

Regulation Committee Meeting 33

Minutes

April 30th, 2020



Date	30 th April 2020
Venue	Zoom
Time	11.00am – 1.00pm
Chaired by	Eddie Lewis (E.L.)
Committee Members Present	Donal McManus (DmcM), Oonagh Breen (O.B.), Ronan Heavey (R.H.), Margaret Geraghty (M.G) (until 12pm)
In attendance	Susanna Lyons (S.L.) (Head of Regulation, RO, Housing Agency) Jenny Murphy (J.M) (Secretary to the iRC, RO, Housing Agency) Steven Sheridan (S.S.) (Head of Performance and Communication, RO, Housing Agency) Miriam Kavanagh (M.K.) (Head of Financial Regulation, Governance and Registration, RO, Housing Agency) Ken Jackson (K.J.) (Engagement Leader, RO, Housing Agency) Catherine Rawson (DHP&LG)

Agenda Items

1. Apologies

- Michael Cameron and Paul Lemass sent apologies

2. Declaration of Interest

- No declarations of interest

Part 1 – Consent Agenda Items

3.

- a. Minutes
- b. Head of Regulation Report
- c. Assessment Programme Update

Outcome

Consent Agenda items agreed by Committee.

4. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

5. Regulation & Covid-19 – Regulatory Changes

J.M. outlined the key regulatory changes implemented by the Regulation Office due to the ongoing pandemic. The Regulation Office postponed the issuance of the remainder of the Regulatory Assessments Reports with the intention to review this in the first week of May. In addition, all Annual Review and Engagement meetings were postponed and will be arranged via video conferencing, in line with public health guidelines, in the coming weeks.

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The Regulation Office issued communication to AHBs outlining the above changes and reiterated the importance of the notifiable events process to report any emerging issues or significant concerns caused by the impacts of Covid-19. The Regulation Office issued “*Key Considerations for Large & Medium Sized AHBs during Covid-19*” which has been well received by organisations.

The Committee supported the changes implemented to date recognising the importance of AHBs focusing on managing the current situation. The Committee discussed areas that may impact on AHBs such as rent collection, allocations, repairs, and maintenance.

6. Engagement AHBs

K.J. provided the Committee with an update on organisations that have been entered into the engagement process. Since the last iRC meeting in February, an additional 12 organisations have been deemed to require engagement. This increase in the number of organisations in engagement was anticipated and highlighted to the iRC at its meeting in February.

KJ provided the Committee with an update in relation to several individual AHBs. A summary of the issues which had emerged during the recent assessment cycle together with an overview of the primary reasons for organisations entering Engagement was also provided. In addition, a breakdown of the types of organisations entering Engagement was provided.

KJ updated the Committee on an organisation that had been deemed unsatisfactory and has submitted an Annual Regulatory Return which demonstrated significant progress and a satisfactory level of compliance. K.J outlined the steps the Regulation Office intend to take and asked the Committee for approval of the proposed approach. It was suggested that this could be used as a case study to highlight the benefits of engaging in the process.

Action

1. The Regulation Office to provide an update to the Department regarding organisations in Engagement.
2. IRC approves approach for organisation previously deemed unsatisfactory.
3. Regulation Office to consider case study of unsatisfactory organisation.

7. Presentation

S.L provided the Committee with an overview of the key impacts and considerations of Covid-19 and the medium to long term implications for the sector. Covid-19 has impacted the operations of AHBs across multiple areas, including housing management, housing delivery, implications in delays, and care and support services. The true impact of the current pandemic may not be fully visible for up to 18 months. The Committee discussed the risks and opportunities that the current pandemic presents for the sector in relation to reductions in turnover, increases in expenditure and tenure and succession planning in the sector. The potential for mergers or stock transfers within the sector was also discussed.

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8. DHPLG Update

C.R. provided the Committee with an update in relation to the current position on the implementation of the Housing (Regulation of Approved Housing Bodies) Act 2019. Discussions have occurred with the Housing Agency regarding timelines and a shared services model. Recruitment for the CEO position has been delayed due to the ongoing pandemic. Further updates are expected in due course in relation to this.

The next iRC meeting is scheduled for Thursday, 25th June 2020