

**New Funding Model for ELC and SAC
Expert Group Meeting
Wednesday 23 June 2021
Webex
Minutes**

Participants:

Michael Scanlan (Chair)
Edward Melhuish
Tove Mogstad Slinde
Tim Callan
Niamh Callaghan (Department of Public Expenditure and Reform)
Philip Crosby (Department of Education and Skills)
Anne-Marie Brooks (Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth)
Hazel O'Byrne (Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth)
Gillian Martin (Secretariat, Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth)
Andrew Burrows (Secretariat, Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth)
Matthew Duffy (Secretariat, Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth)
David Carabini (Secretariat, Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth)

Present (for relevant parts of meeting):

Gillian Paull, Frontier Economics
Nick Fitzpatrick, Frontier Economics

Apologies:

Eva Lloyd
Rory O'Donnell

Welcome

The Chair welcomed the Expert Group to the meeting. Minutes from the last meeting were agreed.

Topical issues

Gillian Martin updated the Expert Group on issues including: the Review of Systems and Structures; the Workforce Development Plan; the Joint Labour Committee; extension of the EWSS; the Annual Early Years Sector Profile 2019/2020; relevant Parliamentary Questions; Summer of Play initiative; and relevant media and press.

Quality Work Strand

Gillian Martin then presented a secretariat discussion paper on the quality work strand, which included options regarding new funding streams, how such streams may operate, their advantages and disadvantages, and the role of providers and the State as a result. The Expert Group then discussed the paper, and the main issues covered included: staff pay; pay structures; CPD; staff retention; the relationship between providers and the State; funding conditionality; data availability; qualifications and training; and operational quality measures.

Stakeholder Consultation

Nick Fitzpatrick from Frontier Economics presented an update on the planning and structure for Phase 3 of the stakeholder consultation. The Expert Group then discussed the outcomes of

consultations thus far through Phases 1 and 2, the proposal for Phase 3, ideas on how best to facilitate constructive dialogue and output from the upcoming consultation, and the objectives of Phase 3.

Childminding

Matthew Duffy presented a secretariat discussion paper on Childminding and the New Funding Model. The main issues covered in the discussion included the nature of childminding, National Action Plan for Childminding (2021 – 2028), and considerations regarding the incorporation of childminders into the New Funding Model.

AOB / END

The meeting of the Expert Group concluded.

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Present (for relevant parts of meeting):

Martin Quigley (Pobal)

Apologies:

Eva Lloyd
Rory O’Donnell
Tove Mogstad Slinde
Niamh Callaghan (Department of Public Expenditure and Reform)

Welcome

The Chair welcomed the Expert Group to the meeting.

Inclusion Work Strand

Martin Quigley from Pobal presented the most recent iteration of the model to identify services operating in the context of concentrated disadvantage within the Early Learning and Care and School Aged Childcare environment. The Group discussed methods of identification of these services with a

view to offering effective and targeted supports. The Secretariat will progress options for identification and allocation models under this work strand.

Affordability Work Strand

Andrew Burrows presented a secretariat paper dealing with affordability issues, NCS reforms and costings. The Expert Group then discussed the paper, and the main issues covered included: fee control mechanisms; scheduling and prioritisation; NCS reform; quality control mechanisms; targeting methods; and the relationship between services and the State.

Project review

Gillian Martin presented a secretariat paper on the overarching timeline and tasks for project implementation and gave updates on progress. The following discussion covered stakeholder consultation, research partnership, project planning and reporting.

AOB / END

The meeting of the Expert Group concluded.