

Minutes of 3rd Meeting of the Civil Service Accountability Board (CSAB)

Department of the Taoiseach, 21 July 2016

Present

Taoiseach

Minister for Public Expenditure & Reform

Minister for Children and Youth Affairs

Dorothy Scally

Bernie Gray

Shane Bissett

Paul Farrell

Martin Fraser

Robert Watt

Niall Cody

Seán O Foghlú

John Shaw (Secretary)

Apologies

Tánaiste and Minister for Justice and Equality

Item 1 – Introduction

The Taoiseach noted that the Board hadn't met since November 2015 due to the General Election and extended period of negotiations in advance of Government formation. Three new members have been appointed reflecting new Ministerial appointments.

The Taoiseach indicated that a schedule of meetings for the year ahead would be arranged.

Item 2 – Report of Last Meeting and Matters Arising

The Board agreed to the Minutes of the last meeting as circulated and noted that they would be published.

Item 3 – Programme of Organisational Capability Reviews

The Committee noted the paper circulated. A pilot review is underway in the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport, and a second pilot Department will be selected in due course. It was agreed that the methodology is comprehensive, but will need to take account of the varying roles of individual organisations to be reviewed. Any further specific feedback on the methodology from Board members would be welcome.

Item 4 – Whole of Government pathfinder projects

The Board received an update based on the paper circulated. It noted that work has been completed on the overall model for testing to apply in the three pathfinder projects. The Board discussed the approach set out in the paper and a number of issues arising including:

- the rationale for choosing the three different pathfinder projects
- the extent to which there are project plans for each of the projects
- the extent to which there are outcomes identified for each of the projects

- the extent to which different project management approaches are being advanced in the projects and how this work links in with the project management strand of Civil Service renewal
- how the progress can be assessed and how there can be comparisons with projects which are not testing the same model.

It was agreed there would be a short presentation on the public services card project at a future meeting of the Board.

It was also agreed that Board members would be sent details on the project plans and outcomes identified for the three projects.

Item 5 – Performance Management System for Secretaries General

The Board noted the paper circulated and that an initial round of objectives set by Secretaries General in early 2016 had been considered by the Performance Review Group (comprising Martin Fraser, Robert Watt and Bernie Gray) in advance of the General Election. Secretaries General have now been asked to prepare revised objectives following the formation of the Government and restructuring of Departments. A number of issues arising were discussed including:

- while accepting that it operates in a complex environment, there is a need for greater clarity around the process itself
- the nature of objectives to be included, and the balance between personal and organisational objectives
- the need, at a minimum, to ensure timely and 100% completion of the process
- the need for greater resourcing of the process and support for the Performance Review Group.

It was agreed that the Performance Review Group would meet again shortly to consider the issues arising including the need for greater resourcing of the process.

Item 6 – Performance Indicators / Metrics for the Board

The Board agreed that short-term KPIs for the next twelve months would be set based on the paper circulated, subject to inclusion of a more quantitative metric where possible.

Item 7 – AOB

The Board noted the significant progress recorded in the Report on Civil Service Renewal recently published by the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform.

It was agreed that the Board would prepare an annual report at the end of 2016.

Department of the Taoiseach
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