



Minutes of the 416th NESC Council Meeting, 19th December 2014

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

Attendance: Martin Fraser (Chair), Pat Smith, Frank Allen, Edmond Connolly, Mike O'Sullivan, Gavan O'Leary, Seán Ó Riáin, James Doorley, Brid O'Brien, Seán Healy, Karen Murphy, Mary Walsh, Tony Donohoe, Ian Talbot, David Hegarty, Karin Dubsky, Michelle Norris, John Murphy, Shay Cody, David Begg, Manus O'Riordan and Bairbre Nic Aongusa,.

Secretariat: Rory O'Donnell, Larry O'Connell, Jeanne Moore, Helen Johnston, Anne-Marie McGauran, Noel Cahill, Paula Hennelly and Richard Holland.

Apologies: Michael Ewing, Theresa Carter, Oisín Coghlan, Edgar Morgenroth, Mary Daly, Sally Anne Kinahan and John McCarthy.

1. **Minutes of the Meeting of November 2014** were approved.
2. **Presentation from Bairbre Nic Aongusa, Assistant Secretary, Department of Environment, Community and Local Government on the Social Housing Strategy and Construction 2020:** Members welcomed the presentation and in particular the ambition underpinning the SHS and the highlighted links between both strategies.

In relation to the SHS issues discussed included the degree to which the SHS represents a fundamental change in housing policy; the challenge of implementation and prioritisation; ongoing oversight and annual review of the SHS and its five work streams; the recently-announced European investment funding proposals as a potential support for off-Government balance sheet investment in social housing and other social infrastructure; an expanded role for NAMA; the advantages of the Housing Assistance Payment (HAP), the practical challenges it faces and the risk of costs increasing; affordability and the development of cost rental; the need for strategic management of the AHB sector; access to finance for Local Authorities; the value for money of the public private partnership in the SHS; progress and policy in relation to vacant properties and ghost estates; and deposit retention and forthcoming changes to the role of the Private Residential Tenancies Board.

In relation to the wider housing system issues raised included: the continuing need to tackle the question of supply; the scale of the challenge associated with providing support for a quarter to one third of the population; the importance of rental reform and security of tenure; finance; planning and reform; costs and VAT; building standards and regulation including in relation to one-off housing; mortgage lending and impact of proposed new ceilings on loan to value and loan to income ratios; and the environmental impact associated with current planning permissions

3. **Summary of Work in 2014 and Note on Work in Early 2015:** This item was deferred.
4. **Council Meeting Dates for 2015:** were circulated to members.
5. **Other Business:** None

The next meeting was set for: **Friday, 16th January 2015**, Clock Tower, 10.00 a.m.