



## **Organisational Review of An Bord Pleanála Implementation Group Terms of Reference and Plan for Implementation**

### **Background**

In July 2015, the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government appointed an external independent review group to undertake an organisational review of An Bord Pleanála. The Group was mandated to prepare a report and make recommendations to support the Board in its operations, with a view to ensuring that it is appropriately positioned and fit for purpose from an organisational perspective to achieve its legislative mandate. The Report of the Independent Review Group was published on 14 March 2016.

Further details on the review, including the members of the review group, their terms of reference and the Report, can be found on the DHPCLG's website at <http://www.housing.gov.ie/planning/bord-plean%C3%A1la/review/bord-plean%C3%A1la-review>.

### **Organisational Review of An Bord Pleanála**

The Review Report acknowledges the achievements of An Bord Pleanála since its establishment and notes the high level of public and institutional confidence developed over this time-span. To build on the track record of the Board and ensure its fitness for purpose in a fast-changing and more complex operational environment, the report contains 101 recommendations across a number of topics, relating to:

- simplification of the planning legislation
- more open arrangements for Board membership
- improvements to the processes, systems and practices of An Bord Pleanála
- improvements to the organisational structure and staffing
- changes to the statutory objective timeframes and as aspects of Strategic Infrastructure Development process.

## **Purpose**

Following the publication of the Review Group Report, the Department of Housing, Planning, Community and Local Government (DHPCLG) and An Bord Pleanála (ABP) reviewed and gave careful consideration to the Report and its recommendations. Action 3.8 of Rebuilding Ireland – An Action Plan for Housing and Homelessness committed to developing and publishing an Implementation Plan to prioritise implementation of key recommendations of the Report.

An Implementation Group has been established in this regard whose primary tasks are to:

- Oversee the consideration of the key recommendations of the Review Report.
- Develop and publish an Implementation Plan to implement key recommendations, as agreed.
- Prepare Interim and Final Reports to the Minister on the implementation of the Plan.

## **Membership**

Membership of the Implementation Group includes officials from the DHPCLG and ABP, as follows:

### **DHPCLG**

Terry Sheridan, Principal, Planning Policy (**Co-Chair**)

Niall Cussen, Principal Adviser, Forward Planning

Niamh Drew, Assistant Principal, Planning Policy

Brendan Buggy, Higher Executive Officer, Planning Policy (Secretary)

## **ABP**

Loretta Lambkin, Chief Officer (**Co-Chair**)

Rachel Kenny, Director of Planning

Gerard Egan, Director of Corporate Affairs

The Implementation Group will report to Dave Walsh, Assistant Secretary, Planning and Housing Market Policy and Land Management Division, DHPCLG, and to Dr. Mary Kelly, the Chairperson of ABP. Draft progress reports will be issued by the Implementation Group to the Assistant Secretary and Chairperson for submission to the Minister.

It is envisaged that the Implementation Group may wish to call on experience or expertise of other officials in the DHPCLG, ABP or other organisations, such as the local authority sector, as may be required, whose participation or engagement, would be beneficial regarding aspects of the Review being considered. This may also take the form of establishing Working Groups, consisting of officials in ABP and/or the DHPCLG, in consideration of aspects of recommendations of the Review Report.

The DHPCLG and ABP members of the Group will be responsible for managing reporting and governance arrangements within their own organisations as well as consultation and involvement of respective staff, where relevant.

## **Structure/Format/Meetings**

It is expected that the Implementation Group will conclude its work by June 2017 by which time the methodology outlined in this Implementation Plan will be fully developed and key structures or mechanisms for delivery of the Plan will be in place. It is also expected that the Implementation Group will meet every 4 to 6 weeks to oversee the consideration of the key recommendations in the Review Report.

The Implementation Group may assign tasks to nominated Working Groups to consider various recommendations/themes and report back to the Implementation Group.

Following the conclusion of its work in June 2017, a report will be prepared by the Implementation Group for submission to the Minister, with two Interim Progress Reports also issuing in February 2017 and May 2017.

### **Implementation Group Outputs:**

1. Publish Terms of Reference and Plan for Implementation (November 2017)
2. Interim Progress Update Reports (February 2017 and May 2017)
3. Publish Final Implementation Plan Report on Delivery (June 2017)
4. Post 2017 – Progress on implementation to be reported in line with the reporting timelines in the *Action Plan for Housing and Homelessness*.

### **Rollout of the Implementation Plan**

The Implementation Group's proposed approach to developing the Implementation Plan will be to consider the key recommendations of the Review Report under a number of common themes, such as:

- Legislation
- Communications/Stakeholder Engagement
- Board Role/ Governance/ Appointments
- Organisation Matters
- Operational Matters (including ICT)

The development over the life of the Implementation Plan will include clarification of issues raised in the Review Report, will highlight where recommendations have been addressed and identify the timeframes (short/medium/long term) within which themes will be considered. It will include a programme for delivery of the key

recommendations, as considered and agreed by the Implementation Group, along with an outline of the mechanism for delivery.

Implementation Group

DHPCLG and ABP

November, 2016