longmore	

1. Minutes and actions of previous meeting

The minutes of the last meeting of 4th March 2026 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. Annual Report – For Approval

The Secretariat advised that the Annual Report was approved at the last board meeting for publication and mentioned the previous discussion regarding NOAC having a newsletter. It was suggested that the Annual Report could serve as a newsletter, which will be distributed with a note from the NOAC Chair to the Chief Executives and Cathaoirleach of all local authorities. The Secretariat advised that the Annual Report could be issued in either soft or hard copies. Additionally, it was noted that there was a delay in the Irish translation of the report, however, once received both Irish and English versions of the report will be combined and printed as a single document.

5. Work Programme:

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

The WG1 Chair advised that the working group met on the 12th March 2026. The main items discussed at this meeting included the ongoing work regarding secondary data sources. The WG1 Chair advised that Maria Graham, who is working on this, joined the meeting and provided an update on meetings with different organisations to identify existing data gaps. She is expected to have a draft report for the next working group meeting, and following its review by the working group, it is hoped that a draft report will be available for the board.

Further, the WG1 Chair advised that they had a meeting with the All-Island Research Observatory (AIRO) at Maynooth, to identify potential research partners. The WG1 Chair noted that AIRO is engaged in similar work and would be available to help. It was also noted that AIRO are aware of the work conducted by NOAC and have worked with several different government agencies.

At the meeting, AIRO delivered a presentation on data presentation techniques, the use of online dashboards, and the functionality of clicking on maps to access relevant information for specific areas. AIRO are familiar with NOAC data and use it, in particular its performance indicator data. They noted that this data is presented in PDF flat format and this could be looked at further. The WG1 Chair clarified that this wouldn't be for the working group to pursue but that a mock-up of how this could be presented in a different format would be worth considering. Additionally, the WG1 Chair proposed the idea of inviting AIRO to a future board meeting.

The WG1 Chair discussed the Corporate Plan report and the possibility of hosting a workshop. A date for this is still to be determined and it could be Autumn before this happens.

One of the board members expressed their support for collaborating with AIRO, indicating a willingness to work together. It was also suggested that both WG's 1 and 3 could meet with AIRO in Maynooth. The Secretariat informed that they had reached out to AIRO and are currently waiting on a date to be confirmed. One of the board members asked if the working group had reached out to the ESRI to see if it would have interest in being a research partner.

A member of WG1 advised that they were very impressed with the presentation given by AIRO, particularly regarding the data and the sources used to gather information. They noted that this could be beneficial for WG2 in relation to trend analysis for the performance indicators.

Additionally, one of the other board members advised that, although it is worthwhile to consider, normal procurement rules apply around such appointments, and there is an EU directive that must be followed regarding data accessibility. It was suggested that support could be sought from IT with DHLGH.

The WG1 Chair gave an overview on the presentation regarding the dashboard and commended the quality of the data collected and observed that clicking on links is more efficient than leafing through documents.

WG2 (Performance Indicators): Update

The Chair of WG2 advised that the working group had not met since the last board meeting. The WG2 Chair extended an invite to WG3 to attend their next meeting scheduled for 23rd April, to discuss performance indicators and customer service. The WG2 Chair advised that work in relation to the Performance Indicators report is ongoing and that the LG Returns system will close next Friday 17th April 2026, for the return of data by the local authorities.

He advised that there had been productive meetings with the Department of Culture, Communications and Sports with the potential for performance indicators coming from these areas, but that feedback was still pending.

One board member asked regarding the schedule of the validation visits. The Secretariat advised that they will be able to distribute dates for the validation meetings after LG Returns closes and after it reopens for a short window to address any issues that could arise.

Another board member noted that from attending the scrutiny meetings, there had been a few issues with the data being presented by the local authority that were highlighted by NOAC and noted that this issue could be impressed on local authorities at the validation visits. This would allow the opportunity to rectify any issues before it is highlighted at scrutiny meetings.

WG3 (Communications and Customer Service): Update

The WG3 Chair outlined that the working group had not met since the last board meeting.

The WG3 Chair advised that the Good Practice Event went extremely well, with higher-than-normal attendance, and thanked the Secretariat for their work. The WG3 Chair

advised that they are working on the Customer Service Workshop for later in the year. She advised that they are scheduled to attend two meetings, one with WG2 in relation to Performance Indicators, and the other with the AILG, to enhance cooperation with elected members.

The WG3 Chair explained that she had attended a meeting in Portlaoise with MyPay. She was very impressed with the cross over to the digital dashboard, and she explained that they have an external firm that created a program that sits on top of Core and extracts information. The WG3 Chair noted that a meeting could be scheduled with this firm but advised that this service is provided through the LGMA.

WG4 (Financial Management Performance): Update

The WG4 Chair advised that the working group hadn't met since the last board meeting, and the next working group meeting is scheduled for next week. She mentioned that she had met with MyPay and that, aside from Dublin City Council, she has all local authorities on board. She advised that she was very impressed with the progress made and by the extremely low error rates with the system.

The WG4 Chair explained that they had received two invitations to attend Audit Committee meetings for Fingal and Meath County Council.

Further, she noted that a request had been received to meet with a delegation from Ukraine on Thursday 16th April with the Chair of NOAC. The purpose of the meeting is to advise of the role of NOAC in Internal Audit of Local Government. The board members will be informed of the outcome of this meeting, after the event.

One of the board members asked for further details on the topics to be discussed at the meeting with the Ukrainian delegation. The WG4 Chair advised that this could be viewed as a valuable engagement and that they were looking for information on how to improve their own management and reforms, as well as how NOAC monitors internal audit.

6. NOAC Scrutiny Process – 2025 process discussion and 2026 proposals

The NOAC Chair stated that the new Scrutiny process is working well and mentioned the heavy workload that the Secretariat must deal with, which includes pre-meeting preparations and the logistics. He expressed his satisfaction with the process and noted the recent interesting interactions with Roscommon County and Galway City Councils. The Secretariat, on request from the NOAC Chair, provided an update on the next Scrutiny meeting, which is scheduled with Tipperary County Council on 7th May 2026. Two further meetings will take place later in the year.

7. Media Engagement – Standing Item

The Secretariat advised that there were no standing items.

8. Update on correspondence received

The Secretariat advise that there were no emails to be brought to the attention of the board.

9. Date of Next Meeting

The next board meeting is scheduled for 19th May 2026 online.

The next Scrutiny meeting is scheduled for 7th May in Custom House.

10. AOB

- **Update on Training**

The Secretariat advised that due to the high volumes of ongoing work, that it was still in the process of addressing this item.

- **Local Democracy Taskforce**

One member requested an update on the Local Democracy Taskforce. It was advised that work is taking place in the background on an implementation plan that will be brought to Government. There are 80 actions across a multitude of bodies, with the expectation to go to Government in the coming weeks and the report will be shared with the board, once possible.

- **Strategy and Appointments**

The Secretariat informed the board that they are awaiting a response from the Minister's office regarding the Statement of Strategy, as well as members renewals. The NOAC Chair advised that he is happy to meet with the Minister to discuss this.

Actions:

Agenda item no.	Subject	Action
1.	Minutes of meeting on 4th March 2026 approved	The Secretariat to publish these minutes on the website.
4.	Annual Report – For Approval	The Irish and English version of the annual report will be combined and circulated to the Chief Executive's and Cathaoirleach's to include a note from the Chair.

5.	Work Programme:	<p>WG1: WG1 Chair to consider date for Corporate Plan Workshop</p> <p>WG2: The Secretariat to provide a link to WG3 members for the next WG2 meeting.</p> <p>WG4: Update to be provided on meeting with Ukrainian delegation.</p>
7.	Local Democracy Taskforce – Update from Chair	The NOAC Chair will consider another date for the presentation on the LDTF
9.	AOB	The Secretariat to address the training options for the board members