



## **Minutes of the 422<sup>nd</sup> NESC Council Meeting, 18<sup>th</sup> September 2015**

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

**Attendance:** John Shaw (Chair), Seán Ó Riáin, John McHale, Michael O’Sullivan, Karen Murphy, Seán Healy, Bríd O’Brien, James Doorley, Tony Donohoe, Gavan O’Leary, Simonetta Ryan, Dave Walsh, Ian Talbot, Michael Ewing, Edgar Morgenroth, Mary Walsh, Siobhán Egan, Oisín Coghlan, Karin Dubsy, Seamus O’Donohoe, Frank Allen, Pat Smith, Edmond Connolly, David Hegarty, and John Murphy.

**Secretariat:** Rory O’Donnell, Larry O’Connell, Anne-Marie McGauran, Jeanne Moore, Helen Johnston, Damian Thomas, Noel Cahill and Richard Holland.

**Apologies:** Anna Davies, Patricia King, Mary Daly, Shay Cody and John McCarthy.

**1. Minutes of the Meeting of June 2015** were approved.

### **2. Ireland’s Reconstruction**

The Director gave an overview of the ‘Reconstruction Project’ and this was followed by a presentation on the two papers prepared by the Secretariat:

Paper 1: Vision and Developmental Projects

Paper 2: Context for Developmental Projects

There was a wide ranging discussion of the two papers, with a particular focus on paper 1 Vision and Developmental Projects. Council members saw the papers as a good starting point for discussion of national challenges. Members were generally supportive of the five developmental projects that the Secretariat had selected, although there was some discussion about the possibility of expanding this list to include other strategic issues. Some suggested additional areas (such as developments in the EU and issues arising from international trends) and others proposed criteria for selection of themes. The view was expressed that aside from being important individually the projects should be seen as an integrated developmental package; each of its elements could make it easier to address the others. This was significant given some recurrent policy dilemmas and weaknesses in Ireland. It was argued that there is a spatial and planning dimension to all five of the developmental projects. The focus on reform, implementation and institutions was strongly endorsed. Members argued that the effectiveness of reformed services and public bodies, in a number of policy areas, should not be taken for granted. The analysis of infrastructure was seen as important and worth further development.

In responding to the members comments, the Director noted that in relation to the proposed project on Climate Change there is merit in incorporating a stronger focus on biodiversity and water quality.

### **3. Other Business:**

The next meeting was set for: **Friday, 16<sup>th</sup> October 2015**, Clock Tower, 10.00 a.m.