

# Project Ireland 2040 Delivery Board

2<sup>nd</sup> May 2023

Whitaker Room, Department of Public Expenditure, NDP

Delivery and Reform, Government Buildings, Upper Merrion Street,

Dublin 2



Tionscadal Éireann  
Project Ireland  
**2040**

## Minutes

### Participants

Chair: Minister Paschal Donohoe TD

External Board Members: Mary Hughes, PJ Rudden, Sean O'Driscoll, Thomas Barrett, Terry Prendergast.

SG Board Members: David Moloney (DPENDR), Graham Doyle (DHLGH), Jim Breslin (DFHERIS)

In attendance: Áine Stapleton (DHLGH), Paul Hogan (DHLGH), John Conlon, Eoin Dorgan (DPENDR), Fiona O'Connor (Special Advisor to Minister Donohoe).

Secretariat: Kevin Meaney, Margaret O'Donnell, Tom Fleming (DPENDR).

### 1. Introduction from Chair (Minister Donohoe)

Minister Donohoe welcomed the participants to the inaugural meeting of the reconstituted Project Ireland 2040 Delivery Board. The Minister set out the importance of delivering the NDP for the future prosperity of the country, and to achieve critical social and environmental goals. He highlighted the importance of having an external view on the progress of Government in bringing further insights and challenge to the consideration of policy and delivery challenges. The Minister invited that members submit to the Secretariat their views on the top three constraints holding back delivery of the National Development Plan (NDP). The constraints identified will provide a focus of future deliberations of the Board. The Minister also requested that DFHERIS give a presentation at the next meeting on the work they are doing in relation to boosting the skills and labour capacity in the construction and related sectors.

### 2. Draft Terms of Reference of new Board

The draft terms of reference as circulated prior to the meeting were agreed. The Minister said that the key term of reference for this Board was to "Identify system wide responses to resolve any significant cross-cutting issues arising from National Development Plan (NDP) and National Planning Framework (NPF) implementation." The Minister also indicated that more frequent meetings of the Board than those planned quarterly will be considered.

### 3. Presentation on NDP Background

DPENDR gave a short presentation on the NDP focusing on the trends in capital expenditure in the main capital spending Departments over the past few years, the cross-cutting issues impacting on delivery and the trend in capital spending to date in 2023. Members of the Board noted that:

- there is a need to change the narrative on NDP delivery as the majority of projects are delivered on time and on budget reflecting a sound focus on delivery across the state sector.

- in addition to discussion on constraints, the delivery of climate action projects should be a focus for a future meeting, and that officials should be invited to present on these.

The Minister noted that as part of the focus on identifying constraints invitations to attend this Board could be extended to relevant officials and other relevant agencies who can help to address those constraints.

#### **4. Updates on capital investment priorities in the DHLGH – Housing, Water and the Urban Regeneration Development Fund (URDF) from Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage:**

It was noted that capital spending on those three areas was expected to be much stronger in 2023. DHLGH officials updated the Board on developments in relation to planning including the reconstituted An Bord Pleanála, the Planning Bill and the revision of the National Planning Framework (NPF). The Planning Bill was published in January and DHLGH are awaiting final recommendations from the relevant Oireachtas Committee, following the pre-legislative scrutiny process. Members of the Board noted:

- The urgent need to restore confidence in the planning system and provide investor assurance. DHLGH noted that the Bill is a very complex piece of legislation and that the final Act needs to be robust and able to stand up to challenges. MPENDR assured the Board that the Bill is receiving a huge political focus and that it is expected that the second stage of the Bill will be taken in Dáil Éireann before the summer recess and that committee stage will follow after the recess.
- The large number of bodies/agencies involved in housing policy and delivery: Land Development Agency, Housing Authority, the NDFA, local authorities and AHBs could be construed as a barrier to delivery. DHLGH said that there were about 450 AHB's but it is expected that there will be consolidation of those bodies over time and that only a small number of AHBs delivered at scale.
- The small number of builders of scale that are capable of delivering large projects. DHLGH said that over time moving to modern methods of construction, more offsite construction and increased access to skill sets would be a game changer for delivery and attract a different scale of construction firm.

#### **5. Date of next meeting**

The Secretariat will confirm the date of the next meeting.

#### **6. AOB**

No items were raised under any other business.

<b>Actions arising from May 2<sup>nd</sup> 2023 meeting</b>
1. Board Members to submit their top three constraints impeding NDP delivery to the Secretariat by Friday May 12 <sup>th</sup> 2023.
2. DFHERIS to give a presentation at the next meeting on boosting the skills capacity and labour supply in the construction sector.
3. Presentations for future meetings to be circulated in advance and noted on the day of the meeting.