

**New Funding Model for ELC and SAC
Expert Group Meeting
Wednesday 22 September 2021
Webex
Minutes**

Participants:

Michael Scanlan (Chair)
Edward Melhuish
Eva Lloyd
Tove Mogstad Slinde
Tim Callan
Niamh Callaghan (Department of Public Expenditure and Reform)
Joanne Tobin (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
Thomas Baily, Frontier Economics

Apologies:

Rory O'Donnell

Welcome

The Chair welcomed the Expert Group to the meeting. Minutes from the previous meeting were accepted.

Topical issues

Gillian Martin updated the Expert Group on issues including: the Review of the Operating System; Workforce Development Plan; Joint Labour Committee; Covid-19 supports; research projects; Budget submissions; relevant media and press highlights.

Implementation Work Strand (Budget 2022)

Anne-Marie Brooks presented an overview of the Departments present and previous Budget allocations, and led a discussion of the approach and planning for the upcoming Budget.

Implementation Work Strand (Expert Group Report)

The Chair presented the Draft 2 of the Report and led a discussion which covered issues including its structure, framing, costings, evidence and data presentation, the impact of Covid-19, timelines and phasing.

NCS 12 Month Review

Gillian Paull from Frontier Economics presented the findings of the NCS 12 Month Review. This consisted of an overview of the evidence collection for the review, its findings regarding scheme structure and implementation, early findings on the impacts of the NCS, as well as concerns for further consideration. Thomas Baily, also from Frontier Economics then gave a presentation on the aspect of the NCS commonly known as the Work/Study Test. This covered the policy rationale, design, and aims of the test as well as an overview of trade-offs including those related to flexibility, sustainability, and the administrative burden.

The Expert Group then discussed the NCS 12 Month Review and the implications of its findings for their Report on the New Funding Model and for ELC and SAC sector more broadly.

AOB / Close

The meeting of the Expert Group concluded.

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Implementation Work Strand (Expert Group Report)

The Chair presented the most recent draft of the Report and led a discussion which covered matters relating to the content of the Report as well as implications of its recommendations on the ELC and SAC sector. The topics covered included issues related to investment, data collection, sustainability, flexibility, risks, affordability and fee controls, quality, access, inclusion, and the role of the State.

The Expert Group also discussed the implementation of the recommendations in terms of the policy context and ongoing developments in the sector, as well as funding, phasing and the monitoring of their impacts on the sector.

AOB / Close

The meeting of the Expert Group concluded.