



Board Meeting (no. 4 of 2026)
Draft Minutes
Tuesday 19th May 2026 at 2:30 p.m.

Venue: Via Teams online platform

Attended by:

Chairperson:	Michael McCarthy	
Members	Ciarán Hayes	
	Miriam McDonald	Margaret Lane
	Noel Harrington	Declan Breathnach
	Kathleen Holohan	John Byrne
	Anne Haugh	Brian Cawley
Secretariat:	Alan McDermott	Martina Gardiner
	Deirdre Byrne	Valerie Longmore
Apologies:	Fiona Quinn	

1. Minutes and actions of previous meeting

The minutes of the last meeting of 15th April 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 arising¹.

4. Work Programme:

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

The Chair of Working Group 1 (WG1) advised that the group had not met since the previous board meeting held on 15 April 2026. The next WG1 meeting is scheduled for the end of May, at which time the group will meet with Maria Graham to discuss the draft report on secondary data sources. It is anticipated that, following review by the working group, the draft report would be submitted to the Board.

In addition, the WG1 Chair enquired whether the All-Island Research Observatory (AIRO) at Maynooth University had been in contact with the Secretariat regarding the provision of historical data for performance indicators, to facilitate the preparation of a mock-up presentation.

The Secretariat confirmed that they, together with the Chair of WG2, had met with Justin Glesson of AIRO. Following this engagement, data relating to three performance indicators were provided, with the remaining data for a fourth indicator submitted today. AIRO will outline what can be done with the data to enable NOAC to consider and to determine the next steps. AIRO are aware and in agreement that should NOAC wish to develop a data dashboard that public procurement would be required before any provider could be considered.

WG2 (Performance Indicators): Update

The Chair of WG2 advised that the LG Returns system, used for the collection of data for the performance indicators returned by the local authorities had now closed.

He further advised that six local authorities had been selected for the validation visits and noted that both board and WG members had confirmed their availability to attend.

Additionally, the WG2 Chair informed that they had met with AIRO at Maynooth in May. He highlighted the tools available to AIRO to manipulate and interrogate data for trend analysis and noted that it could be very beneficial.

Finally, the WG2 Chair advised that the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI) would not be able to submit the outstanding data in relation to the E5 – Percentage Energy Efficiency Performance as it is required to carry out validation of its data.

¹ A reference to matters arising was noted in the WG4 update via the appointment of a NOAC member to a committee

WG3 (Communications and Customer Service): Update

The WG3 Chair outlined that the working group had a meeting with the Association of Irish Local Government (AILG) on how they could reciprocate website links and strengthen their communications. The WG3 Chair advised that they are awaiting further contact from the AILG in relation to attendance at events.

The WG3 Chair further advised that a proposed meeting with WG2 in relation to the introduction of a customer service indicator did not go ahead. This followed on from discussion that such a performance indicator would be difficult to incorporate into the report. Further discussions were carried out on conducting a mystery shopper survey or a customer service survey of local authorities.

In addition, the WG3 Chair advised that a one-page document in relation to the NOAC Annual Report which included infographics on the work of NOAC had been developed.

Finally, the WG3 Chair advised that work for the Customer Service Workshop is progressing, with the event scheduled to take place on 1st October in Kilkenny.

WG4 (Financial Management Performance): Update

The Chair of Working Group 4 (WG4) advised that the group last met on 22 April 2026. The meeting was attended by Niamh Larkin of the Local Government Audit Service (LGAS) and Michelle McLoughlin of the Value for Money (VFM) Unit and was described as both informative and engaging.

The WG4 Chair acknowledged the valuable work being undertaken by the VFM Unit, noting two recent reports: one on Local Authorities' Differential Rent Schemes and Rent Reviews (published), and another on the role of local authorities in the provision of social housing by the Approved Housing Body sector (to be published). It was further noted that a review of the material contained within these reports could be beneficial to inform discussions at scrutiny meetings. The Chair also highlighted that LGAS welcomed the support of NOAC.

In relation to the Good Practice Seminar, the WG4 Chair advised that the LGAS had enquired about potential next steps arising from the projects presented, including whether any follow-up would be undertaken by the County and City Management Association (CCMA). It was noted that this is an area that NOAC may wish to consider.

The WG4 Chair further advised that she and members of the Secretariat attended a meeting of Fingal Audit Committee on Friday, 15 May. She described the engagement as very positive and noted the local authority's strong interest in enhancing its oversight arrangements and strengthening engagement with NOAC.

The WG4 Chair reported that NOAC met with a Ukrainian delegation on 16 April, with 14 delegates in attendance. It was noted that the NOAC Chair provided a strong contextual overview at the outset of the meeting. The WG4 Chair provided a summary of the engagement, highlighting that the delegation expressed particular interest in NOAC's work, including its role in monitoring internal audit functions within local authorities.

Finally, the WG4 Chair advised that an invitation had been received from Meath County Council to attend its Audit Committee meeting on 21 September 2026.

A NOAC member advised that she had been appointed to the Approved Housing Body Regulatory Committee and noted that the findings of the abovementioned Value for Money (VFM) reports may have implications for the NOAC performance indicators.

The Chair of NOAC extended congratulations to the member on her appointment.

5. NOAC Scrutiny Process – Update and proposed dates by Chair.

The NOAC Chair, provided an update on the next two Scrutiny meetings, which are scheduled with Sligo County Council on 13th October 2026 and Donegal County Council on the 17th November 2026.

6. Bord na Mona Energy Conference – Update by the Chair.

The Chair provided an update on the Bord na Móna Energy Conference, which he attended on 15 May. He advised that a number of significant success stories were highlighted around renewable energy projects across the country, with particular progress noted in the Midlands. The Chair also encouraged board members to identify and bring to the attention of himself and the Secretariat any events that NOAC could attend which would be of strategic benefit.

A board member noted the range of agencies administering grants and funding for similar purposes, often through differing systems, and suggested that greater collaboration across these bodies could improve efficiency. He noted that some local authorities have successfully combined their resources and grant funding with support from the SEAI, enabling estate-wide retrofitting projects to be delivered. The member proposed that NOAC could examine the various grant schemes across these entities and develop recommendations on how such funding streams might be better aligned or integrated. The Chair requested that the member prepare a proposal outlining this concept for submission to himself and the Secretariat.

A member queried the increased responsibilities now assigned to local authorities and asked whether any engagement had taken place with Sport Ireland in this regard. The WG2 Chair advised that he is awaiting an update on this matter from the Secretariat.

7. Media Engagement – Standing Item

The Secretariat advised that the annual report has been circulated to the Chief Executives of the local authorities. As part of this circulation, the Chief Executives were asked to bring the annual report to the attention of the meetings administrator for elected members, as well as other stakeholders, with a one-page summary as agreed. It was also noted that there is a slight delay in printing, but hard copies were circulated.

8. Update on correspondence received

The Secretariat advised that NOAC is copied on a range of correspondence. In this context, it was noted that NOAC was copied on an email to Meath County Council regarding a procurement. The Chief Executive of Meath County Council responded to

this correspondence, following which a further reply issued referencing NOAC as an oversight body with responsibility of the Age Friendly Ireland Shared Service.

The Secretariat sought the board's view on whether a response should issue clarifying that NOAC is not the oversight body in respect of this entity, which sits under the aegis of the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage. It was agreed that no response would be issued by NOAC as the matter was addressed to the CE of Meath County Council.

9. Date of Next Meeting

The next board meeting is scheduled for 22nd July 2026 online.

10. AOB

- **Local Government Audit Service Overview Report 2024.**

The Secretariat advised that the report had been circulated to board members. A member noted that the information contained within the report could be of value in informing scrutiny meetings, particularly in identifying recurring common themes. The Chair of NOAC requested that this item be included on the agenda for the July meeting.

- **Local Democracy Taskforce**

The Chair of NOAC noted that a presentation to be delivered by a Board member on the Local Democracy Taskforce had been deferred. He advised that he would seek to arrange a briefing for members at the earliest opportunity.

Actions:

Agenda item no.	Subject	Action
1.	Minutes of meeting on 15th April 2026 approved	The Secretariat to publish these minutes on the website.
6.	Bord na Mona Energy Conference - Grant funding. Sports Ireland Update	The Chair requested that the WG2 Chair prepare a proposal outlining this concept for submission to the Secretariat. The Secretariat to provide an update on Sports Ireland.
10	AOB	The Secretariat to put the Local Government Audit Service Overview Report 2024 on the agenda for the next board meeting.

10.	AOB	The Chair to arrange a briefing for members on the Local Democracy Taskforce
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