



# National Oversight & Audit Commission NOAC

International Service Design Conference  
Fota Island Resort Cork

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# NOAC – What is it ?

- National Oversight and Audit Commission - NOAC
- Statutory body established on 1<sup>st</sup> of July 2014
- Established via the Local Government Reform Act 2014
- The aim is to bring an added dimension of independent scrutiny to local government performance at local, national and regional level

# NOAC – What are its functions?

- a) Scrutinise performance against relevant indicators
- b) Scrutinise financial performance in respect of financial resources
- c) Support best practice development and enhancement
- d) Monitor and evaluate adherence to Service Level Agreements
- e) Oversee implementation of LG sector national policy by LAs
- f) Monitor and evaluate public service reform implementation by LAs
- g) Monitor adequacy of regional assembly and LA corporate plans and evaluate their implementation
- h) Take steps under these functions to produce reports requested by a Minister under section 126D
- i) Produce reports under its own initiative
- j) Any other functions conferred by Ministerial order

# **NOAC – What experience do the members bring ?**

Chaired by Pat McLoughlin (who chaired both the LGER and LGER Implementation Group)

The other members are;

- former LA Chief Executives
- former Councillors
- a former Comptroller and Auditor General
- a former Board member of the former National Consumer Agency
- the DG of RGDATA
- an officer of the Minister
- a Chief Investment Officer of a financial services group

# NOAC Membership

- Pat McLoughlin
- John Buckley
- Tara Buckley
- Constance Hanniffy
- David Holohan
- Paul Lemass
- Michael McGreal
- Martina Moloney
- Sharon O'Connor
- Colleen Savage

# NOAC – How it operates

- NOAC's functions are broad so a decision was taken to establish sub-groups to deal with specific aspects
- 7 sub-groups have been established to date including;
  - Performance Indicators (PIs)
  - Housing
  - Customer Survey
  - Public Spending Code
  - Financial Performance
  - LEO
  - PMO Projects
- Will mainly operate by way of thematic reviews of LA activities

# **NOAC Overview (07/2014 – 26/9/2017)**

- Established 07/2014
- 2 staff
- 21 Board meetings (2014: 3, 2015: 9, 2016: 9, 2017: 7)
- 12 Reports on LA activities
- 8 Governance reports
- c. 15 sub-group meetings p.a.

# NOAC Partners

- Secretary General Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government & officials in several Departments
- County and City Management Association
- Local Government Audit Service
- Audit Committees
- Internal Audit



# NOAC Reports

- Local Authority Corporate Plans – November 2015
- Performance Indicators Report 2014 – December 2015
- Tenant Survey – December 2015
- Public Spending Code 2014 – February 2016
- Efficiency Review Reforms – April 2016
- Shared Services – April 2016
- Rates Collection – April 2016
- Financial Performance of LAs – April 2016
- Public Spending Code 2015 – July 2016
- Private Rented Sector – October 2016
- Performance Indicators 2015 – November 2016
- NOAC Management and Maintenance Review – May 2017
- Performance Indicators 2016 – very shortly

# Performance Indicator Variations 2016

- Improvements in housing stock and vacancy rate, but 19% increase in homeless adults in emergency accommodation and lengthening of average re-letting times
- Donegal only LA below 50% for online motor tax, but Dublin LAs at 83%
- New buildings notified to LAs increased by 37% and a quarter were inspected
- Calls to attend fires reduced by 4% and to attend other emergencies increased by 10%
- Library visits declined by 1.8% and averaged 3.61 per person
- Paid certified sick leave rose by 6.8% to 3.76% nationally with 21 LA's at a rate in excess of 3.5%
- All LAs, bar Co. Galway, running a deficit in 2015 reduced the deficit in 2016 and 3 LAs eliminated it
- Rates collection performance improved to a median rate of 82.3%
- Net jobs created with LEO assistance up 6%; there were 7,564 participants in mentoring scheme

# NOAC Recommended re Pis:

- LAs to establish targets to assist in assessment of outcomes
- Present targets and outcomes to Management Team, elected members and Audit Committees
- Analyse cost indicators to understand underlying significant variation
- Compare outcomes with similar profile authorities

# Management & Maintenance of LA Housing

- large variations in LA staff assigned to management - Dublin City: 1 WTE per 66 dwellings / Galway County: 1 WTE per 1,197 dwellings
- vacancy rates varied from 0.2% in Wicklow to 8% in Roscommon
- 993 of Dublin City's 1,355 vacant properties have been kept empty pending planned demolition or refurbishment work
- a full cost benefit analysis should be carried out to underpin any decision to set aside a dwelling for a planned development that may not happen for some time
- 17 LAs have energy retrofitted at least half their dwellings
- only 15 LAs have ever carried out a condition survey of their housing stock
- only 5 of these survey their stock at regular intervals

# Private Rented Sector

- No common basis for selection of accommodation for inspection
- Range of properties inspected from <2% to >20%
- 55% non-compliant
- 22 LAs did not make copies of inspection reports available to tenants
- Cost of inspections ranged from €47 in Mayo to €775 in Louth

# Shared Services Report

- Original LEGR identified areas to be examined
- 19 projects managed by the PMO classified as Shared Services
- Savings identified
  - MyPay: €5.1m
  - ICT: €1.4m
  - Procurement: €3.2m
- Lack of progress for various reasons in Treasury, Legal, Veterinary, Laboratory, Motor Tax, Accounts Payable

# Local Government Efficiency

- 106 Recommendations
- 69 have been or are being implemented
- 15 being implemented by way of policy modification
- 8 are on hold
- 14 where no progress has been made or decision taken not to implement
- Annual savings of €586.6m, 80% of which is payroll

# Survey of Local Authority Social Housing Tenants

- 1,778 Contacts, 758 Interviewed, 43% Conversion Rate
- Satisfaction with neighbourhood – Very: 56%, Fairly: 31%
- Satisfaction with condition and maintenance – Very: 39%, Fairly: 42%
- Emergency Repair works (contact) – Yes: 46%, No: 54%
- Responsiveness to non-emergency within target or reasonably quick –  
Always: 41%, Sometimes: 35%
- Overall satisfaction – Very: 32%, Fairly: 21%



# Local Authority Corporate Plans (2015-2019)

published November 2015

- Satisfied as to their adequacy for meeting relevant statutory requirements
- Significant variations in the approaches followed
- Scope to improve the quality and commitment to corporate planning in some areas
- Improvement needed in consultation with principal internal and external stakeholders
- Key Issues:
  - How can corporate planning improve the delivery of service?
  - Does the Department have to be more specific in its guidance to ensure this?

# NOAC 2017 Work Plan

- Existing work on Performance Indicators, Public Spending Code, Financial Performance
- Complete Housing Management and Maintenance Review
- Start Evaluating Corporate Plan Implementation
- Customer Survey desktop analysis and workshop in November
- Organise Best Practice showcase event
- Review individual authority performance

# Partnership Working

- Leverage statutory functions of NOAC/LGAS – understanding reached with LGAS
- Leverage knowledge of LGAS Auditors from Financial Performance of LA to overall sector performance
- Combination of fact based reviews by LGAS and VFM studies by NOAC and LGAS
- Must move from analysis to performance improvement



# What has worked ?

Better evidence to support decision making

Leadership by the Chief Executives

Project Management approach

Getting buy in from all authorities

Leveraging the knowledge of local management

# Next Phase

- Concentrate on spreading best practice
- Analysis of individual authorities
- How are consumers needs addressed?
- Revisit previous areas of work
- Local authorities facing challenges of a growing economy



**Thank - you**