## Index

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Foreword from the Secretary General</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Governance Principles</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overview of Governance Framework</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Chapters</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 1 - Department Overview</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 2 - Ministerial and Senior Management Roles &amp; Assignment of Responsibilities</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 3 - Management Board &amp; other Governance Structures</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 4 - Audit, Assurance and Compliance Arrangements</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 5 - Bodies under the Aegis of the Department</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Foreword from Secretary General

In April 2016 the Corporate Governance Framework for the Department was published. I welcome the publication of this updated Corporate Governance Framework for the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection. This framework sets out our governance standards which are fundamentally about delivering priorities, achieving objectives, behaving with integrity and acting in the public interest. This framework is part of a common approach to governance shared across the civil service as set out in the Civil Service Renewal Plan (CSRP) and will evolve over time. The CSRP includes a key action to enhance governance arrangements in line with international best practice by the introduction of a common governance standard.

Governance is concerned with having in place appropriate structures and processes for directing and managing our organisation so that all stakeholders can be assured that the organisation is operating effectively and efficiently. It is about transparency, accountability and consistency, and about operating in a participative environment. The on-going support and cooperation of all staff to that environment will strengthen governance structures that underpin this framework. I am confident that the values of innovation and engagement in our organisation will enable our governance structures to be dynamic and responsive with the capacity to change and improve on the effective delivery of our services.

The five high level governance principles as outlined in this framework will help to guide the organisation towards a future that will evolve with the changing needs of our stakeholders, including our staff, as we continue to seek new ways of doing things for the benefit of our customers and all stakeholders.

John McKeon
Secretary General
Good Governance

Good governance is central to the effective operation of the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection; it is vitally important in effectively discharging its statutory and policy obligations. It ensures that a framework of structures, policies and processes are in place to deliver on these obligations and it allows for an objective assessment of management and corporate performance.

Context of Civil Service Renewal Plan

The Civil Service Renewal Plan (CSRP) 2014 sets out new arrangements for governance and accountability in the Civil Service. The CSRP includes a key action to enhance governance arrangements in line with international best practice by the introduction of a common governance standard. In particular it seeks to:

- formalise the role of the Management Board in Departments and support greater ministerial and managerial interaction in jointly and regularly reviewing priorities and performance;
- introduce a single governance standard for all Management Boards drawing on international best practice in corporate governance; and
- establish an annual assessment for all Management Boards to measure delivery and performance.

Constitutional and Legal Framework

Corporate governance measures must be applied within the framework of constitutional and statutory provisions and comply with the statutory provisions in the Ministers and Secretaries Acts 1924 to 2013, the Civil Service Regulation Acts 1956 to 2005, the Public Service Management Act 1997 and the Comptroller and Auditor General Acts 1866 to 1998. This framework encompasses and has regard to aspects of corporate governance that already exist within the civil service, for example, in the Cabinet Handbook, the Public Financial Procedures, the Public Spending Code, the Civil Service Code of Standards and Behaviour and the recommendations of the Report of the Working Group on the accountability of Secretaries General and Accounting Officers.
This Corporate Governance Framework is based on a number of high level governance principles that underpin the governance arrangements in this Department.

**Governance Principles**

1. Good governance supports a culture and ethos which ensures behaviour with integrity, a strong commitment to ethical values and respect for the rule of law.

2. Good governance helps to define priorities and outcomes in terms of sustainable economic and societal benefits and to determine the policies and interventions necessary to optimise the achievement of these priorities and outcomes. It means implementing good practices in transparency, reporting, communications, audit and scrutiny to deliver effective accountability.

3. Good governance means developing the Department’s capacity, including the capability of the leadership team, management and staff.

4. Good governance means managing risks and performance through robust internal control systems and effective performance management practices.

5. Good governance ensures openness, effective public consultation processes and comprehensive engagement with domestic and international stakeholders.
The following table outlines the environment within which the Civil Service operates and the context for the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection’s governance arrangements.

**Civil Service and Ministerial Accountability**

- The Minister is in charge of the Department and is responsible to the Oireachtas for all elements of the exercise of his/her departmental responsibility.

- The Department’s relationship and communication with the Minister and his/her advisers is a key governance process. The successful delivery of business priorities and programmes is contingent on these relationships operating effectively.

- The Secretary General of the Department is responsible and accountable for managing the Department, providing advice to the Minister and monitoring and implementing Government policies appropriate to the Department in accordance with the Public Service Management Act 1997.

- The Secretary General, as Accounting Officer, is personally responsible for and accountable to the Oireachtas for regularity and propriety in the Department’s accounts, the efficient and economical use of the Department’s resources and for the control of assets held by the Department in accordance with the Comptroller and Auditor General Acts 1866 to 1998.

Good governance is integral to the culture and to the strategic and operational policies and practices of this Department. All employees have an important role to play in committing to the good governance of the Department through the application of this Corporate Governance Framework in the performance of their duties.
This Corporate Governance Framework is structured around a number of Chapters, setting out the core elements that are adhered to by the Department when establishing or reviewing its governance arrangements, as follows:

1. Department Overview
2. Ministerial and Senior Management Roles and Assignment of Responsibilities
3. Management Board and other Governance Structures
4. Audit, Assurance and Compliance Arrangements
5. Bodies under the Aegis of the Department
Mission of the Department

Our Mission is:

‘To promote active participation and inclusion in society through the framework of employment rights and the provision of income supports, employment services and other services’.

Our overall objective, as set out in the Department’s Statement of Strategy 2017 to 2020, is to continue putting our clients at the centre of all our operations, providing an efficient and effective service and to continue developing our staff, structures and processes.

Our Customer Charter guides our efforts to provide a high quality service.

The legislative basis for the Department is Section 3 of the Ministers and Secretaries (Amendment) Act 1946 (No. 38 of 1946) together with the Ministers and Secretaries (Amendment) Act 1946 (Section 3) (Commencement) Order 1947 (S.I. No. 15 of 1947) which provided for the establishment of the Department of Social Welfare with effect from 22 January 1947. The Department supports the Minister for the Employment Affairs and Social Protection in the discharge of governmental, parliamentary and departmental duties and its main functions are to:

- advise Government and formulate appropriate social protection, labour market activation and social inclusion policies;
- design, develop and deliver effective and cost efficient income supports, activation and employment services and to provide comprehensive and accurate information to customers;
- work towards providing seamless delivery of services in conjunction with other departments, agencies and bodies; and
- control fraud and abuse.
Values, Behaviours and Culture

The Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection has identified five core values, all directly supporting the Department’s Strategic Goals. Our values were subject to thorough consideration and reflect a strong consensus among staff and stakeholders as to the values which underpin excellent service.

These values were formulated based on the evaluation of the input of more than four thousand staff, customers, employers and senior staff from other government departments who, between September 2013 and February 2014, provided their perspectives and opinions by way of structured interviews, interactive workshops and an online survey deployed to all staff.

The five core values form the code to which the Department subscribes and are aligned with the Civil Service Code of Standards and Behaviours and the Ethics in Public Office Acts. The Civil Service Renewal Plan (2014) reiterated those values as:

- a deep rooted public service ethos of independence, integrity, impartiality, equality, fairness and respect;
- a culture of accountability, efficiency and value for money; and
- the highest standards of professionalism, leadership and rigour.

All staff are accountable and it is the duty of all staff, guided by the Department’s leadership, to familiarise themselves with codes, rules and legislation governing the Civil Service including the application of requirements in relation to official secrecy which also apply to former staff and Special Advisers. Incoming staff undergoing induction training are provided with clear guidance on their obligations as well as access to all related materials.

Throughout their careers in the Department, staff will be updated and reminded, primarily through training and development programmes and notifications on the Department’s intranet (Stór), on their obligations and responsibilities.

The Department is cultivating a common culture which will help progress strategic goals and enhance and build organisational effectiveness. Embedding the new values and culture is a key focus of the Department’s ‘One DSP ‘organisational change programme. The process of embedding these values has been activated through a high level Implementation Plan.

The continuing implementation of a wide-ranging programme of organisational development will deepen integration, support staff and build organisational and staff capability to successfully manage change and to provide excellent services to our clients.

**Complaints Handling Procedure**

**Customers**
The Department aims to deliver high quality customer service at all times. The Department has a formal process for dealing with customer comments and complaints which can be accessed through [www.welfare.ie](http://www.welfare.ie). Internal comments and complaints handling guidelines are available to staff to assist in their dealing with complaints. These guidelines have been written with reference to the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform’s Key Principles for Complaints Systems for Customers and Staff (January 2014).

Comments and complaints are a valuable source of feedback by which service delivery standards can be monitored and reviewed.

All comments and complaints and their outcomes are recorded on a central application.
Staff

Staff members are provided with a number of platforms to relay problems or complaints, such as directly through line management, at performance management meetings and also through the use of surveys seeking confidential feedback.

Staff members are notified of, and given access to, positive working environment and dignity at work policies and can avail of the support of the Employee Assistance Service for support and assistance when encountering problems at work.

The Grievance Procedure is also in place for staff and seeks to deal in a fair, prompt and impartial manner with the complaints of individual members of staff that are within the scope of the procedure but which are not appropriate for discussion under the Conciliation and Arbitration Scheme.

Organisation of the Department

The Department has a permanent staff complement of approximately 6,300, supplemented periodically by additional temporary and seconded staff.

Centralised offices in a number of locations around the country administer all of the Department’s long term schemes and many of its short term schemes as well as having a range of policy responsibilities.

A number of corporate services are also provided, including Human Resource Management, Staff Development, Information Systems Development, Budget and Finance, Internal Audit, Legislation and the provision of policy support and advice to the Minister.

In addition, the Department delivers schemes and services locally through a national network of in excess of 100 Intreo Centres and Branch Offices.

The General Register Office (GRO) manages the Civil Registration Service which facilitates the registration of births, stillbirths, adoptions, marriages, civil partnerships and deaths in the State. Day to day delivery of the Civil Registration Service is provided through a network of local civil registration service offices across the State. The GRO also operates a genealogical research facility.
The Social Welfare Appeals Office is responsible for independently determining appeals against decisions on social welfare entitlements and insurability of employment.

The Social Welfare Tribunal is responsible for independently adjudicating in cases where entitlement to Jobseeker's Benefit or Jobseeker’s Allowance is refused due to an involvement in a trade dispute.

The Citizens Information Board is the national agency responsible for supporting the provision of information, advice and advocacy on social services through the Citizens Information Services and for the provision of the Money Advice and Budgeting Service.

The Pensions Authority provides information, regulation and governance in relation to occupational and private pensions.

The Pensions Council advises the Minister on matters of relevance to pensions, with a particular focus on policies to support the future sustainability and adequacy of pension provision.

The Low Pay Commission makes recommendations to the Minister that are designed to set a minimum wage that is fair and sustainable, and when appropriate, is adjusted incrementally, and that, over time, is progressively increased to assist as many low-paid workers as is reasonably practicable without creating significant adverse consequences for employment or competitiveness.

The Department serves a wide and diverse group of clients including families, people in employment, unemployed people, people with disabilities, carers, and older people. In more recent times, the Department also provides a range of services to employers, a client group of growing importance. The Department administers over 70 separate schemes and services which impact on the lives of almost every person in the State. Key services include:

- payment of a wide range of social insurance and social assistance income support schemes such as child benefit, jobseeker payments, illness benefits, pensions and supplementary welfare allowances;
  - each week, nearly 1.4 million people receive a social welfare payment and, when qualified adults and children are included, almost 1.8 million people benefit from these payments;
• some 625,000 families receive child benefit payments in respect of almost 1.2 million children each month;

• integration, through Intreo services, of employment services and benefit payment services, to ensure that the payment of income supports to people who do not have a job is directly linked to the equally important task of supporting people in their pursuit of employment, training and education opportunities to improve their life chances;

• provision of a range of employment supports, internship opportunities, guidance and placement services to help jobseekers find and secure employment;

• delivery of a range of employer services including recruitment services, online publication of job vacancies, employment supports (e.g. wage subsidy schemes for people with disabilities) and redundancy and insolvency services;

• a range of community services to promote social inclusion and provide a pathway to employment for people who are unemployed;

• the development of appropriate social policies in areas such as pensions, child income support, job seekers and activation;

• co-ordination of the implementation of government strategies for social inclusion under the National Action Plan for Social Inclusion and the Europe 2020 Strategy

In 2017 the activities of the Department included

• 1.8 million applications processed;
• 80.7 million scheme payments made;
• more than 950k control reviews carried out;
• 7.3 million telephone calls answered;
• 18,980 social welfare appeals finalised;
• almost 124,000 job opportunities advertised nationally;
• over 186,900 Personal Public Service numbers allocated to clients from over 184 countries; and
• over 680,000 Public Services Cards issued, bringing to 3.03 million the number of PSC’s issued by end 2018.

Strategic Planning, Decision Making & Performance Management

The Department’s Statement of Strategy serves as a framework for action by the Department over the following three years. The goals and objectives set out in the document take account of the priorities and commitments in the Programme for a Partnership Government, the Public Service Reform Plan, the Civil Service Renewal Plan, the Action
Plan for Jobs and Pathways to Work 2016 - 2020 as well as a range of other approved Government strategies and policies.

The Department’s strategic plan for the period ahead is found in its Statement of Strategy 2017-2020. In accordance with the Public Services Management Act 1997, a new strategy statement is prepared every three years, or within 6 months of a new Minister taking office, and comprises the key goals, outputs and related strategies of the Department.

The strategic objectives and actions outlined in the Statement of Strategy inform and are reflected in the annual Business Planning and Risk Management (BPRM) process carried out by each business area across the Department. These contain specific targets which each business area is expected to deliver on each year, the aggregation of which should ensure that the commitments outlined in the Statement of Strategy are met. Risks to the achievement of business plan activities are identified together with controls to mitigate the risks.

Each member of staff’s role in the attainment of strategic objectives is clearly defined and is encompassed within the Performance Management and Development System (PMDS).

The BPRM process and the PMDS process involve consultation between management and staff to ensure that everyone in the organisation is aware of his/her role in the attainment of the Department’s strategic objectives.

Heads of business are required to report progress on BPRM on a quarterly basis and at the end of each year. A BPRM application was developed to support the process. The BPRM process is used by Management throughout the Department to actively manage risk and has regard to risks that emanate from business processes supplied by third party providers. More detail on risk management is given in Chapter Four.
**Monitored Planning & Risk Management Process**

![Diagram of Business Planning & Risk Management Process]

### Statement of Strategy Objectives

The Statement of Strategy also sets out how the Department will monitor progress in achieving its goals by associating desired outcomes with related, and measurable, performance indicators for each activity.

The primary progress report in relation to the Statement of Strategy is the presentation to the Minister, by the Secretary General, of the Annual Report of the Department which sets out the progress under each of the objectives in the Statement of Strategy.

Monitoring of progress is also achieved more frequently by Minister’s/Minister of State’s attendance at Management Board meetings, through the monthly provision of updates on the Minister’s list of priorities as agreed with the Secretary General and periodic updates on the relevant commitments in the Programme for Government.

### Communications and Customer Services Unit

A new Communications and Customer Services Unit (CCSU) was established in the Department in September 2016. This new unit has responsibility for three key areas, external communications, customer service and supporting internal communications.
Key elements of the Communications and Customer Services Unit is creating public information campaign and providing important customer information in customer friendly formats to ensure that customers and stakeholders are aware of the supports and services that are available to them and any changes which may affect them. The unit also manages social media on a daily basis, as well as design and branding for publications in the Department. The unit also manages media relationships for the Departments through its press office. The unit also supports better and more effective internal customer service and is implementing a range of projects to enhance customer service across the Department.

**Internal Communications**

The Department supports effective internal communications through the principles of our Customer Charter and Action Plan, whereby staff members are recognised as internal customers and are properly supported and consulted with regard to service delivery issues.

As explained in Chapter Three, the Management Board meets with all Principals of the Department twice a year and there is regular engagement between individual Management Board members and Principals regarding the corporate agenda. In turn, Principals and managers at all levels are expected to communicate with staff in relation to all matters.

Staff members are informed of developments in the Department through normal engagement with managers at all levels, through the Department’s Intranet portal (Stór) and the use of other appropriate and relevant channels of communication including all staff emails, the Staff Magazine (Social Affairs), bulletins and newsletters and through the use of messaging (including video messaging) from the Secretary General on issues of importance.

Stór is a major communication and collaboration tool in use across the Department and supports the everyday work of staff, providing them with document management facilities, collaborative working on shared sites, as well as access to line-of-business applications that help streamline business processes and support new initiatives in the Department. The Department facilitates exchange of views/best practice through the discussion board on Stór.

The Department encourages and supports staff to become involved and contribute to change in the Department through the Department’s Engagement and Innovation Programme.
Engagement with External Stakeholders

The Department also adheres to a principle of consultation and provides a structured approach to meaningful consultation with, and participation by, external stakeholders in relation to the development, delivery and review of services and policies. The Department engages with a range of external stakeholders including the following:

- The Oireachtas;
- The public (including those experiencing poverty and/or social exclusion);
- Customer representative bodies;
- Community and voluntary sector;
- NGOs;
- Elected representatives and political parties;
- Policy institutions, researchers and academics;
- Central government departments, local authorities, state agencies and other public bodies;
- The European Commission;
- Media;
- Social partners;
- Social service delivery organisations;
- Education sector and the health sector.

1. **Quality Customer Service Initiative**

The Department;

- Ensures regular communication with all our varying customer representative groups on significant service changes;
- Invites the relevant customers' views on the standard of our service delivery through participation in various consultation fora;
- Seeks feedback and suggestions from customers on ways in which we can improve the delivery of our services;
- Acts on feedback received when services are being reviewed;
- Engages proactively with customers in advance of the development of new policies, schemes and programmes by the Department.
Through the Department’s Quality Customer Service Initiative the Department surveys the public on a frequent basis and invites over thirty external customer representative groups to consultation events which are held in order to inform the Department’s customers (through representative bodies) of forthcoming changes to schemes and services. These consultations are held twice yearly.

The Department regularly hosts lunch time policy seminars which aim to involve networks of practitioners, academics and experts in developing and debating policy options.

Individual business areas also consult with and brief their customer representative groups on scheme changes and other business changes.

2. **Employers**

The Department offers a range of supports and services to employers including:

- JobsIreland – online jobs advertising portal;
- Recruitment supports including candidate matching; career fairs – including annual Jobs Week;
- EURES – European Employment Service
- Youth Employment Support Scheme (YESS)
- Grants and Assistance – JobsPlus
- Workplace Support Services – a more inclusive approach to employment
  - Employability Service
  - Disability Awareness Training Support Scheme
  - Willing Able Mentoring Scheme
  - Reasonable Accommodation Fund

To raise awareness of these services, the Department engages with representative bodies, connects directly with employers, hosts employer focused events, participates on industry groups and works closely with state agencies - enterprise and training - to meet the current and future needs of the business community.

Advice and support in accessing the services available is provided by Intreo Offices; the National Employer Relations Division, and Divisional Employer representatives.
3. **Pre Budget Forum**

A Pre-Budget Forum, hosted by the Department, has been held annually since 1988. The purpose of the Forum is to give organisations, representative of the Community and Voluntary (C&V) sector, an opportunity to express their views and priorities in relation to social expenditure in the context of the forthcoming Budget. In advance of the Forum, the C&V groups send pre-Budget submissions to the Department. Approximately forty C&V organisations are invited to participate. An independent moderator is engaged to chair the forum.

4. **Social Inclusion**

The Social Inclusion Division (SID) has an extensive programme of engagements with external stakeholders associated with the Department’s high-level strategy commitments to achieve a more inclusive society through co-ordinating the implementation of government strategies and working with other departments/offices, agencies (both national and international), employers and stakeholders.

This Division’s external relationships cover the co-ordination, implementation and monitoring of the National Action Plan for Social Inclusion; engagement with EU social policy structures and processes; communications on and the promotion of the awareness of poverty and social inclusion issues. Business activities involve significant contact with a range of stakeholders from government departments, agencies, the European Commission, academic experts, the public and other external groups. The adoption by the EU of a headline poverty target under the Europe 2020 Strategy has increased the Division’s engagement with the EU, particularly the Social Protection Committee and its Indicator Sub-Group.

This Division of the Department and its engagement with external stakeholders can be categorised under the following five groups:

- Inter-Departmental, e.g., stakeholder engagement related to development, implementation, monitoring and reporting on the National Action Plan for Social Inclusion and the National Social Target for Poverty Reduction, Senior Officials Group on Social Policy & Public Sector Reform and Various government policy/strategy development working groups, e.g. Interdepartmental Working Group on the UN Sustainable Development Goals, Census 2021 Advisory Group, Gambling
- Inter-Governmental, e.g., Committee on Employment Affairs and Social Protection and Indicators Sub-Group of the Committee on Employment Affairs and Social Protection;
- Advisory, e.g., ESRI’s SWITCH tax/welfare microsimulation model steering group, All-Island Food Poverty Network, Programme Monitoring Committee for the ESF Operational Programme for Employability and Inclusion and Learning (PEIL) 2014-2020;
- Consultative, e.g., Technical Advisory Group, Annual Social Inclusion Forum, Annual Pre-Budget Forum and Community and Voluntary Pillar Liaison; and
- Other, e.g., Irish Social Policy Association, Social Research Association, Public Service Evaluation Network, Research Managers Network

In addition there are a number of key events where the Division engages with external stakeholders: the Social Inclusion Forum is an annual event which serves to underpin the implementation, monitoring and on-going development of the Government’s social inclusion agenda; the Technical Advisory Group was established under NAPinclusion to provide support and advice in relation to data and poverty measurement issues.

The Department, along with the Department of Children and Youth Affairs, consults widely with child and family organisations on the implementation of a whole-of-government approach to child poverty. Civil society representatives on the Advisory Council for the national policy framework for children and young people (Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures) have been consulted in the development process. An ad-hoc project team is overseeing the approach, including representatives of government departments and the BOBF Advisory Council (NGOs and experts).

**European Context**

Consultation for the purpose of engaging with external stakeholders is part of EU reporting requirements relating to social inclusion policy, such as the National Reform Programme (NRP). Each year SID co-ordinates the Department’s input to Ireland’s NRP update report. In recent years this has involved stakeholder consultation with the community and voluntary sector and social partners. SID coordinates a national delegation to represent Ireland at EU events. Delegations have included nominees from community and voluntary sector, elected representatives, academics, NGOs, people experiencing poverty and officials.
Social Inclusion Division Research Programmes

SID undertakes in-house research and manages two external research programmes. Stakeholder engagement has an important input to the evidence-base for policy development, monitoring and evaluation. Consultations with internal and external stakeholders are routinely conducted to inform the research. Outputs are presented at various external fora (e.g. research seminars/conferences; inter-departmental working and advisory groups; Oireachtas and various EU and International structures). The research publications are published on the Department’s website.

5. The Oireachtas

The Department accounts to the Houses of the Oireachtas in the first instance, through parliamentary questions and through the following Oireachtas Joint Committee on Social Protection.

The Secretary General of the Department also appears as required, usually each year following the publication of the Annual Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General, before the Oireachtas Public Accounts Committee (PAC).

When a Social Welfare Bill is being published the Department arranges a briefing on the Bill for Opposition spokespersons. A note summarising the provisions of the Bill is circulated, along with the Bill, in advance of the briefing. The briefing is delivered by the relevant policy and scheme owners from the Department.

6. The Media

As part of the Department’s Communications Unit the Press Office provides a service to the Minister and the Department by dealing centrally with all queries and requests for interviews from the media and issuing press releases on the Department’s initiatives, schemes and services to the regional and national media. All calls from the media, made to Departmental offices, are directed to the Press Office for reply. The Communications Unit works closely with business areas to assist them in publicising their developments, events or initiatives. In a similar fashion, any issues that might give rise to media comment are advised to the Press office for preparation of press enquiries. The Press Office responds to press queries to ensure the Department’s position is adequately represented.
7. **www.welfare.ie**

The Communications and Customer Services Unit manages the Department’s website (welfare.ie) which acts as the core information link between the Department and its customers and stakeholders. It also provides clear links to the Department’s digital services also at MyWelfare.ie.

The Department publishes the following on **www.welfare.ie**:

- Information on the Department’s schemes and services;
- A running consolidation of the Social Welfare Consolidation Act 2005 to reflect the legislative changes introduced in the interim;
- Corporate publications, e.g. annual reports, Statement of Strategy, Customer Charter and Action Plan;
- Policy and research documents and reports, e.g. Comprehensive Guide to SAFE Registration, Responses to DEASP Consultations, A Roadmap for Pensions Reform 2018 - 2023;
- Financial reports, e.g. Value for Money reviews, actuarial reviews of the Social Insurance Fund;
- Statistics, e.g. Annual Statistical Information Reports;
- Other, e.g. Advisory Group on Tax and Social Welfare.

The Department undertook a strategic review of **www.welfare.ie** in 2017 with a plan to develop a new customer focused website that makes information easier to access in 2018. Following this review, the Department has begun work to moving to the new Government portal **www.gov.ie** in 2019, in line with a government decision made in 2018.

This Gov.ie website is a central portal for online government services, allowing citizens the ability to search and find all government services in a single, convenient manner. Links to online government services will be provided from Gov.ie.

The Public Service ICT Strategy was launched in January 2015. The strategy has five key strategic objectives, “Digital first” being one of them. It states: “Digitisation of key transactional services and the increased use of ICT to deliver improved efficiency within Public Bodies and provide new digital services to citizens, businesses and public servants.”
8. **Engagement at International Level**

The main standing committees and groups at EU and at International level which are serviced by the Department are listed at the Appendix.

The extensive engagement with stakeholders described in this Section allows the Department to take various perspectives into account, thereby increasing the quality of its policies and service delivery.

**Review of Effectiveness of Governance Framework**

The Corporate Governance Framework will be subject to ongoing review by the Management Board of the Department and will evolve in line with best governance practice.
Governance Principle:

Good governance helps to define priorities and outcomes in terms of sustainable economic and societal benefits and to determine the policies and interventions necessary to optimise the achievement of these priorities and outcomes. It means implementing good practices in transparency, reporting, communications, audit and scrutiny to deliver effective accountability.

Minister

The Minister is in charge of the Department and is responsible to the Oireachtas for all elements of the exercise of his/her departmental responsibility. This responsibility ranges from significant political decision-making on major policy issues to routine administrative responsibilities discharged by civil servants on the Minister’s behalf.

The Ministers and Secretaries Act 1924, as amended, provides that each Minister shall be the responsible head of the Department or Departments under his/her charge and “…shall be individually responsible to Dáil Éireann alone for the administration of the Department or Departments of which he is head…”. This gives statutory effect to the constitutional principle of ministerial responsibility. This Governance Framework does not replace or usurp the Carltona Doctrine whereby powers vested in the Minister may be exercised, without any express act of delegation, by officials of certain seniority and responsibility. The Minister is legally responsible for every action of the Department.

Relationship with the Minister

A key governance process is a Department’s relationship and communication with the Minister and his/her advisers. The successful delivery of business priorities and programmes is contingent on these relationships operating effectively.

---

1 Article 28.4.2 of the Constitution provides that the Government shall be collectively responsible for Departments of State ‘administered’ by the Members of the Government. Under Article 28.12 of the Constitution Ministers are ‘in charge of Departments of State. The principal legislative provisions governing the Minister’s powers are the Ministers and Secretaries Act 1924-2013 and the Public Services Management Act 1997.
The Management Board of the Department meets formally with the Minister on a periodic basis, and as often as required, to consider strategic policy and management direction. Such meetings are in addition to, and do not replace, routine and on-going interaction between Ministers, members of the Board and other senior officials on the day to day business of the Department. This interaction may not always be limited to working hours or to normal office arrangements. It is the responsibility of the Management Board to ensure that the Minister’s Office is kept informed and updated on the division of responsibilities among senior management, including in relation to cross cutting issues, in order to ensure clarity and effective communication.

**Recording of Ministerial Decisions**
Formal submissions, seeking a Ministerial decision or requesting the Minister to note a position, from officials are submitted to the Minister through the Minister’s Private Secretary. Submissions are cleared by the relevant Head of Division prior to being submitted to the Minister’s private secretaries. Submissions are copied to the Minister’s Adviser(s). The decision or position taken by the Minister is noted by officials on the relevant file.

The Minister may also meet with officials where decisions are conveyed and positions noted. These are recorded in the minutes of those meetings, where appropriate, or in a file note.

**Minister of State**
The Minister retains full responsibility for all areas of the Department’s work. However, a Minister of State may be appointed by the Government on the nomination of the Taoiseach. The Government may choose to delegate certain ministerial duties to the Minister of State, subject to ministerial supervision. Such delegated duties may therefore be performed by either the Minister or the Minister of State.

**Relationship with the Minister of State**
The Department operates a similar system in its communication and relations with the Minister of State as with the Minister.

**Leadership and Organisational Capacity/Capability**
The management team of the Department leads and manages the implementation of the systems, processes and behaviours necessary to promote good corporate governance across the organisation so that all staff of the Department work together as a high performing team. It is the responsibility of Senior Management, led by the Secretary General and the Management Board, to set the tone for effective governance by embracing and
promoting best practice and behaviours. Senior Management actively communicates its commitment to achieving Government objectives through accountable processes, thereby setting a clear example for all staff.

**HR**
To ensure that the Department is in a position to fulfil its mandate, the Department has developed a workforce planning framework so that management has the operational capacity for the organisation as a whole. This will be complemented by a HR strategy, in development, which reinforces the Department’s ability to deliver on its goals in an effective manner.

**ICT Governance and Security**
The administration of the Department’s schemes and services is underpinned by a programme of work to continually improve service delivery, meet the changing needs of customers and maximise the benefits of new technology. Through the project governance process (see Chapter Three), project proposals and initiatives are approved and prioritised and budgets and resources are assigned.

The provision of secure computing systems is a key principle for the operations of Information Systems Division (ISD). The Department recognises that specific ICT measures are an important part of an overall strategy to protect strategic systems from failure. The security of the Department’s ICT infrastructure is addressed at many levels and detailed in the ICT strategy.

ISD works in association with Business Information Security Unit (which has overall responsibility for information security policy) and Facilities Management Unit (which is responsible for physical access to buildings including the data centres), to ensure the security of the Department’s systems.
Communications
Chapter One details the Department’s engagement and communication with internal and external stakeholders.

Record Keeping, Data Management and Information Management

The Department is statutorily and administratively obliged to make and maintain records of all its activities and decisions, and to have an established and effective system of records management. Making, keeping and maintaining records is an essential part of the work of all staff and managers at all levels of the Department. Each member of staff is responsible for making and keeping records of his/her own work. Business area managers are responsible for ensuring that appropriate structures and governance are in place to manage records in their areas to meet the requirements of legislation (including National Archives, Data Protection and Freedom of Information) and both internal and external audit and scrutiny.

Secretary General

The Secretary General is the administrative head of the Department and has overall management responsibilities for the quality of advice submitted to the Minister.

The Ministers and Secretaries Act 1924 and the Public Services Management Act 1997 outline the statutory responsibilities of the Secretary General. Under the 1997 Act, certain duties are assigned to the Secretary General within the Department (Section 4 (1), 9 (1) and 9 (2)), including but not limited to:

- managing the Department;
- implementing Government policies appropriate to the Department;
- delivering outputs as determined with the Minister;
- providing advice to the Minister and using resources so as to meet the requirements of the Comptroller and Auditor General (Amendment) Act 1993 in relation to regularity and propriety as well as to economy, efficiency and effectiveness;
- preparing Strategy Statements for submission to the Minister;
- providing progress reports to the minister on the implementation of the Strategy Statement;
- ensuring proper use of resources and the provision of cost-effective public services;
• Making sure arrangements are in place to maximise efficiency in cross departmental matters;
• Preparing an outline of how specific responsibilities are to be assigned so as to ensure that the functions performed on behalf of the Minister are performed by an appropriate officer, or an officer of an appropriate grade or rank, of the Department; and
• Managing matters relating to appointments, performance, discipline and dismissal of civil servants below the grade of Principal or its equivalent.

The Secretary General may also be required, under the Public Services Management Act 1997, to carry out other functions on behalf of the Minister.

**Accounting Officer (Secretary General)**

The Secretary General also serves as Accounting Officer for the Department. The role of the Accounting Officer is outlined in detail in the Role and Responsibilities of Accounting Officers – A Memorandum for Accounting Officers (2011), as well as in the Comptroller and Auditor General Acts 1866 to 1998 and the Public Financial Procedures.

The Accounting Officer is responsible for the safeguarding of public funds and property under his or her control; for the regularity and propriety of all the transactions in each Appropriation Account bearing his or her signature; and for the efficiency and economy of administration in his or her Department. In this regard, the Accounting Officer is personally answerable to the PAC for regularity, propriety and value for money through rigorous post factum examination of the manner in which Accounting Officers have discharged their responsibilities by means of independent audit and examinations by the Comptroller and Auditor General.

The Accounting Officer is responsible for and must personally sign the appropriation account (an account of expenditure and receipts) for each ‘Vote’ for which he or she is responsible. The Secretary General of the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection is responsible for Vote 37 and for the Social Insurance Fund (SIF). Section 9 of the Social Welfare Consolidation Act 2005 sets out the responsibilities of the Minister for Employment Affairs and Social Protection and the Minister for Finance with regard to the SIF.

---

2 Department of Expenditure and Reform Public Financial Procedures (2012)
The SIF consists of a current account and an investment account. The Minister for Employment Affairs and Social Protection is responsible for the current account and the Minister for Finance is responsible for the investment account which is held in the Central Bank.

The investment account records the investment transactions of the SIF. It is prepared by the Department of Finance, audited by the Comptroller and Auditor General, and signed by the Secretary General of the Department of Finance.

The current account records all SIF related receipts and payments and consolidates investment account related financial transactions and balances. This account is signed by this Department’s Secretary General. The two accounts are published and laid annually together before the Oireachtas. See Chapter Four for further information.

**Special Advisers to the Minister**

The primary functions of Special Advisers are to secure the achievement of Government objectives and to ensure effective co-ordination in the implementation of the Programme for Government. The role and duties of Special Advisers are described in Section 11 of the Public Service Management Act 1997. In summary, these are to assist the Minister or the Minister of State by (i) providing advice; (ii) monitoring, facilitating and securing the achievement of Government objectives that relate to the Department, as requested; and (iii) performing such other functions as may be directed while being accountable to the Minister or the Minister of State in the performance of those functions. The Special Adviser performs his or her role alongside the senior civil servants in collectively supporting the Minister and the Government of the day. Special Advisers are not part of the line management system of the Department.

To ensure that there is clarity around the interaction between Special Advisers and civil servants, briefing is provided to Special Advisers, on their appointment, on matters such as governance arrangements, information flows and procedures for decision making.

**Responsibilities of all Staff**

The role of good governance in effective service delivery, and the mechanisms which support it, should be a priority for all staff. Regardless of role or function in the Department, all staff members have a role to play in collectively committing to the good governance of the Department through the requirements of this Corporate Governance Framework, as well as
by adhering to the Civil Service Code of Standards and Behaviours in the performance of their duties, corporate policies, procedures, circulars and Office Notices.

Assignment of Senior Management Roles & Responsibilities
Section 4(1) of the Public Service Management Act 1997 empowers the Secretary General to assign to other officers of the Department (or grade or grades of officer) responsibility for the performance of his or her functions. The framework of assignments constitutes a consolidated statement of all assignments under the Act by the Secretary General of the Department.

Interpretation of the framework and its assignments has regard to the factors which from time to time affect the distribution and discharge of responsibilities across the Department, such as the exigencies of work in a particular area, the alignment of activities spanning or involving more than one area, and the co-ordination of shared or contiguous responsibilities. It also has regard to the assignment of functions in respect of appointments, performance and discipline of personnel under the Civil Service Regulation Acts 1956-2005 which are made from time to time by the Secretary General under separate regulations.

The framework of assignments is currently being updated. A description of functions can be found at www.whodoeswhat.gov.ie/root/social/
Governance Principle:

Good governance means developing the Department’s capacity, including the capability of the leadership team, management and staff.

Management Structures in the Department
The Public Sector Management Act, 1997, outlines the statutory responsibility of the Secretary General for managing the Department, implementing Government policies, delivering outputs, preparing a Statement of Strategy and providing advice to the Minister. In accordance with the assignment of functions made by the Secretary General, it is the responsibility of the Deputy Secretary and the Assistant Secretaries to manage the delivery of the operational functions of the Department and they are accountable for these responsibilities to the Secretary General. The Secretary General is assisted by the Management Board which is the primary corporate decision-making forum of the Department. The Management Board may establish sub-committees to consider issues requiring more detailed examination before decision by the Management Board itself. There are currently three sub-committees of the Management Board – the Project Governance Committee, the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Committee and the Legislation Committee.

The Deputy Secretary or Assistant Secretary with functional responsibility for a particular area has responsibility for managing all processes relating to the development and delivery of proposals and activities within his/her area, including all discussions/decisions involving the Management Board.

Management Board
The Secretary General is the Head of the Department and the Accounting Officer. The Secretary General remains ultimately responsible and accountable for any actions undertaken. The Secretary General is assisted by a Management Board which acts as a team and a unifying force, providing leadership and direction and driving change across the organisation. It is the Management Board’s responsibility to ensure that the Department is being managed in a way that achieves its objectives effectively, efficiently and economically, and conforms to all relevant legislative and regulatory requirements.
Management Board Terms of Reference

Our Mission, as set out in Chapter One, is:

‘To promote active participation and inclusion in society through the framework of employment rights and the provision of income supports, employment services and other services’.

The role of the Management Board is to:

- Give leadership and drive strategy and innovation;
- Define control mechanisms to safeguard public resources;
- Supervise the overall management of the business of the Department (operational, policy development and support functions);

Detailed functions include:

- Set and drive strategic priorities. Approve, review and oversee the development and implementation of the Statement of Strategy, Public Service Reform Plan, Civil Service Renewal Plan, Business Planning and Risk Management processes;
- Review and monitor the performance of the organisation;
- Review and confirm high-level resource allocation within the Department (financial and human); ensuring Organisational Capacity & Capability Reviews are conducted periodically;³
- Adjudicate on high-level internal cross-divisional issues, including significant operational matters;
- Ensuring effective communication throughout the organisation including dissemination of information on the role and decisions of the Management Board where appropriate, driving engagement with staff and communication with external stakeholders;
- Considering and debating major policy issues and wider external issues of significance;
- Ensure that opportunities exist to exploit and embrace technology and innovation to transform how services are delivered and
- Governance arrangements.

³ Departments should have regard to any recommendations emerging from the Organisational Capability Reviews to be established under Action 20 of the Civil Service Renewal Plan.
Approach to Policy Making

Policy making in the Department is set by Government and the Minister consistent with budgetary resources and constraints. The Minister may establish advisory groups, such as the Advisory Group on Tax and Social Welfare, to harness expert opinion and experience and provide a forum to which the Minister may refer specific issues.

Policy making is supported by the Policy Committee which has an advisory role and supports the Management Board, Programme Boards and Divisions in considering, challenging or advising on policy at a strategic level.

The membership of the Policy Committee is linked to specific roles in the organisation and includes a rotating membership from the remaining Principal cohort nominated by specified Assistant Secretaries.

The policy committee and operational systems work together to deliver the Department’s goals by developing organisational and individual capacity and an understanding of each other’s needs and demands. It is beneficial to policy making in the Department that the process is complemented and strengthened by the operational areas where the policy will be implemented and can therefore be tested to ensure efficient and effective applicability.

As outlined in Chapter One, the Department consults extensively with external stakeholders in the formulation of policy and internally with operational areas and other internal stakeholders.

Composition of the Management Board

Membership of the Management Board is a matter for the Secretary General, but includes appropriate representation from all areas of the Department. The Management Board is chaired by the Secretary General and comprises the Deputy Secretary and all of the Department’s Assistant Secretaries, the Chief Appeals Officer and the Chief Medical Officer.

Key Relationships and Communication with Other Stakeholders

The key relationships for the Management Board are with the Minister, Minister of State, the Minister(s)’ Special Advisers, the Principal Officer grouping, staff in general and Agency CEOs.

The Management Board meets formally with the Minister as considered appropriate.
Monitoring of progress can be achieved by the Minister/Minister of State’s attendance at fortnightly management board meetings and through the monthly provision of updates on the Minister’s list of priorities. These priorities are as agreed with the Secretary General.

As outlined in Chapter Two, Assistant Secretaries and Principals meet, or otherwise communicate, with the Minister and his/her special advisers to deal with current issues and developments.

The minutes of the Management Board are published on the DSP intranet (Stór). Issues of general importance are regularly communicated to staff using a variety of media, including emails, Stór, etc. Staff members are encouraged to input to consideration of important issues via line management and Stór discussion board.

The Management Board meets with the Senior Management Team (SMT) twice a year. The SMT includes all Principals of the Department. In addition, Management Board members engage with Principals on a regular basis in relation to the corporate agenda (through team meetings) and encourage Principals in turn to communicate regularly all relevant information to their staff.

The Management Board endeavours to visit centralised and regional offices outside of Dublin. In visiting these offices, the Management Board communicates a message to the staff there as well as receiving presentations. Opportunities are sought to engage with the maximum number of all staff.

There is a wide range of communications between the Minister, the Department and agencies /bodies under its remit.

The Secretary General may invite CEOs of the Agencies to present on keys issues to the Management Board.

**Operation and Roles of the Management Board**

The Secretary General is responsible for ensuring the effectiveness of the Management Board in all aspects of its role and functions and in reviewing its performance. S/he ensures that all new members of the Management Board are briefed on their roles and responsibilities. The Management Board meets fortnightly.
The Secretary General chairs and sets the agenda for Management Board meetings, in consultation with the Secretary to the Management Board. The Secretary General determines what issues are appropriate for discussion, the priority of each item, the level of time afforded for discussion and what briefing material is required to be circulated in advance.

Attendance by all members is expected for the full duration of all meetings except in exceptional circumstances and with the approval of the Secretary General. Management Board members are expected to have read the briefing material and to be in a position to contribute to all of the discussion.

Assistant Secretaries with functional responsibility for a particular area have responsibility for oversight of all processes relating to the development and delivery of proposals and activities within his/her area, including all discussions/decisions involving the Management Board. They are expected to participate fully in the management of the whole Department, providing leadership and strategic direction and driving the implementation of strategies outside of their own areas. The establishment of committees is appropriate in relation to issues of a cross-departmental nature or where particular issues require more detailed examination by the Management Board. They may also be a useful tool to ensure that matters of an overly operational nature are not referred to the full Management Board for discussion.

The Management Board agrees on a range of topics that they would like to be briefed on during the course of the year and agrees an appropriate timeframe. This is reviewed on a quarterly basis.

Annual requirements, such as Business Planning and Risk Management, discussions in connection with the Estimates, Budget and legislation are factored into the agenda at appropriate intervals and with adequate and timely briefing material.

Periodic/Standing items include:

- Government Business;
- EU matters;
- Review of major reports and other published documents such as Statements of Strategy, Annual Reports, Reports of Audit Committee;
• Action points from previous Management Board meetings;
• Business performance and risk management;
• Financial performance;
• Policy and legislative developments;
• The Reform agenda;
• H.R.;
• The status of major projects (i.e. those of strategic importance).

Members of the Management Board, who wish to table items, must forward precise details of the issue for discussion, to the Secretary to the Management Board and must provide appropriate background material at least a week in advance of the next scheduled meeting.

Committees of the Management Board
The Management Board can and does establish sub-committees to consider issues requiring more detailed examination before decision by the Management Board itself. All committees established to assist the Management Board have clearly defined terms of reference, formal reporting mechanisms to the Management Board and performance and review procedures.

There are currently three sub-committees of the Management Board;

1. **The Project Governance Committee (PGC)**
The PGC is a committee of the Management Board chaired by the Secretary General and including the Deputy Secretary and all Assistant Secretaries. The PGC meets approximately every six weeks. The PGC has responsibility for corporate governance in the evaluation, prioritisation and oversight of programmes, projects and proposals in line with the Department’s Statement of Strategy, the Programme for Government and business plans. It oversees procurement processes and approves significant procurements.

The Project Office supports the efficient and effective running of the PGC. It is responsible for the development and implementation of a project management framework and procurement policy for the Department. The Project Office promotes best practice in project management and procurement and supports project managers and staff involved in procurement through the provision of procedures and templates.
Individual projects are aligned to a Programme Board; each Programme Board is sponsored by an Assistant Secretary and each project is managed by a Principal.

2. The Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Committee
The ICT Committee is a sub-group of the Management Board and the PGC. It was established in recognition of the importance that ICT plays in the delivery of the Department’s schemes and services. The ICT Committee is composed of the Chief Information Officer (CIO) and three other Assistant Secretaries who collectively have considerable ICT/business background and experience. The group normally meets in advance of PGC meetings to focus on specific aspects of particular Information System (IS) projects or in relation to wider IS issues which might need particular cross project/cross Departmental attention.

3. The Legislation Committee
The Legislation Committee is chaired by the Deputy Secretary. The standing members of this Committee are the Chief Appeals Officer, the Assistant Secretary with responsibility for Legislation Unit and the Principal with responsibility for the Decisions Advisory Office.

Legislation Unit/Legal Services staff also attend and provide support as required. All Assistant Secretaries who have proposals on the legislative agenda are required to attend the meetings of the Committee and are a member for those meetings.

The purpose of the Legislation Committee is to –
- Review proposals for quality, completeness, readiness for implementation and compliance with overall policy objectives;
- Highlight issues for resolution (policy, operational, legal, cross-departmental);
- Prioritise proposals;
- Identify proposals to be deferred or dropped;
- Ensure deadlines in the process are respected and met;
- Update Management Board as appropriate.

The primary function of the committees is to assist the Management Board in the discharge of its responsibilities. All recommendations emerging from the committees are included in the committees’ minutes to be circulated to the Management Board in advance of its meetings.
Internal Ad-hoc Working Groups and Management Structures

As previously outlined, projects are progressed through the Programme Board structure of the PGC. The overall programme structure, technical and administration co-ordination, policies and top-level management matters are all controlled by the Programme Board. The Programme Board monitors key inter-project and inter-programme dependencies.

In addition to this, ad-hoc working groups are established from time to time, to address current issues and developments.

Review of Performance
A review of the Management Board’s performance is carried out periodically. Effectiveness is measured against the role, function and operation of the Management Board. This is done on a self-assessment basis.

Support to the Management Board
The Secretary to the Management Board reports directly to the Secretary General on Management Board business. He/she ensures that all appropriate documentation is provided to members on time, records the minutes of meetings and drives the Management Board’s business in between meetings.

Governance across Organisational Boundaries
Members of the Management Board, and other Department staff, also contribute to broader civil service management. The Secretary General is a member of the Civil Service Management Board and the Interim Boards of the Office for Government Procurement and the National Shared Services Office. Additionally, other Management Board members participate in senior civil service management fora, as appointed by the Secretary General.

A number of staff across the Department service cross-Departmental senior official groups which contribute to wider civil service coordination and policy formation. The Department emphasises the importance of this engagement in delivering broader Government priorities and commits to an interdependent and collegiate approach in all its dealings, structured or not, with other Government Departments and Agencies.
Senior Officials support the work of the Cabinet Committee on Economic Recovery and Jobs (CCERJ), the Cabinet Committee on Construction 2020 and the Cabinet Committee on Housing and Homelessness.

The Department is also represented and serves on a number of EU and international bodies.

The Appendix lists the Groups upon which Department officials at Assistant Secretary level and upwards serve.
Governance Principle:

4. Good governance means managing risks and performance through robust internal control systems and effective performance management practices.

Audit and Assurance Arrangements

(a) The Secretary General prepares an annual statement of Internal Financial Control for the Comptroller and Auditor General where he/she declares his or her approach to, and responsibility for, risk management, internal control and corporate governance.

As Accounting Officer for Vote 37, the Secretary General annually prepares the appropriation account for the Vote, and submits the account to the Comptroller and Auditor General for audit. In accordance with this requirement, the account is prepared of the amount expended in the year ended 31 December of the previous year for the salaries and expenses of the Office of the Minister for Employment Affairs and Social Protection, for certain services administered by that Office, for payments to the Social Insurance Fund (SIF) and for certain grants. The standard accounting policies and principles for the production of appropriation accounts are applied in the preparation of the account.

As Accounting Officer, the Secretary General ensures that:

- An effective system of internal financial control is maintained and operated by the Department and the system and its effectiveness are kept under ongoing review

- A Financial Control Environment is maintained in place through a number of elements:
  
  - financial responsibilities are assigned at management level with corresponding accountability;
  - reporting arrangements are established at all levels where responsibility for financial management has been assigned;
  - formal procedures are established for reporting significant control failures and ensuring appropriate corrective action and
there is an Audit Committee to advise the Secretary General in discharging responsibilities for the internal financial control system.

- A framework of administrative procedures and regular management reporting is in place including segregation of duties and a system of delegation and accountability and, in particular, that:
  
  - there is an appropriate budgeting system with an annual budget which is kept under review by senior management;
  - there are regular reviews by senior management of periodic and annual financial reports which indicate financial performance against forecasts;
  - a risk management system operates within the Department;
  - there are systems aimed at ensuring the security of the ICT systems;
  - there are appropriate capital investment control guidelines and formal project management disciplines and
  - there is an appropriate focus on good practice in purchasing and that procedures are in place to ensure compliance with all relevant guidelines.

(b) As Accounting Officer, the Secretary General ensures that assurance arrangements, regarding internal controls and audit arrangements, are maintained in place with the Accounting Officer for the National Shared Services Office (NSSO), consistent with relevant Service Management Agreements, in respect of HR Shared Services Centre (PeoplePoint) and Payroll Shared Service Centre. Assurance arrangements will be put in place with the appropriate Accounting Officer in the event of any other shared service arrangements being entered into in the future.

(c) There is an established Audit Committee which has its own Charter and has agreed terms of reference with the Department. The Audit Committee is independent in its role in the provision of assurance to the Secretary General.

  - The role of the Audit Committee is, as part of the ongoing systematic review of the business control and corporate governance procedures within the Department, to oversee and advise on matters relating to (a) the operations and development of the internal audit function; and (b) the business control governance and risk management environment;
  - The Audit Committee is not responsible for any executive functions and is not vested with any executive powers;
• The Audit Committee exercises an advisory role in relation to its duties and functions within the Department;

• The Audit Committee consists of a Chairperson and not less than four ordinary members appointed by the Secretary General by virtue of their experience in fields of expertise relevant to the functions of the Committee. At least half of the members are external to the Department and appointments to the Committee are, unless otherwise decided by the Secretary General, for a period of three years;

• The Chairperson is appointed by the Secretary General from the external members of the Committee. A vice Chairperson is appointed by the members present when the chairperson is not present;

• Within three months following the end of each calendar year, the Audit Committee formally reports in writing to the Secretary General outlining its activities during the year together with such advice and recommendations as it may deem appropriate;

• The Chairperson meets with the Secretary General of the Department at least on an annual basis.

(d) It is Departmental policy to have and support a quality Internal Audit Unit (IAU) which conducts its activities in accordance with the Code of Ethics and Standards of Professional Practice of the Institute of Internal Auditors (UK & Ireland) and in accordance with internal audit standards and guidelines of the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform.

The role of IAU, as an integral part of the Department’s overall business control, risk management and governance environment, is to assist in the achievement of Departmental goals and objectives and enhance and protect organisational value by providing risk based and objective assurance, advice and insight to the Secretary General and Management of the Department. It is an independent, objective activity bringing a systematic, disciplined approach to evaluate and improve the effectiveness of control and governance.

The IAU derives its authority from the Secretary General, to whom the Head of Internal Audit (HIA) has the right of direct access. The HIA reports quarterly or otherwise if
requested, to the Audit Committee. On administration matters the HIA reports to an Assistant Secretary.

Following an audit, Internal Audit observations and recommendations are communicated to the appropriate business area management and copies of all such reports are forwarded to the Secretary General and to the Comptroller and Auditor General.

(e) The Department has an Internal Investigations Unit (IIU) which is responsible for:
   - Investigating cases of suspected data protection breaches across all DEASP at the request of the Business Information Security Unit (BISU);
   - Carrying out internal control/fraud investigations across all DEASP schemes/programmes at the request of Internal Audit Unit (IAU);
   - Carrying out investigations on behalf of the Personnel Officer.
In addition it is also open to the Protected Disclosures Group (PDG), through IAU, to request IIU to investigate Protected Disclosures.

(f) The Department has established an Employment Programme Internal Compliance unit to examine monitor and report on internal control practices and procedures across selected Employment Programme areas (TUS/RSS/CE/JI) within the Divisions.

(g) The EU Funding Compliance unit ensures compliance with EU regulations for the drawdown of the European Social Fund (ESF) and European Globalisation Fund (EGF) within the Department. This role is carried out by issuing guidance to the relevant areas within the Department on the requirements for compliance with the relevant EU regulations. The unit also carries out reviews of systems and expenditure in the areas which are funded under these schemes, prior to submission of final claim. The unit is a liaison point with the relevant ESF/EGF Authorities in the Department of Education and Skills and is a certifying authority for the Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived (FEAD) programme.

(h) The Department’s internal Finance Unit is comprised of two separate business areas namely, Budget & Finance Unit and Accounts Branch.
(1) The Budget and Finance Unit is responsible for:

- The preparation, co-ordination and monitoring of Estimates for the Department’s schemes, services, Social Insurance Fund income and Vote 37 receipts;
- The preparation and co-ordination of the Department’s Budget proposals;
- Directly assisting and briefing the Minister in the Estimates/Budget process, including for Oireachtas Committee meetings;
- Means Testing Policy; and
- PRSI Policy

As stated in Chapter Two, the Department’s expenditure is funded from two sources namely the Exchequer via Vote 37 and the SIF – funded mainly by PRSI contributions. SIF income (from PRSI receipts) and expenditure on all the Department’s schemes, services and administration is monitored against profile and scheme trends versus previous year, variances are analysed including estimated outturn for the current year and preparing of estimates for next year.

Each month, an estimate of expenditure and social insurance fund income is prepared and provided to the Department of Public Expenditure on the third last working day. This estimate of the overall expenditure is published by the Department of Finance in the monthly Exchequer Statement on the 2nd working day of the next calendar month.

(2) The primary role of Accounts Branch is to reconcile all of the Department’s payments and receipts and bring them to account. The Oireachtas votes income and expenditure to the Appropriation Account, expenditure covering departmental administration and social welfare assistance and non-contributory payments. Income to the SIF account is mainly derived from PRSI contributions made by employers, employees and the self-employed, with expenditure incurred for insurance based payments and associated administration costs.

Accounts Branch also makes supplier payments, some scheme arrears and manages the funding and reconciliation of all salary, travel and subsistence, and customer payments. Note from October 2017 salary and travel and subsistence payments transferred to the Payroll Shared Service Centre. All expenditure is recorded and reported to Department of Public Expenditure and Reform on a monthly basis. The Branch is responsible for facilitating, co-ordinating and
overseeing the management of the Administration Budget and related processes within DEASP. The Branch also has responsibility for payment delivery services and payment strategy in the Department.

(i) The Department has an established Risk Management Policy with an overall objective to have in place a systematic method to assist business areas in identifying, assessing, mitigating, monitoring and reporting on the risks to which the Department may be exposed. It also enables the achievement of the Department’s strategic objectives through well-managed governance structures. The Department’s Risk Management Policy has been prepared in accordance with Department of Finance guidelines.

In the risk identification process risks are classified by type, i.e. whether they pose a strategic, financial, operational, reputational or other type of risk to the Department. Risks are then evaluated, taking account of the current controls in place to mitigate the risk, along with an assessment of the possible impact of the risk and also the likelihood of the risk event occurring. Arising from this evaluation, a high, medium or low ranking is given to the risk and an action plan to mitigate the risk is prepared. All risks identified are held in risk registers on the BPRM ICT application referred to in Chapter One. The Management Board identifies General Corporate Risks, i.e. significant risks to the organisation which may encompass a number of activities and business areas. As also outlined in Chapter One, quarterly progress update reports on the achievement of the risk management plans are produced on the BPRM application and examined by the Management Board which assesses the adequacy of the progress made and decides whether further action is required.

The Management Board is fully committed to the Risk Management Policy and compliance with the policy is mandatory throughout every part of the Department.

(j) The procurement of supplies and services is essential to support the Department in providing high quality service to the public in a cost effective and efficient manner. Public procurement is governed by a comprehensive regulatory, legal and procedural framework and, in particular, is governed by EU Directive 24 of 2004, supported by procurement guidelines published by the Department of Finance and circulars of the Department of Finance and Department of Public Expenditure and Reform. The guiding principles are transparency and openness of competition.
The Department’s Statement of Strategy 2017 - 2020 focuses on enhancing corporate governance, maintaining robust financial management and reporting systems, and achieving value for money. The Department’s Procurement Policy and Procedures supports and advances these strategic objectives, ensuring that best practice in public procurement is implemented. As outlined in Chapter Three, the Department has established a dedicated Project Office to support good governance of major projects and to promote best practice in procurement across the Department. The Project Governance Committee (PGC), a sub-Committee of the Management Board and chaired by the Secretary General, approves significant procurements and all major projects, including procurement of supplies and services associated with the projects.

The Department participates fully in ongoing initiatives by the Office of Government Procurement to achieve procurement savings.
Governance Principle:

5 Good governance ensures openness, effective public consultation processes and comprehensive engagement with domestic and international stakeholders.

External Governance and Oversight of Bodies under the Aegis of the Department

The Department and the bodies under its aegis have Performance Delivery Agreements/Service Level Agreements in place where appropriate. These agreements act as a performance contract between the Department and the body in which an agreed level of performance/service is formalised and which will ultimately result in the improved effectiveness and efficiency of public services. The agreements allow for the adoption of both annual and multi-annual targets, and the development of output and outcome indicators including milestones to measure performance against targets.

There are a number of responsibilities on Departments and Bodies set out in various statutes, codes of practice (including the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies) and the Public Service Reform Plan (e.g. in relation to appropriate Service Level Agreements (SLAs) or their equivalents which are in place between Departments and their State Agencies).
## Bodies under the Aegis of the Department / Office

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Body</th>
<th>Accountable Person (i.e. Head of Office)</th>
<th>Principal Officer in Dept liaising with Body</th>
<th>Principal Ministerial and Departmental Functions</th>
<th>Exchequer Funding Source</th>
<th>Governing Legislation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Pensions Authority</td>
<td>Brendan Kennedy</td>
<td>Helen McDonald</td>
<td>listed below</td>
<td>DSP Vote and fees from schemes</td>
<td>Pensions Act 1990 (As amended)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Pensions Council</td>
<td>Jim Murray</td>
<td>Helen McDonald</td>
<td>Listed below</td>
<td>DSP Vote-expenses and research funds</td>
<td>Pensions Act 1990 (As amended)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Social Welfare Tribunal</td>
<td>Mr Colin Walker</td>
<td>Barry Kennedy</td>
<td>The Minister appoints the members and the Department provides secretarial services as required</td>
<td>Expenses only</td>
<td>331 - 333 of the Social Welfare Consolidation, Act, 2005</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1. **PENSIONS AUTHORITY**

The Pensions Authority monitors and supervises the operation of the Pensions Act and pension developments generally. It regulates occupational pension schemes; trust RACs and Personal Retirement Savings Accounts (PRSAs) in Ireland. It has a statutory responsibility to provide advice to the Minister for Social Protection on pension matters. The Authority aims to be a valued source of pension advice and knowledge for the Department of Social Protection and for Government generally.

The Pensions Authority consists of a three person Board, a chief executive (the Pensions Regulator) and staff of the Pensions Authority.

The Pensions Authority was formerly known as the Pensions Board.

The functions of the Pensions Authority are set out in the Pensions Act 1990 (as amended).

**Principal Ministerial and Departmental Functions**

- Provide sufficient oversight to ensure the effectiveness of the body while not impacting or impinging on its independence.
- Make any necessary changes to primary and secondary legislation in relation to the Pensions Authority.
- Appointment of members of the Board of the Pensions Authority.
- Request advice as required.
- Request tasks to be performed.
- Provide consents/approvals as necessary and appropriate.
- Confer additional functions on the Authority and make necessary provisions in connection with the conferral.
- Make orders, regulations, etc., relating to the role and function of the Pensions Authority and lay them before the Houses of the Oireachtas.
- Determination of allowances for expenses of the Pensions Regulator.
- Request/approve/direct/review accounts, reports, statement of strategy.
- Laying of documents (reports, statement of strategy, etc.) before the Houses of the Oireachtas.
- Removal of members of the Board in specified circumstances.
- Determine payment of remuneration and allowances to the chairman of the Board.
Accountability
The Pensions Authority is a statutory body comprising a chairperson appointed by the Minister for Employment Affairs and Social Protection and two ordinary members. The term of office for Authority members is five years. One ordinary member is nominated by the Minister and is an officer and representative of the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection. One ordinary member is nominated by the Minister for Finance and is an officer and representative of the Department of Finance.

The Pensions Regulator is the accountable person of the body and is required under legislation to report to the PAC as necessary.

Reporting Obligations;
Section 22(1) of the Pensions Act, 1990, as amended, requires the Authority to prepare financial statements in such form as may be approved by the Minister for Employment Affairs and Social Protection with the concurrence of the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform. In preparing the financial statements, the Authority is required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent
- prepare the financial statements on a going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the Authority will continue in operation
- disclose and explain any material departures from applicable accounting standards.

The Authority is responsible for keeping proper books of account, which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the Authority and which enable it to ensure that the financial statements comply with Section 22(1) of the Pensions Act, 1990, as amended. The Authority is also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the Authority and for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Codes of Business Conduct
The revised Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies, issued by the Government on 15 June 2009, requires all state bodies to have written Codes of Business Conduct for directors and employees. It requires that the requirements of the Companies Acts which relate to the behaviour of directors should be implemented even where their legislation does not reflect these requirements. Members of the Authority are considered ‘directors’ for the purposes of the code. The code for employees should embrace such matters as duty to the
state body, avoidance of conflict of interest, limits on outside activities, acceptance of gifts and honesty in dealings.

The Code of Business Conduct for Authority members and staff of the Pensions Authority is available [here](#).

**Tax Clearance and Compliance**
The Pensions Authority ensures that the Tax Clearance requirements set out in Department of Finance Circular 44/06 (21 December 2006), as regards the payment of grants, subsidies and similar type payments, and Department of Finance Circular 43/06 as regards Public Sector Contracts, are fully adhered to.

## 2. PENSIONS COUNCIL
The Pensions Council was established to provide pension policy advice to the Minister for Employment Affairs and Social Protection. Its membership ensures that the relevant skills, knowledge and experience are available to provide the necessary advice and information in the development of pension policy. There are between eight and twelve members assigned to the council by the Minister for a period of five years. The members serve on a part-time capacity and there is no remuneration for the post. Under the legislation governing the Council, the Minister for Social Protection determines its procedures. These may, in practice, be amended following discussions between the Chairperson of the Council and his/her officials.

### Principal Ministerial and Departmental Functions
- Provide sufficient oversight to ensure the effectiveness of the body while not impacting or impinging on its independence.
- Make any necessary changes to primary and secondary legislation in relation to the Pensions Council.
- Appointment of members of the Pensions Council and designation of chairperson.
- Removal of members of the Pensions Council in specified circumstances.
- Request advice as required.
- Determine procedures of the Pensions Council.

### Accountability
The Pensions Council is accountable to the Minister for Employment Affairs and Social Protection.
Service Level Agreements
There is a Memorandum of Understanding with the Pensions Authority.

Reporting Obligations
The Council reports directly to the Minister for Social Protection as required.

Codes of Business Conduct
Members of the Council are considered ‘directors’ for the purposes of the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies. The code for employees should embrace such matters as duty to the state body, avoidance of conflict of interest, limits on outside activities, acceptance of gifts and honesty in dealings.

The code of Business Conduct for Authority members and staff of the Pensions Council is available here.

Tax Clearance and Compliance
The Pensions Council operates under the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection. Members of the Pensions Council are unpaid. Travelling & subsistence costs, where they arise for the Chairperson, are as covered under civil service provisions and paid by the Department. The Pensions Authority provides administrative support to the Pensions Council under a Memorandum of Understanding at the request of the Minister.

3. CITIZENS INFORMATION BOARD
The Citizens Information Board (CIB) is the statutory body which supports the provision of information, advice and advocacy on a broad range of public and social services.

The CIB provides the Citizens Information website, citizensinformation.ie, and supports the network of Citizens Information Centres and the Citizens Information Phone Service. It also funds and supports the Money Advice and Budgeting Service (MABS).

It is governed by the Social Welfare (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2008, the Citizens Information Act 2007, and the Comhairle Act 2000. The CIB’s mandate, as defined by the Acts, is:

- To ensure that individuals have access to accurate, comprehensive and clear information relating to social services;
• To assist and support individuals, in particular those with disabilities, in identifying and understanding their needs and options;
• To promote greater accessibility, coordination and public awareness of social services;
• To support, promote and develop the provision of information on the effectiveness of current social policy and services and to highlight issues which are of concern to users of those services;
• To support the provision of, or directly provide, advocacy services for people with a disability;
• To support the provision of advice on personal debt and money management through the Money Advice and Budgeting Service.

Principal Ministerial and Departmental Functions

• The Minister is responsible for the appointment of the Board.
• The Minister has a Departmental representative at Assistant Secretary level.
• The Minister approves a strategic plan which is placed before the Oireachtas.
• The Department agrees and approves an annual budget with CIB.
• The Department monitors monthly expenditure to ensure compliance with agreed profiled expenditure.
• DEASP approves the annual budget for CIB.
• DEASP examines monthly funding drawdown requests received from the CIB and expenditure reports submitted by the CIB, in line with the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies.
• CIB conducts a formal Mid-Year Review of the overall CIB Budget expenditure, results of which are presented to the Finance and Audit Committee and the Board of CIB for consideration and approval and subsequently submission to DEASP.
• CIB Accounts are subject to audit by Comptroller & Auditor General.

Accountability

The CIB is a statutory body comprising 15 Board Members, one of whom is appointed as Chairperson. All members, including the Chairperson, are appointed by the Minister for Employment Affairs and Social Protection. The term of office of members of the Board of the Citizens Information Board is five years. The remit, role and functions of the CIB are set out in legislation.

The Chief Executive Officer is the accountable person of the body; he/she is accountable to the Board and is required under legislation to report to the PAC as necessary.
Reporting Obligations
There is no service level agreement with the CIB as there is governing legislation in place regarding its role, remit and funding arrangements. The CIB’s performance is reflected in its Annual Report. As part of its governance of CIB, senior DEASP staff meets with their counterparts in CIB executive, including the CEO on a regular basis. Meetings take place quarterly, and more frequently, as required.

CIB provides periodic updates on its organisational structure, which indicates roles and responsibilities of the senior staff in CIB. Regular contacts are maintained.

Codes of Business Conduct
A Code of Business Conduct for all directors and employees of the CIB which takes into account the implications of the Ethics in Public Office Act, 1995 is available here.

Tax Clearance and Compliance
Tax clearance certificates are furnished to the Department of Social Protection.

4. SOCIAL WELFARE TRIBUNAL
The Social Welfare Tribunal is a statutory body set up in 1982 to deal with cases where entitlement to Jobseeker’s Benefit or Jobseeker’s Allowance is refused due to an involvement in a trade dispute. Where a person feels that he/she has been unreasonably deprived of employment because his/her employer refused or failed to follow the negotiating machinery available for settling disputes, he/she may apply to the Tribunal for an adjudication on the matter.

The Tribunal is made up of a Chairman and four ordinary members. The members of the Tribunal are appointed by the Minister for Employment Affairs and Social Protection and must consist of an independent Chairman, two members nominated by the Irish Congress of Trade Unions (ICTU) and two by the Irish Business and Employer's Confederation (IBEC).

Accountability
The Tribunal acts as an independent body. A person interested (including the Minister) may apply to the Tribunal for a review of its decision and, where the Tribunal is satisfied that a material change has occurred in the circumstances of the stoppage of work or of the trade dispute which caused the stoppage of work, or that there is new evidence or new facts which in the opinion of the Tribunal could have affected its decision, it may review its decision and such a review shall be treated as an Adjudication.
Adjudication by the Tribunal members is final and conclusive but an Appeal may be referred to the High Court on an issue of law.

A member of the Tribunal may be removed from office by the Minister.

**Reporting Obligations**
The adjudication of the Tribunal is recorded in a document signed by the Chairman and sealed with the seal of the Tribunal. The adjudication sets out a summary of the arguments adduced by the parties and the conclusions reached by the Tribunal in the matter.

Notification of the decision reached by the Tribunal and a copy of the adjudication is sent to the relevant parties including the employee(s) and employer(s) involved; the Minister, the Secretary General and the Deputy Secretary.

**Codes of Business Conduct**
There are no directors or employees. Members would be aware of the implications of the Ethics in Public Office Act, 1995.

**Tax clearance and compliance**
Expenses only are paid per sitting. However, the members of the Tribunal are informed of their obligations regarding holding an up to date tax clearance certificate when they are appointed or re-appointed to the Tribunal.

**5. Low Pay Commission**
The Low Pay Commission (LPC) was established by the National Minimum Wage (Low Pay Commission) Act 2015. Its principal remit is to recommend levels for the national minimum wage national minimum hourly rate of pay so that it:

(a) Is designed to assist as many low paid workers as is reasonably practicable,
(b) Is set at a rate that is both fair and sustainable,
(c) Where adjustment is appropriate, is adjusted incrementally, and
(d) Over time, is progressively increased, without creating significant adverse consequences for employment or competitiveness.

The legislation also provides that the Commission may be requested by the Minister to examine ‘related matters’.
Principal Ministerial and Departmental Functions
- The Minister is responsible for the appointment of the members of the Commission.
- The Minister makes an order each year setting the rate of the National Minimum Wage, following receipt of the Commission's recommendation, and lays any reports before the Houses of the Oireachtas.
- The Minister may request the Commission to examine matters related generally to its functions.
- The Department provides sufficient overnight to ensure the effectiveness of the body while not impacting or impinging on its independence.
- The Department approves an annual budget for the operations of the Commission.
- The Department provides the Secretariat to the Commission.
- LPC accounts are subject to audit by Comptroller & Auditor General as part of the Department's Vote.
- Make any necessary changes to primary and secondary legislation in relation to the Low Pay Commission.

Accountability
The LPC is an independent statutory body comprising nine members (one of whom is Chairperson), appointed by the Minister. The term of office of members is three years. A person may not be a member of the Commission for more than two consecutive terms of office but is otherwise eligible for re-appointment. The remit, role and functions of PLC are set out in legislation.

Reporting Obligations
The Act establishing the Commission provides that the Commission will make a report and recommendation in relation to the national minimum wage to the Minister in July each year. The Commission is also required to report to the Minister in relation to ‘related matters’, if so requested by the Minister. In addition, the Commission is required to report once every three years on the operation of the Act and on the impact of any minimum wage orders made on low pay, income distribution and employment costs. Any reports received by the Minister must be laid before the Houses of the Oireachtas within three months of receipt.

Codes of Business Conduct
There are no directors or employees. Members would be aware of the implications of the Ethic in Public Office Act, 1995.

Tax clearance and compliance
Members may receive an annual fee. Travelling and subsistence costs, where they arise, are in accordance with civil service provisions. The members of the Commission are informed of their obligations regarding holding an up to date tax clearance certificate on appointment or re-appointment to the Commission.
APPENDIX

GROUPS ATTENDED AT SENIOR MANAGEMENT LEVEL

DEASP/Revenue High Level Group
The Department liaises bilaterally with Revenue through a Joint DEASP/Revenue High Level Group. The group meets on a quarterly basis and comprises of senior management board members from both organisations. It has established a number of dedicated working groups to ensure collaborative efforts are directed towards progressing joint strategic and business priorities. The groups include:

- Shadow Economy/Joint Investigation Units
- Information Data Exchange
- PRSI
- Joint Architectures Group.

High Level Working Group with Department of Public Expenditure and Reform (DPER)
Community Employment Scheme claim for pensions, ex gratia payment – this group is chaired by D/PER.

High Level Working Group with Health and HSE
Newly established group to discuss governance arrangements for data sharing initiatives.

Universal Retirement Savings Group (URSG)
An interdepartmental group which includes the Central Bank, NTMA, OECD and UK’s DWP

Liaison Group with SOLAS
This group is co-chaired by DEASP’s Deputy Secretary and the Chief Executive Officer of SOLAS.

Oversight Group for implementation of Gateway Initiative
This group is chaired by DEASP’s Deputy Secretary. The Department of Planning, Housing and Local Government and two Local Authorities are also represented on the group.

Senior Officials Group on Labour Market Issues

Senior Officials Group on Economic Recovery and Jobs

Senior Officials Group on Social policy and Public Service Reform

Senior Officials Group on Climate Change

Senior Officials Group for Cabinet Committee C

The Government Task Force on Emergency Planning
Further Education and Training Strategy Implementation Advisory Group
SAFE Steering Committee
Ministerial Group on Pensions
Reform and Innovation Network
Liaison Group between the Central Statistics Office and DEASP
Interdepartmental Group on Local & Community Development
Interdepartmental Group on the European Union and Brexit
Inter-departmental group on the European Pillar of Social Rights
The National Disability Strategy Implementation Group
Comprehensive Employment Strategy (for people with disabilities) Oversight Group
Make Work Pay for People with Disabilities Interdepartmental group
HR Shared Services Programme Board
Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) Oversight Group
HAP Project Board
Irish Refugee Protection Programme Taskforce
High Level Group on Asylum Seekers in Direct Provision
Interdepartmental Flood Policy Co-ordination Group
National Emergency Coordination Group on Severe Weather.
Homelessness Policy Implementation Team
Better Outcomes Brighter Futures
The Debt Management Implementation Project Board
Interdepartmental Group on Fuller Working Lives
EU and International Groups

Executive Board on the implementation of EESSI
Employment, Social Policy, Health and Consumer Affairs Council (EPSCO)
Committee on Employment Affairs and Social Protection (EASPC)
Employment Committee (EMCO)
Social Questions Working Party
Administrative Commission for the Coordination of Social Security Systems
Technical Commission for Data Processing (attached to the Administrative Commission on the Coordination of Social Security Systems)
Advisory Committee for the Coordination of Social Security Systems
Mutual Information on Social Security Systems of EU/EEA countries (MISSOC)
Governing Board of the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions (Eurofound)
European Jobs Network (EURES)
European network of Public Employment Services (PES)
Advisory Committee on the Free Movement of Workers
Advisory Group on the European Labour Authority
Committee on the EU Programme for Employment and Social Innovation (EaSI)
Council of Europe
International Labour Organisation
Relevant Committees of the United Nations
International Social Security Association
Employment, Labour and Social Affairs Committee of the OECD (ELSA)
“Windsor Conference” (group of social security experts from 6 English-speaking countries)
North South Ministerial Council
Border People Advisory Group