**Chair: Robert Watt, Secretary General, Department of Public Expenditure & Reform**

**Robert Watt** is Secretary General of the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform in Ireland.  The Department has responsibility for public expenditure policy, capital spending and Public Private Partnerships and overall management and reform of the Irish public service. With the Department of Finance it manages the budget process and advises the Government on economic and budget policy.

Robert is leading a major public sector reform programme in areas such as procurement, shared services and digitalisation and civil service renewal

The Department is responsible for the Government’s open and transparency agenda and is leading on the reforms of the Freedom of Information Act, Regulation of Lobbyists, Whistleblowers and the Open Data Partnership. The Department is also driving the Civil Service renewal project which aims to modernize the Irish Civil Service. Enhanced performance and accountability is an integral part of this agenda.

Robert is a member of the Government’s Economic Management Council and is a key advisor to the Government on budget, financial and economic matters. He is an economist and has experience in both the public and private sectors.  He has worked in a range of roles within the Department of Finance as well as previously working as an Economic consultant. He is a member of the board of the NTMA and the Leuven Institute for Ireland in Europe.