

# Minutes of the Sixteenth Meeting of the Construction Sector Group 3pm on 25<sup>th</sup> April 2022



Rialtas na  
hÉireann  
Government  
of Ireland

Tionscadal Éireann  
Project Ireland  
2040

## Conference Call

### Present

David Moloney (DPER) (Chair), John Kinnane (DPER), PJ Rudden (Chair of Innovation and Digital Adoption Sub-Group), Sarah Ingle (ACEI), Tom Parlon (CIF), Frank Kelly (CIF), Declan McGee (Enterprise Ireland), Kathryn Meghen (RIAI), Patrick King (SCSI), Alan Power (DETE), David O'Brien (OGP), Sarah Neary (DHLGH), Owen Joyce (DFINANCE), Maria O'Brien (DHEALTH), John Coppinger (DTRANS), Ed Hearne (DPER), Colm Farrell (DPER), Rinku Phulphagar (DPER), Frank Newman (DPER), Declan Donoghue (DPER), Paul Sheridan (CIF), Shirley Coulter (SCSI), David McHugh (RPS Group), Neil Kerrigan (EI), Sarah Miley (DFHERIS), Valerie Kirwan (Education), David Howard (BMF), Geraldine Larkin (NSAI), Eileen Hearne (Department of Taoiseach), Conor McCarthy (ACEI), Caroline Spillane (Engineers Ireland), Graham Rigney (DPER), Mark Connolly (DPER), Mark Kane (HSE), Struan Charters (DPER), Patricia King (ICTU), John Shaw (Department of the Taoiseach), Margaret O'Donnell (DPER), Pranash Ramanundh (RIAI), Robert Moore (TU Dublin), Sean Armstrong (DHLGH), John O'Shaughnessy (Clancy Construction), Hubert Loftus (Department of Education), Alec McAllister (Engineers Ireland), Paul Cotter (D/Finance), Gerard Harvey (OPW), Margaret Power (Housing), Cassandra Hinchy (DFHERIS), Manus O'Donnell (DETE)

### Apologies

Kevin Meaney (DPER)

#### 1. Minutes of meeting held on 28<sup>th</sup> January 2022

The minutes of the last meeting were agreed.

#### 2. Standing Item: Update from Innovation and Digital Adoption Sub-Group (Chair of Group)

The Chair of the Innovation and Digital Adoption Sub-Group gave a brief progress update on the work of the group. Over the past 3 months much has been achieved. The launch of the Build Digital Project took place on 7<sup>th</sup> April. The procurement of the Enterprise Ireland Construction Technology Centre was finalised and an announcement will issue shortly. Great progress has happened with 2 out of 3 Actions in the Sub-Group. The Sub-Group has added 2 cross cutting priority Actions, Housing for All strategy and the Sustainability Climate Action and circular economy strategy. Over the last 3 months the Sub-Group has been challenged, although being challenged the Sub-Group has still committed to delivering the plans of the NDP and Project Ireland 2040. The group knows that while doing these challenges comes new innovation and enterprise opportunities. The Sub-Group faced two major challenges so far this year with Modern Methods of Construction (MMC) and how it will be delivered to the construction industry. Secondly is the Local Government Management Agency (LGMA) led digitisation planning permission applications, has been pushed out till 2023. At the previous CSG meeting it was asked about ePlanning meeting its deadline. The Chair of the Sub-Group then met with the LGMA to discuss the project. This meeting was followed with another meeting with DPER and DHLGH representatives. At the meeting it was discussed that most counties will be completed by 2022, but Dublin and Cork local authorities are less advanced in the project. The introduction of MMC will present challenges and opportunities, as the transition from the traditional methods of construction to MMC will require reconfiguration of ways of working within the construction sector. This includes new contractor agencies, procurement processes, and the need for upfront payments for off-site units, insurances, regulatory compliance and many more. The MMC will focus on reducing costs, achieving faster timelines, improved health and safety, reduction in on-site labour by roughly 70%

amongst other objectives. Work is ongoing between DHLGH, DFHERIS and SOLAS towards building the newly planned and approved Demonstration Park. The consultancy study from DHLGH is currently out to tender.

### **3. Build Digital**

The Project lead, Robert Moore, introduced himself to the CSG and provided an update on its work programme and key deliverables for year 1. BDP stated the objectives of the project. BDP will be about bringing people together to solve problems. The five pillars of the BDP were spoken about in greater detail: Digital Leadership and culture change, Digital Standards, Digital Education & Training, Digital Procurement, and Sustainability & Climate Action. BDP spoke about the half-yearly conference, annual survey, the Irish Build Digital Exchange Hub (which will communicate effectively with the industry) and living labs (testing to make sure techniques deliver best practice). Good practices that already exist in industry will be captured. The key deliverables across the five years of the project were outlined. Leadership Forum plenary (1/2 year event) to be held on 4th May 2022 at CIF as a hybrid event. The BDP outlined that they are engaging with other actions of the CSG Subgroup. Finally, a connected funding model was discussed as 3 actions on the CSG Subgroup will look for funding from industry (BDP, CTC and MMC). NSAI stated that they look forward to progress being made with the projects, upcoming engagements and collaboration, as there are possibilities for synergies.

### **4. CIRI**

Sean Armstrong from DHLGH gave a presentation on the Regulation of Providers of Building Works Bill, which relates to the statutory establishment of the Construction Industry Register Ireland (CIRI). The main objective of the Bill is to develop and promote a culture of competence, good practice and compliance with the Building Regulations in the construction sector that will benefit consumers and the general public. It will provide an essential consumer protection as it will give those who engage a registered builder the assurance that they are dealing with a competent and compliant operator. The Bill is currently going through the Oireachtas and is expected to be enacted in Q2 2022. The CIF will be the operator of the register.

The Register applies to entities not individuals – including sole traders. Committees of experts established by the Board will consult with the various categories of the industry and other stakeholders, and very specific criteria will be established for each category of providers of building services. It was stated that the criteria required for registration will be clear and transparent. Competence will be assessed based on experience or qualifications or a combination of both, and will be prescribed for each division of registration. The registration body will have delegated responsibility for the day-to-day maintenance and operation of the register. The board will be independent and have the responsibility of recommending the competency requirements, making decisions in relation to all sanctions including removal from the register and recommending the divisions of registration. First divisions of statutory registration to commence in H1 2024, on phased basis. Circa 5,000 expected on the register overall once fully established. There are circa 800 currently on the register.

Patricia King stated that there are differences (i.e. electrician without papers). However, other trades such as plasters, carpenters who have not done apprenticeships. How will each be categorised? DHLGH stated that statutory registrations schemes won't be covered. As for carpenters, bricklayers etc., many have a QQI qualification, others through experience. Therefore, committees formed under the board will identify divisions of registrations and it is envisaged that the criteria will be set to the competencies. RIAI stated that for new entrants the CIRI should be publicised. Hubert Loftus asked is there a renewal of registration process for those on the register already. DHLGH advised that they will need to reapply for the statutory register and stated that they will be reassessed for the criteria of the

new statutory register. Also the statutory register will note tax compliance, insurance, any convictions, and any continuous professional development systems in place.

## **5. OGP Update**

OGP has [revised guidelines for Professional Indemnity Insurance in Public Works Projects \(Circular 05/2022\)](#) published 9 February 2022). Feedback from CSG on revised guidelines is welcomed. Additionally, OGP welcomed the support of Building Information Modelling (BIM) through the BDP project. They stated that they have ran BIM masterclasses and are currently obtaining feedback for their upcoming implementation strategy. Additionally, they are developing brief document for the purpose of tendering for consultancy services. OGP started bilateral meetings with GCCC colleagues, as well as meetings with industry stakeholders to discuss measuring carbon content in construction projects. The first stage of this work related to measuring carbon content will be seen in the cost template on the CWMF website, incorporating the International Cost Management Standard in construction which will lay the foundations for many metrics that will accurately measure carbon in construction projects, particularly for the procurement context. Finally, OGP has met with CIF at the end of March in relation to rising inflation in the construction sector. The OGP is considering a number of measures and is in communication with Minister PER.

CIF stated that there are significant issues around inflation with many ripple effects on delivery and industry confidence. DPER said that measures are being worked on intensely. David McHugh (ACEI) stated that they welcome some elements such as liability cap from the circular on Construction procurement reform.

## **6. Promotion of Construction Careers**

A representative of the CIF presented on the initiatives taken to promote construction careers including attending career events, supporting the careersportal website to make it user friendly for employers and students, and promoting apprenticeships. They have also carried out research on attitudes to careers in construction. They have also developed courses promoting the retrofit programme. A job advertising website has also been created by CIF (<https://cifjobs.ie/>), which also promotes the demand in construction industry for skilled workers. The CIF also outlined their work related to promoting apprenticeships, and carrying out research on wet trades and apprenticeships, traineeships, and skills surveys. World Skills Ireland 2022 to be held in September 2022, which the CIF will be involved in, was also outlined.

A representative from Engineers Ireland presented on initiatives from ACEI, RIAI, SCSi, and Engineers Ireland in promoting construction careers. ACEI are running two programmes: graduate development and leadership. Additionally, the ACEI runs CPD health and safety courses. ACEI involvement in academic / industry events and fora was outlined, such as having an ACEI representative on the Consortium Steering Group overseeing the new Civil Engineering Apprenticeship L6, 7, 8 & 9 Programmes. Engineers Ireland STEPS programme, which is aimed at primary and secondary students, as well as initiatives to attract more students into engineering were outlined. The STEPS programme held in March 2022 had circa 160,000 students enrolled. They also run the Young Engineers Awards, in order to promote STEM subjects. Engineers Ireland prepared [a report](#), published in April 2022, which captures views of Engineers in the area of engineering employment. This report highlights the growing interest in STEM subjects, and the need for CPD in engineering.

RIAI's initiatives in promoting careers in construction includes a dedicated website section for graduates, a RIAI Transition Year Programme which provides guidance, a programme to support Architectural Practices who take on Transition Year Students, and collaborating with Junior Cycle Teachers to organize and deliver the national Junior Cycle Graphics Exhibition. Upcoming work includes training of incoming graduates/ professionals from abroad to support capacity which would necessitate investment in education and training. As for SCSi, they are showing students how to use freely available international datasets to tackle environmental and social challenges in Ireland through their Space Surveyors Students programme.

### **7. Standing Item: Update on Project Ireland 2040 (NIO)**

The NIO gave a brief update about upcoming capital projects, including those going through the Major Projects Advisory Group (MPAG). The first project has come through the process and was reviewed by MPAG in February, with future projects in the pipeline. The forthcoming Build report will set out the current issues that the construction industry is facing, as well as initiatives to address same. The report examines issues such as costs, inflation, skills, and productivity. The forthcoming Prospects report includes 50 of the largest projects in the NDP. Both of these reports will be published in Q2 2022. The Build Digital Project was launched on 7<sup>th</sup> April in St. Laurence's Church, Grangegorman. Currently, the Project Lead is in place and further recruitment is ongoing. In terms of the PI2040 Tracker and Map – finalising material with aim to publish in late-April/early-May. PI2040 Annual and Regional Reports for 2021 are currently being drafted which will outline what has been delivered under Project Ireland 2040 and the NDP in 2021.

Discussion followed about the project tracker and expenditure for 2022 with the CIF outlining issues such as increasing construction cost inflation, the need for a clear line of sight of upcoming projects via more regular updates to the PI2040 tracker and map.

#### **Action Points**

1. OGP has [revised guidelines for Professional Indemnity Insurance in Public Works Projects](#). OGP has asked for feedback on these guidelines.

***The next CSG meeting is to be held on 7<sup>th</sup> July 2022***