



Minutes of the 427th NESC Council Meeting, 28th September 2017

The meeting took place in Clock Tower, Dept of Education, Marlborough St at 10.00hrs.

Attendance: Liz Canavan (Deputy Chair), Robert Watt, Philip Hamell, David Hegarty, James Doorley, Bríd O'Brien, Oonagh Duggan, Kate Ruddock, Maeve McElwee, Dermot Mulligan, Gavan O'Leary, Patricia King, Tom Geraghty, Terry Corcoran (DEASP), and Edgar Morgenroth.

Secretariat: Rory O'Donnell, Anne Marie McGauran, Damian Thomas, Helen Johnston, Jeanne Moore, Larry O'Connell, Noel Cahill, Sineád Nic Coitir, and Richard Holland

Apologies: Martin Fraser (Chairperson), Shay Cody, Michael Ewing, Seán Healy, Michelle Norris, Tom Parlon, John McCarthy and Ian Talbot

The meeting was chaired by Liz Canavan (Deputy Chair).

1. Minutes of the Meeting May 2017: Approved

2. The chair introduced the proposed Council Work Programme which was unanimously by the Council

- a) A Key Social Challenge: Low Work Intensity Households, Quality Tailored Services and Participation;
- b) Climate Change: Governance of the Low-Carbon Transition;
- c) Land Value, Land Use and Urban Development

3. Discussion of Draft Report on Low Work Intensity Households:

Following a presentation from the NESC Secretariat, was Council discussed the draft report. The following observations were made:

- The report should place Ireland's jobless household rate in a comparative international context.
- It should document some of the policy and institutional changes in place, including those whose full impact has yet to be felt, and highlight which policy initiatives have worked and which have been less effective.
- The sample is a cohort of individuals/households for whom the current system is not working. The question is: what do we need to do differently for this group?
- Particular policies can create disincentives to transitioning from welfare to work. There may also be disincentives at an institutional level that constrain collaboration across service providers.
- The Council should be clear about its conclusions and be prepared to bring forward new recommendations that will help to address the issue of low work intensity households. One suggestion was an adult apprenticeship scheme.
- In reporting the interviews, the work needs to be careful that it does not inadvertently perpetuate some of the myths regarding jobless households.
- The work has brought to surface the importance of softer issues such as trust, kinship and networks and the state should be mindful of these in its ongoing policy work;
- It was suggested that NESC might have a role in evaluating the pilots set out in the Action Plan on Jobless Households.

4. Council sanctioned the posting of the Research Paper, "*Reflections on Infrastructure Policy and Institutional Development in the UK*" on the NESC website in the name of the Secretariat.

5. The next meeting was set for Thursday 14th December 2017.