

Department of Public Expenditure and Reform

Management Board Meeting on Friday, 1 April, 2020

Minutes

Attendance

Secretary General, Mr Downes, Ms O'Reilly, Mr Lowry, Dr Fallon Byrne, Ms Godkin, Mr Quinn, Mr Menton, Mr Cagney, Ms Coleman Mr Moloney, Mr Feeney, Mr Howlin, Ms O Donohue, Ms Codd.

1. COVID 19 Policy Issues

The Secretary General gave a high-level overview to the Board on the main policy issue arising to-date in respect of COVID 19 and looked ahead at what they key issues are likely to be over the coming months.

Mr Menton provided an update for the Public Service Pay and Pensions Division including pension issues arising for staff returning to employment, health sector issues and other pay related queries.

Mr Downes updated the Board on the Expenditure Policy and Reporting Division including the overall expenditure position and outlook, the end March Exchequer Returns, Health Vote issues and Project Ireland 2040.

Mr Moloney updated the Board on the Labour Market and Enterprise Policy Division including sectoral matters relating to income supports and transport issues, and wider economic issues.

Ms Coleman provided an update for the Expenditure Management, Structural Funds and Audit Division in relation to EU Structural Funds, North/South issues, and issues in respect of the Education Sector including Special Needs Assistants.

Mr Cagney provided an update to the Board for the Civil Service Human Resources Division including redeployment of staff to critical areas and guidance notes that have been for both the Civil Service and Public Service.

Dr Fallon-Byrne updated the Board on the Reform and Delivery Office including the provision of assistance to other areas of the Department, reassignments from within the Reform and Delivery Office, Public Service Innovation in the context of COVID 19 including Robotic Process Automation, and FOI policy issues.

Mr Quinn updated the Board on the Office of Government Procurement including procurement issues in a number of sectors and construction related issues.

Ms O'Donohue provided an update for the Office of Government Chief Information Officer including the ongoing work with the HSE on the App for contact tracing, digital solutions being used in the current emergency and an update on the number of staff with remote working access.

2. COVID 19 Organisational Issues

Rolling Business Continuity Plan

Mr Feeney updated the Board on the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform's Internal Rolling Business Continuity Plan for Response to the COVID-19 Emergency. This plan is being implemented by the relevant areas and will be updated on a weekly basis.

Remote Working

Mr Feeney provided an update to the Board on Remote Working in DPER in the context of Covid-19 Emergency as at 31 March. The Department now has almost 100% of staff with the capability to work remotely, although a small number of essential staff are attending the office when required. Remote working on this scale is a significant change to the Department's normal operations and all staff have been issued with a document outlining Remote Working Principles.

Temporary Assignment

Ms O'Reilly provided an update to the Board on temporary assignments in response to COVID 19. The Department has not been found wanting in respect of identifying staff have been identified for temporary assignments, with the names a significant number of such staff communicated to HR. Training for the first cohort of staff to assist with the contact tracing is to be carried out remotely later in the week.

3. Ministerial Brief

Work is ongoing to update Ministerial Briefing as required.

4. Any Other Business

Ministerial Management Board – the Minister will join the Management Board meeting next week. Date and time to be confirmed.