



Minutes of the 419th NESCC Council Meeting, 20th March 2015

The meeting took place in The Clock Tower, Department of Education and Skills, Marlborough St, at 10 am.

Attendance: John Shaw (Chair), Oísín Coghlan, Frank Allen, Seamus O'Donohoe, Gavan O'Leary, Mike O'Sullivan, John McHale, Bríd O'Brien, Seán Healy, Karen Murphy, Michelle Norris, Ian Talbot, David Hegarty, Edgar Morgenroth, Shay Cody, and John McCarthy.

Secretariat: Rory O'Donnell, Larry O'Connell, Jeanne Moore, Helen Johnston, Damian Thomas, Noel Cahill, John Sweeney and Richard Holland.

Apologies: Patricia King, Mary Walsh, Mary Daly, Danny McCoy, Tom Parlon, Michael Ewing, John Murphy, Pat Smith, Tony Donohoe, Siobhán Egan, Séan Ó Riain and Sally Anne Kinahan.

1. **Minutes of the Meeting of February 2015** were approved.
2. **Discussion:** Rory O'Donnell introduced two papers for discussion *Private Rental: Secure Occupancy and Affordable Supply*; and *Active Land and Housing Supply Management: Now is the Time*. The Council strongly welcomed both reports and the balance and sophistication they can bring to debate in this area, particularly in relation to rental and its role in the wider housing system and to the question of housing supply.

The issues discussed included rent regulation and rent certainty, highlighting the positive impacts of flexible, market-conforming approaches; while also noting potential theoretical and practical limitations of rent control, particularly possible negative impacts on housing supply. Members welcomed the focus on supply-side incentives with conditionality and also noted the need to think about how more housing might be provided at a given price. This could come about if the sector found ways to reduce its costs, such as through adoption of new technology and new management techniques associated with a more modernised construction sector. The role of international investors and international developers was also highlighted. Members welcomed the emphasis on cost rental as beneficial for tenants, the state and providers and also for investors and off-balance sheet funding. It was noted that some confusion continues to exist in relation to meaning of cost rental. Members emphasised the damaging impact that rent inflation is having on competitiveness and business, in Dublin but also in major towns such as Dundalk. Other issues noted included the need to consider how PRTB resources might be used more effectively, for example the use of IT and online solutions; the importance of incentives being time-bound; and the importance of regional dimension in housing policy, in particular in relation to how incentives shape the location of housing development.

The Council agreed that both reports be adopted by written procedure, be sent to Government and then published. The Council noted the need to consider carefully how the rental report is communicated. It was also noted that further discussions will take place with D/ECLG and D/Taoiseach and other stakeholders to support the finalisation of the paper on Active Land and Housing Supply Management.

3. Other Business:

The next meeting was set for: **Friday, 17th April 2015**, Clock Tower, 10.00 a.m.