DIRECTION UNDER SECTION 33(3) OF THE WATER SERVICES (NO. 2) ACT 2013

WATER SERVICES STRATEGIC PLAN DIRECTION 2024

"The Act" means the Water Services (No. 2) Act 2013

"The Plan" means the Water Services Strategic Plan

I, Darragh O'Brien, Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage, in exercise of the powers conferred on me by section 33(3) of the Water Services (No. 2) Act 2013, hereby give the following direction to be followed by Uisce Éireann in the exercise of its functions under section 33 of the Act.

(1) This direction may be cited as the Water Services Strategic Plan Direction 2024.

(2) This Direction is set in the context of the Plan being the underlying basis for other Uisce Éireann plans and strategic projects.

(3) Uisce Éireann shall, for the performance of its functions under section 33 of the Act, take account of the following in developing the Plan:

a) The Plan should outline the broad strategy for delivering water services over a 25 year period. The Plan should identify objectives, challenges and high level strategies for providing water services over that period as well as identify those other Uisce Éireann plans and strategies that will further support delivery of the Plan.

b) The Plan should define the methods by which it will support balanced regional development and proper planning and sustainable development through supporting key national and regional spatial development strategies and the implementation of such strategies at local level through the development plan process.

c) The following considerations should be integral to the Plan - a strong customer focus; an emphasis on driving efficiencies; energy efficiency; climate change mitigation and adapting to climate change; minimisation of leakage; support for economic development; ensuring the protection of the environment; providing a secure, sustainable and reliable supply of safe drinking water and providing for existing and projected demand for water services which are essential for the nation's health, the economy and the environment.

d) The Plan shall take account of global and local trends in considering what the future operating environment could be in 2050. The Plan shall set out how Uisce Éireann will address the uncertainty around the future operating environment and how efficient and resilient water services will be delivered in the context of this uncertainty.

e) The Plan should take account of the Government's objectives in the Water Services Policy Statement.

f) The Plan should set out how Uisce Éireann's progress in delivery on its strategic objectives will be monitored.

g) The Plan should commence with an executive summary which sets out the main objectives and obligations of Uisce Éireann with respect to the delivery of water services. Such objectives should be written in plain language and should be clear and un-ambiguous in relation to the standard and extent of services Uisce Éireann intends to provide. The executive summary should also set-out the broad commitments in relation to improving levels of service standards including environmental and quality standards, meeting expected demands for water services and investing in its water services infrastructure over the period of the Plan.

h) The Plan should address the following themes:

- Quality water services;
- Risks, challenges and resilience;
- Sustainability – climate change mitigation and adaptation and conservation;
- Efficiency and maximising value;
- Changing customer expectations;
- Supporting communities, housing and economic growth;
- Protecting the environment and biodiversity;
- Developing people;
- Collaboration and partnerships.

i) Uisce Éireann shall comply with section 33 of the Act when preparing the Plan.

GIVEN under my Official Seal,

Minister for the Housing, Local Government and Heritage

this 30 day of February 2024