

## Minutes for NCP Meeting 112

Meeting: National Competitiveness and Productivity Council No 112  
Venue: IDA Ireland, Three Park Place, Hatch Street Upper, Dublin 2  
Date: 8.30 am – 10.30 am, Thursday 27 July 2023

### Members Present:

Dr Frances Ruane, Chair  
Fergal O'Brien, Executive Director, Lobbying and Influence, Ibec  
Ciarán Conlon, Director of Public Policy, Microsoft, Ireland  
David Hegarty, Assistant Secretary, Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment  
Laura Bambrick, Head of Social Policy & Employment Affairs, ICTU  
Neil McDonnell, Chief Executive, ISME  
Michael Lohan, Chief Executive, IDA Ireland  
Katie Kent, in place of Leo Clancy, Chief Executive, Enterprise Ireland  
Brian McHugh, CCPC  
Bernadette McGahon, IRDG  
Edel Clancy, Musgrave Group  
Maeve Dineen, Financial Services and Pensions Ombudsman  
Liam Madden, System X, Stanford University

### Advisors Present:

John Shaw, Department of the Taoiseach  
Anne-Marie Brooks, Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth  
Cian O Lionáin, Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media  
Lisa Keyes, Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications  
Roshin Sen, on behalf of Niall Egan, Department of Social Protection  
Garret Doocey, Department of Transport  
John McCarthy, Department of Finance  
Colin Menton, Department of Public Expenditure, NDP Delivery, and Reform

### Apologies

Patrick Walsh, Managing Director of Dogpatch Labs  
Michael Taft, Research Officer, SIPTU  
William Beausang, Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science  
Sinead McPhillips, Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine  
Paul Hogan, Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage  
Andrew Munro, Department of Justice

### Secretariat

Dermot Coates  
Rory Mulholland  
Keith Fitzgerald  
Karen Hogan  
Hugh Creaton

	Action
<p><b>112.1 Chair's Introduction, Minutes &amp; Matter Arising</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The Chair opened the meeting.</li> <li>▪ The minutes from NCPC meeting 111 were approved.</li> <li>▪ The Chair welcomed the appointed new members to the Council: Edel Clancy, Bernadette McGahon, Maeve Dineen, Liam Madden and Luiz de Mello. The Chair also welcomed Michael Lohan, the new CEO of IDA Ireland.</li> <li>▪ The Chair noted David Hegarty's last meeting representing the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment at the Council, and thanked him for his contribution over the past number of years.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>112.3 Ireland's Competitiveness Challenge 2023</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The Chair introduced the agenda item and invited the Council to engage in discussion around each Chapter's overall content and recommendations.</li> </ul> <p><b>Chapter 1 - Members Comments</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Members noted the need to focus on the medium term with the 4 key challenges as: Demographics, deglobalisation, decarbonisation and digitalisation. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Members noted that the impact of EU regulatory changes is important, e.g. CSRD. Also noted the importance of acknowledging State Aid and EU regulatory position.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>Chapter 2 - Members Comments</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Welcomed inclusion of discussion on living wage and auto-enrolment.</li> <li>▪ Members noted the need for a focus on legal costs.</li> <li>▪ Labour costs, Labour supply, Labour mobility, and non-banking sector were noted as other important considerations.</li> </ul> <p><b>Chapter 3 - Members Comments</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The need to acknowledge that we cannot compare Foreign and Domestic sectors was noted. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The issue of scaling of businesses and accurately reflecting quality of labour force important considerations was highlighted.</li> <li>▪ Members noted that diversification should be the focus, and it was suggested to bring in the White Paper on Enterprise, particularly around clustering.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>Chapter 4 - Members Comments</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The need for a medium-term view was reiterated.</li> <li>▪ Members noted the need to focus on preparing the workforce for skills needed in AI, lifelong learning, and Quantum.</li> </ul>	<p>Secretariat to consider the feedback and revert to the Council</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Investment in R&amp;D and a strong link with productivity was also raised.</li> </ul> <p><b>Chapter 5 - Members Comments</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Members noted that the Carrying Capacity of Economy hugely important to draw out for a well-functioning regulatory and planning system.</li> <li>▪ Members agreed that it is important to frame how choices are required/prioritisation of commitments.</li> <li>▪ Members also discussed the need to grow capacity in public and private sector, the need to bring in the national training fund, and link with lifelong learning agenda.</li> <li>▪ It was noted that the impact of inflation should be reflected, and suggested that some of labour market constraints should stay in this Chapter.</li> <li>▪ Members also highlighted the need for driving MMC in the Construction sector.</li> </ul> <p><b>Chapter 6 - Members Comments</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Members highlighted that security of supply, competitiveness and green sources are key areas of focus. Including harnessing of wind.</li> <li>▪ Members acknowledged the need to align planning processes.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>112.4 Planned NCPC Bulletins</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Secretariat to send a written update of planned work after meeting.</li> </ul>	<p>Secretariat revert to the Council</p>
<p><b>111.5 AOB</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Written feedback on Challenge draft requested in next two weeks, but sooner than later is preferable.</li> <li>○ Date for the next Council meeting: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>12<sup>th</sup> October 2023 @ at 8.30am</b></li> </ul> </li> </ul>	