

NOAC – National Oversight and Audit Commission

Local Authorities – Reports on Performance Indicators,

Corporate Plans and Tenants Satisfaction Survey

The National Oversight and Audit Commission (NOAC) today (16 December 2015) published 3 reports on:

- *Performance Indicators in Local Authorities 2014;*
- *Local Authority Corporate Plans 2015-2019;*
- *Results of a Local Authority Tenants Satisfaction Survey.*

The report on **Performance Indicators in Local Authorities 2014** replaces the annual Service Indicators reports that have been published since 2004 and outlines the activity in 2014 of the 31 local authorities in respect of 35 performance indicators prescribed by NOAC. These cover a wide range of the functions carried out by local authorities in the areas of housing (6), roads (2), planning (4), water (2), waste/environment (5), fire service (3), library/recreation (2), youth/community (4), corporate (4), finance (2) and economic development (1). The detailed results for each indicator are provided in Tables 1 to 26 on pages 22 to 79 of the report; they bring together a wide range of information about how all the local authorities perform in delivering services to local communities. The data on performance was collected from local authorities by the Local Government Management Agency, who also provided an associated commentary at pages 81-107. Some of the indicators are new, some were previously included in the Service Indicators reports and some are slightly modified versions of previous service indicators.

NOAC (at pages 6-21) sets out details of its quality assurance review of 7 of the indicators; highlights key messages emerging from the data; and gives conclusions and recommendations arising from this work. A snapshot of just a few of the data items contained in this report shows: 3,820 additional social housing dwellings were provided in 2014 either directly by local authorities or through the Rental Accommodation, Housing Assistance Payment or Leasing Initiative schemes; 4,919 local authority dwellings were vacant at 31 December 2014 representing 3.8% of the stock; median average re-letting time and cost were 24.5 weeks and €8,375 respectively; 18,553 private rented dwellings representing 6.5% of registered tenancies were inspected in 2014; unaccounted for water was 46.7% of the total volume of water supplied in the first half of 2015 – this is the first time this indicator has been calculated using metered residential data; the per capita cost of the planning service varied from €12.66 in Cork county to €53.19 per head in Roscommon, with a mean of €28.04; the cost of the fire service ranged from €70 in Leitrim to €28.25 in Kildare per person served by part-time fire brigades; the per capita cost of the library service

was €60.16 in Cork city and €17.30 in Mayo with a mean of €29.60; local authority staff numbers decreased by a further 2.66% in 2014 bringing the total reduction since 2008 to 23.4%; the overall mean average of certified sick leave was 8.27% less than 2013 – when unpaid sick leave is discounted, as per the 2014 indicator, the reduction is 20.33%; and 3,478.5 jobs were created in 2014 with the support of the local authority run Local Enterprise Offices, which replaced the County and City Enterprise Boards.

Local Authority Corporate Plans 2015-2019

NOAC has also published the report of its review of the adequacy of the Corporate Plans prepared by the 31 county, city, and city and county councils for the period 2015 to 2019. It is, in general, satisfied as to the adequacy of all the Corporate Plans for the purposes of meeting the relevant statutory requirements, complying with the guidelines issued by the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government and responding to the major changes in local government that were implemented in 2014. The Corporate Plans of Carlow, Cavan, Cork city, Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown, Leitrim, South Dublin and Westmeath councils are highlighted in the report as exemplars of better practice in the preparation of such Plans. NOAC will commence evaluation of the implementation of Corporate Plans towards the end of 2016.

Results of Local Authority Tenants' Satisfaction Survey

NOAC is currently carrying out, for publication in 2016, thematic studies of the maintenance and management of local authority housing and of local authority performance in implementing the private rented sector regulations. As part of the maintenance/management study and reflecting its statutory mandate relating to customer service, NOAC commissioned Behaviour & Attitudes to conduct market research on local authority tenants' satisfaction with their Council's performance of those functions.

The results from the survey, which was conducted in October/November, will feed into the forthcoming NOAC report. In the interim, NOAC is making available results of the survey. Key findings include: 48% of tenants surveyed believe that the Council's service has improved over the past 5 years and 81% are satisfied with the structural condition of their home; overall, 2 in 3 tenants living in a local authority estate would praise their Council's housing and maintenance services; 46% have contacted their local authority regarding emergency repair work, with leaks being the most common reason (42%), followed by electrical/dangerous wiring (26%); 38% of tenants are not aware which non-emergency repairs are the Council's responsibility and 26% are not aware which repairs are their own responsibility; 64% of the tenants' homes had benefitted from energy efficiency improvement works and 28% were the subject of a Home Condition Survey; of those tenants living in Council estates, 85% consider their estate to be a pleasant place to live. NOAC wishes to express its thanks to the 756 tenants who participated in the survey.

Notes for Editors

The 3 reports are available here:

<http://noac.ie/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/NOAC-Performance-Indicators-Report-2014.docx>

<http://noac.ie/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/Tenant-Survey-BA-for-NOAC.pdf>

<http://noac.ie/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/Corporate-Plans-Report-NOAC.doc>

The National Oversight and Audit Commission (NOAC) was established under the Local Government Reform Act 2014 to provide independent scrutiny of local government performance in fulfilling national, regional and local mandates, including performance in respect of its financial resources. Its mission is to independently oversee the local government sector by reviewing the financial and operational performance of bodies within its remit, overseeing implementation of national local government policy and identifying opportunities for best practice. Further information on NOAC is available at www.noac.ie.

Since its establishment, NOAC has examined a range of areas of local authority activity. Reports arising from some of this work are now being published, with further reports to be published in 2016 as other work is completed and additional areas of local government activity examined. Early in 2016, the NOAC Annual Report for 2015 will be published and will give full details of the Commission's work during the year.

Queries to NOAC via DOECLG Press Office: Tel: (01) 888 2638 (direct), (01) 888 2000;

E-Mail: press-office@environ.ie Web site: www.noac.ie Twitter: @EnvironPress