Open Government Partnership

Round Table Meeting

19th January 2022

10.00 to 12.00

Agenda, outcome and actions arising

Pre-meeting documents

1. Assessment Summary
2. Secretariat Presentation

Purpose:

1. Make decisions on proposals to be included in Ireland's Open Government National Action Plan
2. Make decision on proposals that will not be included and how the rationale for decisions will be communicated
3. Agree nominations for sub-Committees to progress proposals to Draft Commitments
4. Agree Round Table process for 2022.

Revised agenda

10.00	Welcome and introductions Meeting overview and process
10.10	Overview of the Selection Process and key findings
10.30	Break out discussions to discuss the evaluation and the presentation and to bring and questions arising back to the Round Table for discussion.
10.50	Plenary with feedback
11.00	Agreement of proposals not progressing as part of the Third Actions Plan and agreement on feedback to be provided by Co Chairs/Secretariat
11.20	Agreement in principle on 3 or 4 proposals to be progressed
11.30	Agreement on Sub Committees Membership, tasked to develop Draft Commitments for inclusion in the Third Action Plan.
11.45	Schedule of Meetings and Tasks for the Round Table to End of 2022
12.00	Close

Acknowledgement:

The Co-Chairs and Secretariat wish to acknowledge with thanks all the preparatory work undertaken by the Round Table members since the last meeting (29th November 2021), which has included:

- Review of the initial draft commitments circulated.
- Review 19 submissions received in the public call.
- Undertaken a 5 step evaluation of the 19 submissions received in the public call which was shared with the Secretariat for collation.
- Reading the slides in advance of today's meeting.

The Co-Chairs also acknowledged with thanks the work of the Secretariat and Helen Newman (facilitator) in their preparations for today's meeting.

A special welcome was extended to Shana, joining her 1st meeting, and Barry Vaughan, who is the newly nominated Department of the Taoiseach Round Table member.

Round Table operation procedural note: The Secretariat wishes to bring to the Co-Chairs attention that the terms of reference, require co-representation on the Round Table, to a maximum 6 members for both Public Sector and Civil Society. With Barry Vaughan (Department of the Taoiseach) joining as a Round Table member, to ensure ongoing compliance with the terms of reference, Philip McGrath will revert to his original role of Co-Chair / Secretariat role only.

Attendance:

Round Table members:

Catherine Lawlor; Shana Cohen; Johnny Sheehan; Kathryn McCabe; Fiona Descoteaux; Ciara Morgan; Kieran Moylan; Andrew Patterson; Diarmuid O'Leary; Antoinette Doran and Barry Vaughan.

Co-Chairs: Philip McGrath and Antoin Ó Lachtnáin (Round Table member also).

Facilitator: Helen Newman

Secretariat: Criona Brassill, with Eoin Tunsted supporting.

Outcome:

1. **Update since last meeting (29th November 2021)**
   Round Table members agreed the (i) further milestones achieved since the last meeting [slides 4-5]; (ii) status update on the previous meeting next steps [slides 6-8] and the *EMBARGO: International award remains confidential until announced by the Minister*

2. **To make decisions on proposals to be included in Ireland's Open Government National Action Plan.**

   2.1 The Round Table members agreed that three sub-groups would be established to progress the proposals 12, 26 and 15/20 (noting proposal 17 insights).

Sub-groups	Electoral Reform (Proposal 12)	Public Participation Network barriers (Proposal 26)	Civic Participation (Proposal 15 & 20, noting proposal 17 insights)
Lead	Catherine Lawlor (Transparency International Ireland proposed)	Kathryn McCabe (Proposer)	Johnny Sheehan (Proposer #20)
Policy area leads	Diarmuid O'Leary (DHLGH)	Kieran Moylan (DRCD)	Not yet clear.
Member	+ Shauna Cohen (if needed)	+ Diarmuid O'Leary (DHLGH)	Shana Cohen
Member	N/A	N/A	Fiona Descoteaux
Member	N/A	N/A	Antoinette Doran (D/Justice)
Member	N/A	N/A	+ Andrew Patterson (DCEDIY)
Member	N/A	N/A	+ Kathryn McCabe

Note: DHLGH = Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage; DRCD = Department of Rural & Community Development; DCEDIY = Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth.

2.2 The Round Table members noted that the DPER Open Data team and the Secretariat would be bringing a draft commitment to the next meeting for their consideration.

3. **Break out discussion**

Following the presentation on the overview of the selection process and key findings, and mindful of the considerable breadth and depth included, Members were asked to consider the content of the presentation and of the materials circulated in advance of the Meeting and bring back any questions and/or observations to the plenary.

Leaders shared the feedback with the Round Table in plenary session. The feedback shared were broadly in three themes:

3.1 Subgroup remit; task; authority and process queries;
3.2 To ensure that 'respect' was central to the reasoned decision that proposers would receive.
3.3 Speaks to the work in the Programme for Government and national strategies (particularly for sub-group remit).

In addition the following specific feedback was noted:

- The analysis provided by Secretariat was praised and valued by the members.
- The submission process, when reviewed, will benefit from greater clarity on the selection criteria used to assess proposals by the Round Table.
- The challenge of balancing the need for long-term structural change with the shorter timeframe of the National Action Plans was noted.
- Matching funding for projects proposal was raised.
- The importance of ensuring proposals took cognisance of and where appropriate were aligned with existing processes was noted.
- The need for a sponsoring/supporting government department was questioned but no conclusion reached.

- Members requested clarity on the process for progressing the proposal to be included in the Third National Action Plan by subgroups and the road map for the next period. Specifically, members would like guidance to ensure coherence of approach and methodology, clarity on composition, remit, authority and focus for the subgroups.

4. **To make decisions on proposals that will not be included and how the rationale for decisions will be communicated.**

The Secretariat presented the powerpoint presentation to the Round Table members with a proposed 'reasoned decision' for each proposal on the basis of the Round Table members' evaluation and intelligence gathered by the Secretariat on each proposal.

The Round Table members voted on each proposal[1]. The results of the vote to adopt the 'reasoned decision' in the presentation was:

Agree	Reasoned decision for the proposals
100%	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 12, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25 and 26.
92%	8, 9, 10, 11, 13 and 14.

Also, the Secretariat noted the 2 observations shared bilaterally by Round Table members and will revert bilaterally re inputting to the Freedom of Information Act review.

Round Table members agreed that the Secretariat would progress the drafting of a 'reasoned decision' to be finalised with the Co-Chairs to circulate to proposers in early February in advance of the next meeting.

5. **To agree nominations for sub-Committees to progress proposals to Draft Commitments**

The Round Table members formally nominated themselves to work on sub-groups to progress the proposals and sub-group leaders were agreed. *Refer to table in 1.1 above.*

6. **Agree Round Table process for 2022.**

Dates	Activity
16th February 2022 (10:00 – 12:00)	Next Round Table meeting.
9th February 2022	Next Round Table meeting agenda and documentation circulation date.
7th February 2022	Next Co-Chair bilateral discussion.
4th February 2022 (AM)	Draft agenda and draft meeting documentation (including sub-group input) to be circulated to the Co-Chairs in advance of their meeting.
2nd February 2022	Sub-group to submit revised draft commitment templates (attached) to the Secretariat.

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[1] Kieran Moylan had indicated a long standing prior meeting commitment in advance, thus he was unable to vote in proposal 24 onwards, but had already indicated his willingness to be on the proposal 26 sub-group in the evaluation process. The Secretariat will follow-up bilaterally.

Next 2 weeks	Sub-group lead to arrange meeting(s) to progress the proposals with the output being revised draft commitments for circulation to the Round Table.	

7. Actions arising from the meeting:

	What	Who	By when
1	Draft and circulate meeting outcome / next steps, including the formal observations received from DHLGH and Open Data team on proposals	√ **Críona / Helen / Eoin / Co-Chairs**	Monday 24th January 2022 (cob)
2	Sub-group leads to arrange meeting of the sub-group and progress towards the output sought for the next Round Table.	**Catherine; Kathryn and Johnny.**	Output to be provided to the Secretariat by 2nd February 2022.
3	Input to sub-groups from Secretariat: (i) To provide further clarity on the sub-group role, deliverables and timelines; (ii) To address the queries shared in the plenary session from the break out groups; and (iii) To provide questions for consideration by each of the Subgroups based on the evidence arising from the evaluation analysis and intelligence gathering to date.	**Críona - refer to:** **Appendix 1 √** **Appendix 2 √** **Appendix 1 √**	Monday 24th January 2022 (cob)
4	Secretariat to progress the drafting of the Round Table 'reasoned decisions' on the submissions for Co-Chairs to discuss, finalise and circulate in advance of the next meeting. Secretariat to complete any agreed actions underpinning the reasoned decisions (e.g. circulate proposal 1 to the National Statistics Board etc.).	**Críona / Co-Chairs**	Update and share with Co-Chairs 4th February 2022.
5	Secretariat will work with DPER Open Data team to progress draft commitment on open data.	**Críona / Open Data team c/o Rhoda Kerrins**	Share with Co-Chairs 4th February 2022.

Note: DHLGH = Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage and DPER = Department of Public Expenditure and Reform.

8. Post meeting: The Secretariat asks for the support of Round Table members to progress the actions below which relate to matters raised at the meeting:

	What	Who	By when
6	The Secretariat invites Round Table members to share specific recommendations: (i) To further enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of the 'pilot' submission evaluation model. In particular, a deeper understanding of how Round Table members should rank submissions. (ii) To further enhance the initial guidance of the sub-groups.	**All Round Table and Co-Chairs**	To the Secretariat by 2nd February 2022.
7	The Secretariat acknowledges with thanks that the Civil Society Co-Chair will provide 2/3 draft powerpoint slides on 'ways of working' for the consideration of Round Table members at the next meeting.	**Antoin with Civil Society members**	Share with Secretariat by 2nd February 2022.

The Secretariat acknowledges all the ongoing work in progressing the 3 agreed draft commitments (December 2021) and other work across the various organisations that it is hoped can be reflected in the next National Action Plan.

Criona Brassill
19th / 20th January 2022.

Appendix 1

Secretariat responses to the breakout session feedback.

The Secretariat welcomes the feedback shared, which evidences the high level of engagement of Round Table members.

The Secretariat notes the feedback that the submission process would benefit from greater clarity on the selection criteria used to assess proposals by the Round Table.
- ➢ The Secretariat would welcome specific recommendations to enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of the 'pilot' submission evaluation model. In particular, a deeper understanding of how Round Table members should rank submissions.
- ➢ The Secretariat will reach out to Open Government Partnership to seek additional guidance on Step 6 indicator and will request that the international reviewer provides additional detail to the Round Table on this indicator in their 1st report.

The Secretariat invites sub-group leaders and members to review the sub-group guidance shared which seeks to address the sub-group related queries raised. *Refer appendix 2.*
- ➢ The Secretariat can provide clarity at this stage on the following:
  - ▪ Focus and membership of the sub-group: The focus, the sub-group leaders and current sub-group members are outlined at 2.1.
  - ▪ Remit of the sub-groups: Is to progress the shaping of the proposals into draft commitment in line with the Open Government Partnership requirements for the consideration of the Round Table. The draft commitment must be clear, specific and with SMART milestones that those who must implement support; that enable the Round Table to monitor implementation and that the Open Government Partnership reviewer can independently and verifiably measure (refer to the 3 draft commitments circulated in December 2021).
  - ▪ Authority of the sub-group: This derives from the Open Government Round Table which, while supported by membership of Open Government Partnership; a Programme for Government commitment; and Ministers statement in the Dáil, enter the art of persuasive engagement as there is no authority to direct an action to be taken.
  - ▪ Coherency of approach: As the sub-groups differ considerably in terms of their starting points and the breath of the remit, their journey to deliver the output from Round Table consideration will differ in terms of approach and timeframe. The Secretariat will share some initial questions for the consideration on the sub-group based on the intelligence gathered to date.
- ➢ The Secretariat has shared the intelligence gathered on the potential relevant **Programme for Government commitments; national strategies and potential pathways**, including Civic Forum which is to be established in 2022 with the purpose of being the point of engagement between Government and Civil Society. *Refer to appendix 2*.
- ➢ The Secretariat notes the Round Table members' feedback on the **challenge of balancing the need for long-term structural change with the shorter timeframe of the National Action Plan**. The Open Government Partnership (OGP) process has the potential to enable the Round Table to achieve long terms goals through the successful implementation of incremental short term milestones. There is an opportunity to explore this theory as the Civic Participation sub-group explores how to shape the medium /

longer term proposals into a series of milestones, some of which might be reflected as commitment(s) in the 3rd National Action Plan and subsequent commitment(s) in the 4th National Action Plan the process for which will commence in November / December 2022.

➢ The sub-group leaders are invited to arrange a bilateral call with the Secretariat (if required).

Appendix 2

Sub-group guidance

Purpose of subcommittee: to work together in accordance with OGP guidance to produce a completed SMART commitment template agreed by sub-group members for the consideration of the Round Table for the Open Government National Action Plan.

Initial tasks:
- √ Choose a single person to be a contact point.
- Determine governance and meeting schedule.

Ongoing tasks:
- Share sub-group output with the Secretariat by timeline for Co-Chairs/Round Table circulation.
- Sub-group update/feedback will be a standing item on each Round Table agenda.
- Consult with and keep Secretariat informed of progress and issues.

Secretariat guidance applicable to all the subgroups:

The Round Table is on a journey in shaping its processes. These sub-groups are effectively 'pilots'. Many Round Table members will bring considerable experience into this process, thus below is a guide.

General:

- The commitment template should help to focus the discussions and identify what discussion outcomes are required.
- The strategy of capturing other new ideas and insights arising separately ensures a pipeline for the future discussion, while maintaining the focus on the current output and delivery timelines.

What	Complete an agreed draft commitment template (attached) for the consideration of the Round Table.
How	Sub-groups differ and will navigate their own path guided by the values which Round Table members have flagged - active listening, respect and impactful deliverable outcomes.
What does 'good' look like.	Consider the draft commitments circulated in December 2021 as benchmark and to ensure consistency.
When	(i) Initial meeting week commencing Monday 24th January 2022. (ii) Sub-groups to organise / allocate work as deemed appropriate.

	(iii) Revised draft commitment and record keeping output to be shared with the Secretariat by 2nd February 2022.
Record keeping	Sub-group leads are requested to keep high level note which would ensure open and transparent perspective of how the commitment was shaped. For example: Note each meeting (date, attendees etc.); agenda; meeting outcomes and actions arising. One document with all the detail to be shared with the Secretariat by 2nd February 2022.

Please note that the Secretariat is very open and keen for sub-group leads to share any additional insights bi-laterally (cc'ing the Secretariat) to be agile in shaping a consistent productive sub-group 'way of working'.

Proposal 12: Electoral Reform:

Potentially relevant Programme for Government commitment, noting that the proposal flagged the enactment of the Electoral Reform Bill 2020 as a key milestone.

Programme for Government (PfG) commitment description	Establish an Electoral Commission to provide independent oversight of elections and referendums, to inform the public about elections and referendums, to update and maintain the electoral register, and to inform the public about elections and referendums, to update and maintain the electoral register, and to conduct elections. Ensure that this Commission is in place by the end of 2021.
Owner	Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage (DHLGH)
PfG commitment	? Part of PfG commitment (Ref #1452 etc, page 120)
Other: PfG update	The status of the Electoral Reform Bill 2020, Parliamentary questions written response 11th November 2021 [55203/21] https://www.oireachtas.ie/en/debates/question/2021-11-11/29/ DHLGH is working with the Attorney General's Office on the drafting of the Electoral Reform Bill. It is on the list of priority legislation for publication in the autumn legislation programme. Pre-Legislative Scrutiny of the General Scheme of the Electoral Reform Bill 2020 was completed and report published in August 2021, following the publication of the general scheme of the electoral reform bill in January 2021.

Sub-group may wish to consider some/all of the questions below to guide their initial engagement:

(i) Discuss the relevance of the Electoral Reform legislation to the proposal?

(ii) Share an update on the current status and timelines for the Electoral Reform legislation?

(iii) Explore, identify and capture the aspects of the proposal where there is agreement with implementation milestones deliverable by August 2023. *As there are considerable challenges in timing the passage of legislation and ongoing monitoring of the commitments, the sub-group should be mindful that the milestones timelines are deliverable rather than aspiration.*

(iv)   Note, list and initially park any areas of difference, emerging to be reflected upon once all the areas of agreement have been reflected in the draft commitment template.

(v)   Explore, identify and capture how any areas of difference were addressed and/or can't be addressed in the draft commitment.

Proposal 26: Public Participation Network (PPN) barriers

The proposal appears to align with the ongoing Public Participation Network review, pursuant to objective 7, 'Sustainable, Inclusive and Empowered Communities - 5 year strategy 2019-2024', Department of Rural & Community Development (DRCD).

PPN review is nearing completion	DRCD has indicated that there is a review of the PPN is nearing completion.
National Strategy	Department of Rural & Community Development 'Sustainable, Inclusive and Empowered Communities - 5 year strategy 2019-2024 Objective 7 (page 29) which seeks the outcome of increased operational and representative capacity of Public Participation Networks (PPNs).
Programme for Government (PfG) commitment description	Fully implement Sustainable, Inclusive and Empowered Communities, the five-year strategy to support the community and voluntary sector in Ireland up to 2024.
Owner	Department of Rural & Community Development (DRCD)
PfG commitment	PfG commitment (page 92, ref # 1155).

Sub-group may wish to consider some/all of the questions below to guide their initial engagement:

(i)   Discuss the relevance of the ongoing Public Participation Network review?

(ii)   Share an update on the current status and timelines of the Public Participation Network Review?

(iii)   Explore, identify and capture the aspects of the proposal where there is agreement with implementation milestones deliverable by August 2023.

(iv)   Note, list and initially park any areas of difference emerging, to be reflected upon once all the areas of agreement have been reflected in the draft commitment template.

(v)   Explore, identify and capture how any areas of difference were addressed and/or can't be addressed in the draft commitment.

Proposal 15/20: Civic Participation (and insights from Proposal 17).

Proposal 15: The Secretariat will share with the sub-group lead the notes from bilateral phone discussion and the proposer's clarification that the proposal is (i) not seeking legislation, but rather a

statutory instrument or a circular and (ii) potential joint ownership by DRCD (Community & Voluntary sector) and DHLGH (Local Government aspect).

There is working ongoing in civic participation, including below, further exploration of which may identify existing synergies and pathways to progress for the 3rd National Action Plan and beyond.

Owner	Department of the Taoiseach
Programme for Government (PfG) commitment description	Establish a unit in the Department of the Taoiseach to coordinate social dialogue. It will create new models of sectoral engagement.
PfG commitment	Social Dialogue - PfG commitment (page 122, internal ref #1496)

Owner	Department of Rural and Community Development
Programme for Government (PfG) commitment description	Fully implement Sustainable, Inclusive and Empowered Communities, the five-year strategy to support the community and voluntary sector in Ireland up to 2024.
PfG commitment	PfG commitment (page 92, internal ref #155)
	There is significant pathway of work progressing the implementation of this medium term national strategy. As further clarity emerges on what is being sought, the Secretariat is happy to facilitate a bilateral call with DRCD.

Owner	Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth (DCEDIY)
PfG commitment	Youth related - PfG commitments (page 121, internal ref #1475 & #1479)
Programme for Government (PfG) commitment description	[#1475] Consider the expected Institute of Public Administration review of municipal districts, with a view to strengthening local democracy and identifying local needs and initiatives needed to strengthen and grow our communities, villages and towns in a sustainable manner. This review will examine the addition of directly elected, democratic bodies in such areas and below the municipal district level. [#1479] Establish a Youth Assembly, with various modules, including ones for rural and urban young people. This Youth Assembly will consider issues of importance to young people and their future, such as climate action, digitalisation, social media and communications, mental health and wellbeing.

Owner	Department of Public Expenditure and Reform (DPER)
Programme for Government (PfG) commitment description	Continue and reinvigorate participation by the public sector in Open Government Partnership.
PfG commitment	Page 121, internal ref #1485

Sub-group may wish to consider some/all of the questions below to guide their initial engagement:

(i)   What do the proposals have in common?

(ii)   Is the focus of proposal 20 to secure a commitment and governance models?

(iii)   Is the focus of proposal 15 that an advanced consultation and deliberative engagement policy and standards is developed with a requirement to implement? Is the focus on local government?

(iv)   Progress the exploration of what 'good looks like' in order to clarify the 'ask'…

(v)   Distil the individual milestones outcome/outputs to assist in identifying the policy owner.

(vi)   Is there a specific 'requirement' instrument being sought (e.g legislation; circular etc).

(vii)   What are the milestones to delivering the outcome / output being sought?

(viii) Which of these milestones are funded?

(ix)   Which of these milestones can be reflected in the 3rd National Action Plan (delivered by August 2023) and which can be developed for the 4th National Action Plan (process to commence circa November/December 2022).