Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland

Programme Board to oversee the transition to the new International Protection Support Service

Approved Minutes

Date:	28 April 2022
Time:	10:00am
Location:	Video Conference
In Attendance:	Kevin McCarthy (Chair), Carol Baxter; Patricia Doherty; Joseph Doyle; Veronica Healy; Nick Henderson; Bob Jordan; Rosemary Kunene; Brendan Lenihan; Enda O'Neill; Edwina Steele; Julia Tarrant; Tanya Ward. Secretariat: Liz Dornan; Ciara O'Connor (DCEDIY).
Apologies:	David Delaney; Úna Ní Dhubhghaill; Eve Leonard; Paula Quinn; John O'Connor; Patrick O'Sullivan; Jim Walsh.

Ref	Key Decision / Discussion Points
	Welcome and Apologies • Thanked the Programme Board for agreeing to this rescheduled meeting, which was put back due to the war in Ukraine.
1.	**Minutes of 17 February 2022** • The Minutes of the Board's previous meeting were agreed without amendments.
2.	**Updates from Chair** • The Chair noted that there was a meeting between the EAG and the IPSS Transition Team at the beginning of February. The EAG received an updated briefing on the Programme Board, the draft implementation plan, the ownership model, the funding scheme and the justice regularisation programme.

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3.	**AHB Funding Model** • Claire Feeney of the Housing Agency delivered a presentation on the Funding Design Scheme. • The Housing Agency have had some discussions with the Irish Council for Social Housing (ICSH) around how the rent contribution can be calculated if someone is in full-time employment but cannot access other accommodation. • International Protection (IP) Loan and Availability Contract (LAC) is the name for the new model that will be concentrated on until the end of 2022. • It was suggested that a sub-committee meeting be held to review the model before it is rolled out to ensure that the funding model is appropriate and is also value for money. Issues such as timelines, capacity and willingness of residents to transition to the new model all need to be considered as well. • It was noted that people currently in Direct Provision do not pay rent and utilities, therefore might be reluctant to transition to a new model where they are expected to pay rent. The issue of AHBs taking on debt capacity and then the reversion of property ownership back to the State was mentioned. • Assessing the capacity of the sector will vary from AHB to AHB. If an AHB has Tier 2 borrowing status they can put forward a proposal to DCEDIY stating how they will fund and manage the properties. • The aim for this year is to have 100 properties acquired and to start moving people in Q3. It was noted that CYPSCs mentioned in the White Paper offer supports that will be critical for planning purposes and moving young people into Phase Two accommodation. • It was noted that over the next 6 – 9 months the Department of Justice is working hard to clear the backlog of difficult long-term cases that are

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	still in the system. The Department of Justice is on track to make 6 months' processing times possible. • The Housing Agency noted that there will be one further meeting with the ICSH next week and there will then be engagement with a couple of AHBs individually. • It was noted that the White Paper envisaged a capacity of 3,500 applicants for Phase Two accommodation. At the current rate over the last 4 months, the number of applicants we can expect over a year is 4,700. The Programme Board is going to need to get regular updates in the future on the flow of people through the system in order to monitor what is set out in the White Paper
4.	**Progress Update** • The IPSS Transition Team gave a presentation showing that progress is ongoing in relation to the implementation plan, tracking outcomes and deliverables, the risk committee and the memorandum for government. • The Minister is thankful for the work completed by the subgroup and the Programme Board in relation to the ownership model. • Assistance was offered on working through the issues around transition into Phase Two accommodation.
5.	**Programme Board's First Progress Report** • This report contains information on who the Programme Board are, specific roles, terms of reference and tasks completed. • It lays out key priorities for 2022 but feedback is welcomed. • It was noted that the progress report is helpful and the communications element is good. The KPIs are mentioned as a key priority for 2022. Circumstances have changed since the White Paper was written; this needs to be acknowledged to the public.

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	• It was noted that it is positive that the stakeholder engagement with the NGO sector will be held on a quarterly basis. The report itself could be expanded upon in a few ways. It would be useful to let people hear the discursive points that have been made over the course of the Programme Board's meetings in relation to children and young people. • The HSE received additional resources to provide further supports. It was noted that what is happening at pre-reception stage means that resources have to be diverted. • The Chair said this is a report from the Programme Board to the Minister – the Programme Board report could then be presented by the Minister to government. • It is worth articulating that this is a complex and risky project. The Chair agreed that the context piece is a very important point that should be included in the Programme Board progress report. • The IPSS Transition Team noted that input for the implementation plan is currently being sought from other stakeholders and that accuracy in the plan must be ensured before publication. • The IPSS Transition Team requested observations from the Programme Board on the report. A follow up email will be sent to board members.
6.	**Update from the Department of Justice** • An undocumented scheme went live on the 7th of February – there have been approximately 600 applications. There are approximately 4,000 people who are eligible, who have been in the system for over two years. There are consistently over 100 interviews a week being scheduled. It is hoped that face to face interviews will resume as restrictions start to ease going forward. • The paperless process for International Protection applicants is progressing.

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	• It was noted that unaccompanied minors are not in a position to make an application in their own right. When an application for protection is made for an unaccompanied minor, the social worker makes the application on their behalf. • Tusla and social workers are happy to apply for children for this scheme, on their behalf.
8.	**A.O.B.** • There is a tender at the moment for accommodation centres for existing IPAS centres. Short term capacity constraints may be seen in the existing system – the new tender is of a much higher standard than before. There is a risk within this sector if the tender is only going to be for two years. • The Chair said we will see what the response to the current Request For Tender (RFT) but noted that there is definitely a risk.
9.	**Agree next meeting date** • The 16 June 2022 will be the date of the next meeting. • The Chair closed the meeting.