

Minutes of Irish Fiscal Advisory Council Meeting (22nd August 2023)

Online

9.00am-12.30pm, Tuesday 22nd August 2023

Present

Dr Michael McMahon (Acting Chair)

Ms Dawn Holland

Dr Adele Bergin

Mr Alessandro Giustiniani

Attending

Dr Eddie Casey

Mr Niall Conroy

Mr Killian Carroll

Mr Brian Cronin

Ms Karen Bonner

Ms Áine Stokes

Apology

Mr Kevin Timoney

Proceedings

1. Admin/Financial

- **Declarations of interest:**

There were no declarations of interest.

- The Council **approved the minutes** of the meeting of the Council held on 24th July 2023. Dawn proposed and Alessandro seconded them.

- **Matters arising**

It was confirmed that the additional information, sought by the Department in respect of the implementation of the OECD recommendations, regarding staffing grades and resourcing the position of chair on an up to half time basis has been provided.

The Department has advised that the upcoming Public Appointment Service (PAS) State Board's Competition will mirror previous campaigns for Council Members (including a Chairperson) at the usual standard rate of remuneration. In this regard the Department prepared drafts of the PAS Information booklet and State Boards Vacancy Notice, for review and feedback, for a competition to fill the current vacancy of Chairperson, and any further vacancy[ies] for Ordinary Member's on the Council which may arise in 2023/2025. The Council will again indicate a strong preference for advertising the position of Chairperson separately and on an up to half time basis.

- **For noting**

The Minister's response to the FAR May 2023 was received on 27 July 2023 and is published on the Council's website.

- **Standing items:**

- **Purchases and Receipts book:** The Council reviewed the Purchases and Receipts book for July 2023.
- **Recruitment Update:**

Fee structure payment arrangements are being finalised with the University and the student in respect of the partial PhD Scholarship Programme.
- The Council received no **Parliamentary Questions** since the last meeting.
- **FOI Update:** The Council received two FOI requests since the last meeting.
- **Audit and Risk Committee Minutes**

The next A&RC meeting will be arranged in late August/early September to coincide with the completion of the 2022 C&AG audit.

- **Management Accounts:** The management accounts for Q3 2023 will be available for review and approval in early October.
- The A&RC will review Section 4 (Governance and Structure) of the **Risk Register** at its next meeting for subsequent review by the Council.
- **Info Security/GDPR:** There were no matters to report.
- **EU IFIs**
The EU IFI Network ESCB Workshop will take place in Frankfurt on 19-20 September.
- **Recent and Forthcoming Meetings:**
Forthcoming:
 - EU IFI Network ESCB Workshop: Frankfurt, 19 & 20 September.
 - The proposed date for the Council appearance before the Oireachtas Budgetary Oversight Committee is 20 September 2023 @ 5.30pm.
 - Forthcoming Council meetings 2023: September dates regarding the endorsement process include 12 (benchmark call), 22 (remote) and 26 (in person with representatives from the Department of Finance).
 - Forthcoming Audit and Risk Committee meeting 2023 @ 9.30am: late-August/early-September to coincide with completion of audits and 15 November.

Communications

An update was provided in respect of recent communication activity.

2. Pre-Budget Statement

The Council discussed the proposed content and timelines for the Pre-Budget Statement working towards

a planned release date of 6 September with a press briefing the previous day.

3. Internship project update

Áine presented an update on the Summer Internship project regarding estimating the 'additional cost growth' in Irish healthcare expenditure for the health section of future updates of the Council's Long-term Sustainability Report.

4. Climate Paper

The Council reviewed and discussed the draft working paper - 'What climate change means for Ireland's public finances'. The draft has been circulated for peer review and it is planned to finalise the paper for publication in October.

5. Summer Work Plans

An update was provided in respect of other Summer Work.

The 'Estimating spending multipliers in Ireland using the narrative approach' working paper was published on 8 August.

The 2020 Summer Internship General Government Universe project blog and dynamic visual will be published shortly.

6. AOB

There was no other business.

On behalf of the Council and Secretariat Michael thanked Áine and Cian for their contribution and participation in the Summer Internship Program

Eddie outlined the upcoming endorsement process and timelines. There will be a call on 12 September in respect of benchmarks, followed by endorsement meetings on 22 and 26 September.