



**Minutes of the 444<sup>th</sup> NESC Council Meeting (in person), 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022 @ 10am**

**The Clock Tower, Department of Education, Marlborough Street**

**Attendance:** Elizabeth Canavan (Chair), Brid O’Brien, Sean Healy Saoirse Brady, Dave Hegarty (DETE), Damian McDonald, TJ Flanagan, Paul Donnelly, Philip Hamell, Geraint Ellis, Paul Hogan (DHPCLG), Ian Talbot, Tom Parlon, Edgar Morgenroth, Rónán Hession (DEASP), Matt McGann (DoFinance), Jasmina Behan (DPER) Barry Vaughan (DoT). Sinead O’Flanagan, Caroline Whyte, Karen Ciesielski, and Oonagh Duggan listened to proceedings on vc.

**Secretariat:** Larry O’Connell, Damian Thomas, Niamh Garvey, Helen Johnston, Cathal FitzGerald, Anne-Marie McGauran, Jeanne Moore, Noel Cahill, Edna Jordan, Jenny Andersson, Elaine Kennedy, and Gaye Malone.

**Apologies:** Patricia King, Kevin Callinan, John Enright, Michelle Norris, Orlaigh Quinn (Dave Hegarty attending), John McKeon (Ronan Hession attending), David Moloney (Jasmina Behan attending) and Mark Griffin (no Alternate).

**1. Minutes of the Meeting December 2021.** These were agreed.

**2. Lessons from the Pandemic for Public Policy in Ireland: Interim Report.**

Members welcomed this report. Issues raised included: it may be too early to reflect on learning from managing the pandemic, but there is value in noting lessons learnt to date before they are forgotten; the heterogeneity of crises faced, with war, food and energy security crises now; the need for risk assessment and contingency exercises; the different phases and scales of managing the pandemic; useful developments for data gathering and modelling; addressing concerns around data gathering, data use and information provision; the importance of pre-existing networks, structures, ways of working, adaptability and trust; the need to engage with a range of sectors and groups at all stages; the importance of resources, which may not be available at the scale used during Covid; the issues of redeployment and capacity; the importance of focusing on vulnerabilities, including co-existing vulnerabilities; and the role of the local vs central, and of the private sector. The report will be finalised by written procedure.

**3. Exploring Place-based Opportunities for Policy and Practice in Transition**

Issues noted included: the need for continuing discussion with a range of groups on the social aspects of the Just Transition; more reference to broader policy context, recent policies and data; more specifics on how to move forward, the mechanics of a place-based approach and building capacity for the Just Transition; a more critical assessment of approaches used internationally; whether suggestions on alternative employment (local food markets, tourism, new jobs with similar T&C to current) are realistic; the need for sensitivity on the role and identity of farmers. The comments will be fed back to the report authors, and the Council comments on the report will be adapted to take the Council discussion into account.

**4. Updates on other projects**

The launch of the Shared Island report will take place on 12 April, and papers on housing and agriculture will be brought to the June Council meeting.

**5. AOB:**

This is the last meeting of the current Council, and the Chair thanked members for their excellent work. Invitations for new nominations have been issued. The Chair asked members to bear gender balance in mind when nominating.

**The next meeting will take place on Thursday, 30<sup>th</sup> June 2022.**